THE SPIRIT OF EUROPE

HEIDEGGER AND VALÉRY ON THE "END OF SPIRIT"

BJARKE MØRKØRE STIGEL HANSEN

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ABSTRACT

 'Entirely oblivious to the events unfolding on the "other shore," Europe tolerated that the Mediterranean, *her* sea, would turn into a *graveyard*,' (Cacciari 2016: viii) These words from the Italian philosopher Massimo Cacciari's 2016 study on *Europe and Empire* indicate to us how Europe today still suffers from a "historical emphysema." This thesis addresses the question of how these pulmonary difficulties of Europe are related to the process of a history in which the name of Europe comes to be related to and even identified with what is called "spirit." As is well known, Europe has been conceived as 'no more than a geographical accident, the peninsula that Asia shoves into the Atlantic' (Sartre 1988: 292). However, the thesis argues that another definition of Europe, even if intimately bound up with its geography, comes to the fore as the spirit of Europe. In order to bring to light the "spiritual geography" of Europe, I focus primarily on two strands of the twentieth century philosophical inquiry into the notion of "Europe;" one by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger and the other by the French poet and thinker Paul Valéry. The argument is that what these two thinkers achieve in their thought testifies to the history of an ambiguous relation between Europe and spirit. For both thinkers Europe appears as such only as it is shaped and reshaped by this spiritual relation, one which Europe today retains in its absence, that is, in its spiritlessness.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

MARTIN HEIDEGGER

GA 1-102 *Gesamtausgabe*. Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann 1975ff.

GA 1 *Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 4 *Erläuterung zu Hölderlins Dichtung*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 5 *Holzwege*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann. *Early Greek Thinking*. Trans. D. F. Krell and F. A. Capuzzi. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

GA 6.1 *Nietzsche 1*. Ed. B. Schillbach.

GA 6.2 *Nietzsche 2*. Ed. B. Schillbach.

GA 7 *Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 8 *Was heißt Denken?* Ed. P.-L. Coriando.

GA 9 *Wegmarken*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 11 *Identität und Differenz*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann. *What Is Philosophy?* Trans. J. T. Wilde and W. Kluback. New Haven: College and University Press, 1958.

GA 12 *Unterwegs zur Sprache*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 13 *Aus der Erfahrung des Denken*. Ed. H. Heidegger.

GA 14 *Zur Sache des Denkens*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 15 *Seminare*. Ed. C. Ochwadt.

GA 16 *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*. Ed. H. Heidegger.

GA 19 *Platon: Sophistes*. Ed. I. Schüßler. *Plato's Sophist*. Trans. R. Rojcewicz and A. Schuwer. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

GA 20 *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffes*. Ed. P. Jaeger.

GA 21 *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*. Ed. W. Biemel.

GA 24 *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 29/30 *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.

GA 31 *Vom Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*. Ed. H. Tietjen.

GA 32 *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes*. Ed. I. Görland. *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. Trans. P. Emad and K. Maly. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

GA 33 *Aristoteles Metaphysik IX 1-3*. Ed. H. Hüni. *Aristotle's Metaphysics Theta 1-3*. Trans. W. Brogan and P. Warnek. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.

GA 35 *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie*. Ed. P. Trawny. *The Beginning of Western Philosophy Interpretation of Anaximander and Parmenides*. Trans. R. Rojcewicz. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015.

GA 39 *Hölderlins Hymnen "Germanien" und "Der Rhein."* Ed. S. Ziegler. *Hölderlin's Hymns. "Germania" and "The Rhine."* Trans. W. McNeill and J. Ireland. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014.

GA 40 *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Ed. P. Jaeger. *Introduction to Metaphysics*. Trans. G. Fried and R. Polt. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000 [2014].

GA 44   *Nietzsche metaphysische Grundstellung im abendländischen Denken*. Ed. M. Heinz.
GA 45   *Grundfragen der Philosophie*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.
GA 46   *Nietzsches II. Unzeitgemässe Betrachtung*. Ed. H.-J. Friedrich.
GA 51   *Grundbegriffe*. Ed. P. Jaeger.
GA 52   *Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken."* Ed. C. Ochwadt.
GA 53   *Hölderlins Hymne "Der Ister"*. Ed. W. Biemel.
GA 54   *Parmenides*. Ed. M.S. Frings. Parmenides. Trans. A. Schuwer and R. Rojcewicz. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.
GA 55   *Heraklit*. Ed. M.S. Frings.
GA 60   *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*. Ed. M. Jung, T. Regehly, and C. Strube.
GA 62   *Phänomenologische Interpretation ausgewählter Abhandlungen des Aristoteles zu Ontologie und Logik*. Ed. G. Neumann.
GA 65   *Beiträge zur Philosophie*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann. *Contributions to Philosophy*. Trans. R. Rojcewicz and D. Vallega-Neu. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012.
GA 66   *Besinnung*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.
GA 68   *Hegel*. Ed. I. Schüßler.
GA 69   *Die Geschichte des Seyns*. Ed. P. Trawny.
GA 70   *Über den Anfang*. Ed. P.-L. Coriando.
GA 71   *Das Ereignis*. Ed. F.-W. von Herrmann.
GA 78   *Der Spruch des Anaximander*. Ed. I. Schüßler.
GA 79   *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*. Ed. P. Jaeger.
GA 80.1   *Vorträge*. Ed. G. Neumann.
GA 94   *Überlegungen II-VI ("Schwarze Hefte" 1931-1938)*. Ed. P. Trawny.
GA 95   *Überlegungen VII-XI ("Schwarze Hefte" 1938/39)*. Ed. P. Trawny.
GA 96   *Überlegungen XII-XV ("Schwarze Hefte" 1939-1941)*. Ed. P. Trawny.
GA 97   *Anmerkungen I-V ("Schwarze Hefte" 1942-1948)*. Ed. P. Trawny.

A   "Die Armut," in *Heidegger Studies*. Vol. 10 (1994).
EP   "Europa und die deutsche Philosophie," in *Europa und die Philosophie*. Ed H.-H. Gander. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1993.
HKD   "Die Herkunft der Kunst und die Bestimmung des Denkens," in *Distanz und Nähe*. Ed. P. Jaeger and R. Lüthe. Würzburg: Könighausen & Neumann, 1983.
SZ   *Sein und Zeit*. Tübingen: Niemeyer Verlag, 2006.
Zoll   *Zollikoner Seminare*. Ed. M. Boss. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2006.

GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

HW 1-20   *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*. Ed. E. Moldenhauer and K. M. Michel. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970ff.

HW 3   *Phänomenologie des Geistes*.
HW 5   *Wissenschaft der Logik I*.

HW 6	*Wissenschaft der Logik II.*
HW 8	*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften I. The Encyclopaedia Logic.* Trans. T. F. Geraets et al. Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1991.
HW 9	*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften II.*
HW 12	*Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte.*
HW 13	*Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik I.*
HW 20	*Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie III.*
VW I	*Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte.* Vol. 1. Ed. J. Hoffmeister. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1994.
JS	*Jenaer Systementwürfe III: Naturphilosophie und Philosophie des Geistes.* Hamburg: Meiner Verlag, 1987.

KARL MARX

MEW 1	*Hegelsche Rechtsphilosophie. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels Werke.* Vol.1. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1981.
MEW 3	*Deutsche Ideologie. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels Werke.* Vol. 3. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1978.
MEW 23	*Das Kapital. Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Vol. 1. *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels Werke.* Vol. 23. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1962.
MEW 42	*Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels Werke.* Vol. 42. Berlin: Dietz Verlag 1983.

SIGMUND FREUD

Gesammelte Werke. A. Freud. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 1950.

FGW 10	*Zeitgemäßes über Krieg und Tod.*
FWG 14	*Das Unbehagen in der Kultur.*
FGW 16	*Warum Krieg?*

PAUL VALÉRY

LQU	*Lettres a quelques-uns.* Paris: Gallimard, 1952.
Œ I,	*Oeuvres.* Vol. 1. Ed. J. Hytier. Paris: Gallimard, 1957.
C	A. Gide and P. Valéry. *Correspondence 1890-1942.* Paris: Gallimard, 1955.
C II	*Cahiers*, 2 Vols. Ed. J. Robinson. Paris: Gallimard, 1973-1974.
IPE	"Indication d'une politique de l'esprit," in *Vues.* Paris: Éditions de La Table Ronde 1993 [1948]
IP	*Introduction à la poétique.* Paris: Gallimard, 1938.
HP	*History and Politics. Collected Works of Paul Valéry.* Vol. 10. Trans. D. Folliot and J. Mathews. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971.
CW 1	*Poems. Collected Works of Paul Valéry.* Ed. James R. Lawler. New Jersey:

Princeton University Press 1971.

CW 9   *Masters and Friends. Collected Works of Paul Valéry*. Vol. 9. Ed. J. Mathews. New Jersey: Princeton Press, 1968.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

KSA 1-15   *Kritische Studienausgabe der Werke*. Ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980.

KSA 1   *Die Geburt der Tragödie.*
KSA 2   *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches.*
KSA 3   *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft.*
KSA 4   *Also Sprach Zarathustra.*
KSA 5   *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*; *Zur Genealogie der Moral.*
KSA 6   *Götzen-Dämmerung.*
KSA 7   *Nachlaß 1869–1874.*
KSA 11   *Nachlaß 1884–1885.*
KSA 12   *Nachlaß 1885–1887.*
KSA 13   *Nachlaß 1887–1889.*

JACQUES DERRIDA

AC   *L'autre cap*. Paris: Minuit 1991. *The Other Heading*. Trans. P.-A. Brault and M. Naas. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.
AT   "Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy," *Oxford Literary Review*. Trans. J.P. Leavey Jr. Vol. 6, No. 2 (1984).
BS I   *Séminaire La bête et le souverain I (2001-2002)*. Paris: Galilée, 2008. *The Beast and the Sovereign I*. Trans. G. Bennington. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
BS II *Séminaire La bête et le souverain II (2002-2003)*. Paris: Galilée, 2010. *The Beast and the Sovereign II*. Trans. G. Bennington. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.
D   *La dissémination*. Paris: Seuil, 1972. *Dissemination*. Trans. B. Johnson. London, New York: Continuum, 2004.
DT   *Donner le temps*. Paris: Galilée, 1991. *Given Time*. Trans. P. Kamuf. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
DE   *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question*. Paris: Galilée, 1987. *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*. Trans. G. Bennington and R. Bowlby. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989 [1991].
E   "Economimesis," *Diacritics*, Vol. 11, No. Trans. R. Klein.
ED   *L'écriture et la différence*. Paris: Seuil, 1967. *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.
ESN   *Éperons. Les styles de Nietzsche*. Bilingual edition. Trans. B. Harlow. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979.
EU   *Eyes of the University*. *Right to Philosophy 2*. Trans. J. Plug et al. Stanford:

	Stanford University Press, 2004.
FC	*Feu la cendre / Cinders*. Bilingual edition. Trans. N. Lukacher. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.
FK	"Faith and Knowledge," *Religion*. Ed. J. Derrida and G. Vattimo. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.
FWT	*For What Tomorrow…*Trans. E. Roudinesco. Stanford: Stanford University Press 2004.
FS	*For Strasbourg: Conversations of Friendship and Philosophy*. Trans. P.-A. Brault and M. Naas. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.
G	*De la grammatologie*. Paris: Minuit, 1967. *Of Grammatology*. Trans. G. Spivak. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1976.
HQE	*Heidegger: la question de l'être et l'histoire*. Paris: Galilée, 2013. *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*. Trans. G. Bennington. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.
IW	*Islam & the West. A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*. Trans. T. L. Fagan. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008
M	*Marges—de la philosophie*. Paris: Minuit, 1972. *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. A. Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.
MA	*Mal d'archives. Une impression freudienne*. Paris: Galilée, 1995. *Archive Fever. A Freudian Impression*. Trans. E. Prenowitz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
NG	"Nous autres Grecs," in *Nos Grecs et leurs modernes*. Ed. B. Cassin. Paris: Seuil, 1992. "We Other Greeks," in *Derrida and Antiquity*. Ed. M. Leonard. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
OG	*Introduction à* L'origine de la géométrie *d'Edmund Husserl*. Paris : PUF, 1962. *Edmund Husserl's* Origin of Geometry: *An Introduction*. Trans. J.P. Leavey Jr. Stony Brook, N.Y.: Nicholas Hays, 1978.
OTNH	"Onto-Theology of National-Humanism (Prolegomena to a Hypothesis," *The Oxford Literary Review* 14 (1992).
P	*Parages*. Paris: Galilée, 1986. *Parages*. Trans. J. P. Leavey et al. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.
PA	*Politique de l'amitié suivi de l'oreille de Heidegger*. Paris: Galilée, 1994. *Politics of Friendship* [partial translation]. Trans. G. Collins. London and New York: Verso, 2005.
PG	*Le problems de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl*. Paris: PUF, 1990. *The Problem of Genesis in Husserl's Philosophy*. Trans. M. Hobson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
PS	*Points de suspension: entretiens*. Paris: Galilée, 1992. *Points…: Interviews 1974-1994*. Trans. P. Kamuf et al. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.
PSY I	*Psyche: Inventions of the Other*. Vol. 1. Trans. P. Kamuf et al. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007.
PSY II	*Psyche: Inventions of the Other*. Vol. 2. Trans. P. Kamuf et al. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.
PTT	*Philosophy in a Time of Terror. Dialogue with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*. Ed. G. Borradori. Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press.
R	*Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*. Trans. P.-A. Brault and M. Naas. Stanford:

	Stanford University Press, 2005.
S	*Signéponge / Signsponge*. Bilingual edition. Trans. R. Rand. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984.
SM	*Spectres de Marx: l'état de la dette, la travail du deuil et la nouvelle Internationale*. Paris: Galilée, 1993. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*. Trans. P. Kamuf. New York: Routledge, 1994.
TA	"Trace et archive, Image et Art," *Penser à ne pas voir*. La Difference, 2013.
WAP	*Who's Afraid of Philosophy?* Trans. J. Plug. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.

CLASSICS

Gor.	Plato, *Gorgias*. *Platonis Opera*. Vol. 3. Ed. J. Burnet. Oxford: Oxford University Press,1903.
Pha.	Plato, *Phaedo*. *Platonis Opera*. Vol. 1. Ed. J. Burnet. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1900.
Thea.	Plato, *Theaetetus*. *Platonis Opera*. Vol. 1. Ed. J. Burnet. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1900.
Soph.	Plato, *Sophista*. *Platonis Opera*. Vol. 1. Ed. J. Burnet. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1900.
Rep.	Plato, *Respublica*. *Platonis Opera*. Vol. 4. Ed. J. Burnet. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1902.
Met.	Aristotle, *Metaphysica*. Ed. W. D. Ross. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924.
Mete.	Aristotle, *Meteorologica*. Ed. H. D. P. Lee. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1952.
EN.	Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*. Ed. I. Bywater. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1894.
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, vols. 1-3. Dublin, Zürich: Weidmann, 1968.
DIO	Diogenes Laertius. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Ed. R.D. Hicks. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.

MISCELLANEOUS

CW1	P. Celan. *Gedichte I. Gesammelte Werke in fünf Bänden*. Vol. 1. Ed. B. Allemann et al. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983.
CW2	P. Celan. *Gedichte II. Gesammelte Werke in fünf Bänden*. Vol. 1. Ed. B. Allemann et al. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983.
CW3	P. Celan. *Gedichte III*, *Prosa*, *Reden. Gesammelte Werke in fünf Bänden*. Vol. 3, Ed. B. Allemann et al. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983.
Duden	*Das Herkunftswörterbuch*. Mannheim, Zürich: C.H. Beck, 2007.
HSW II	F. Hölderlin. *Sämmtliche Werke und Briefe*. Ed. M. Knaupp. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
HCD	F. Hölderlin. "Communismus der Geister," in *Sämtliche Werke*. Vol. 4. Ed.

F. Beissner. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1961.

Hua VI   E. Husserl. *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*. *Husserliana*. Vol. VI. Ed. W. Biemel. Hague: Nijhoff, 1954.

Hua XXV   E. Husserl. *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1911-1921)*. *Husserliana*. Vol. XXV. Ed. T. Nenon and H. S. Sepp. Hague: Nijhoff, 1987.

Hua XXVII E. Husserl. Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922-1937). *Husserliana*. Vol. XXVII. Ed. T. Nenon and H. R. Sepp. Hague: Nijhoff, 1989.

HWP 2   F. Kudlien. "Diagnose," in *Historische Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. Vol. 2. Ed. J. Ritter et al. Basel, Stuttgart: Schwabe & Co Verlag, 1971.

HWP 4   R. Koselleck. "Krise," in *Historische Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. Vol. 4. Ed. J. Ritter et al. Basel, Stuttgart: Schwabe & Co Verlag, 1971.

KrV   I. Kant. *Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Werke in zehn Bänden*. Vols 3-4 Ed. W. Weischedel. Darmstadt; Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970.

KW 6   I. Kant. *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Werke in zehn Bänden*. Vol. 6. Ed. W. Weischedel. Darmstadt; Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970.

LSJ   Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940.

SKS 4   S. Kierkegaard. *Begrebet Angest*. Ed. Niels Jørgen Cappelørn et al. Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 1998.

SKS 26   *Journalerne NB31-NB36*. Ed. Niels Jørgen Cappelørn et al. Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2009.

TRE I   *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Vol. 1. Ed. G. Müller. Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 1977-1993.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a time when the notion of Europe appears once again to have become a subject of intense debate. Moreover, this particular time, a time in which we claim that Europe is unified in a European union all the while that Europe and our so-called European cultures prove to be dispersed, scattered, and even unidentifiable, presents us with numerous challenges as we come face to face with the question of Europe. As such, this time is also a crucial yet somewhat inconvenient time to put together a thesis that makes no attempt at solving or improving the ambiguous and problematic situation in which Europe finds itself, but rather seeks merely to discuss a single historically and philosophically significant aspect of Europe, namely the spirit of Europe that appears to have fallen into crisis.

As will become clear in the pages that follow, the title of the present work, "The spirit of Europe," carries within itself a certain duality. That is, it carries the duality of a European spirit that is foundational at the same time that it is collapsing. Such a duality, moreover, is one that is reflected in the thought of the two prominent European thinkers of the twentieth century, namely Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and Paul Valéry (1871-1945). With respect to these thinkers we see how, on the one hand, the question of Europe occupies a position of paramount importance for them as the basis not only for their own writings, but also for how they regard their European contemporaries and the *spirit of their time* in general. On the other hand, however, these same thinkers also recognise how the European spirit has suffered a blow and thereby has been subjected to a crisis. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind how this entire dynamic of spirit, for both Heidegger and Valéry, plays out on the background and under the sway of nihilism that Nietzsche had already designated as being central to a Europe imbued with a '*self-devaluation of its highest values* [*die obersten Werthe sich entwerthen*]' (KSA 12, 350).

Engaging with the duality of rise and fall as well as that of significance and devaluation that we have introduced here, it is worth reminding ourselves that such a duality emerges from within a particular historical context. Put in another way, it is not insignificant that Valéry is writing in the proximity and aftermath of the Great War or that Heidegger is writing in the proximity and aftermath of the Second World War, for it is precisely in relation to these concrete situations that each of these thinkers arrives at his particular view regarding the twofold nature of the European spirit. Although it is

indeed important for us to take note of the historical background informing the ideas of Heidegger and Valéry, it is also important for us to point out that this thesis will not be concerned with either the Great War or the Second World War as such, that is, in a historiographical manner. Instead, our focus in what follows will be on the implications that such historical events carry for the manner in which Valéry and Heidegger *think* about the spirit of Europe.

Having now touched upon the notion of spirit, it would be good at this preliminary point in our discussion for us briefly to point out how this notion fits within the general mood of the twentieth-century Europe. In the first half of the century, and particularly in the aftermath of the Great War, Europe was undergoing an increasingly forceful shift in which an increasingly intimate relation between Europe and spirit was being drawn. One characteristic example of this shift came in the form of the so-called "conservative revolution"[1] in Germany in which Germany, seen to occupy a privileged position at the centre of Europe, would eventually be regarded as being essentially *of* spirit. This theme concerning the intimacy between Europe and spirit is a central one for our argument, and for this reason it is a theme to which we will return often in the discussions that follow. What is also important to notice at this preliminary point is how the question of Europe in the twentieth century and its presumed spiritual tradition to which both Heidegger and Valéry seem to be loyal (at least in part and each in his own manner), appears to be inextricably woven into the idiom of philosophy. As Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe provocatively puts it, 'Europe is philosophy [*L'Europe, c'est la philosophie*]' in such a manner that Europe is something like the 'spiritual fatherland [*patrie*] as philosophy.' (Lacoue-Labarthe 2012: 89)

In my view, what Lacoue-Labarthe intends to call attention to with this statement is that 'Europe has invented philosophy' in such a radical sense that philosophy is perhaps 'the only real backbone of the European history since the Greeks.' (Lacoue-Labarthe 2012: 103)[2] This claim will prove useful to our purposes in this thesis not only in that it calls attention to "the Greeks," which will be a crucial philosophical locus of this thesis,

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[1] For a discussion of the controversial term "Konservative Revolution," understood as the collective designation of a multifarious political and intellectual movement, see Mohler and Weissmann 2005: 93ff.
[2] In this sense, Lacoue-Labarthe believes that 'Europe is, very simply, the land of philosophy [*le pays de philosophie*], of this form of thinking, which one calls philosophy and which has its own history and internal ruptures' (Lacoue-Labarthe 2012: 103). As will become evident in Chapter Two, Heidegger too would take up this idea in the form of "European philosophy," which he refers to as a tautology.

but also in that it illuminates what one might dare to call a "philosophy of Europe."[3] Thus, what is important for Lacoue-Labarthe to stress is that "the Greeks" represent a pivotal point of reference in the European history of the "philosophy of Europe."

Such a relation between Europe and the Greeks drawn here by Lacoue-Labarthe, I would suggest, provides us with a suitable backdrop against which it becomes possible for us to trace out the distinctive contours of what Lacoue-Labarthe calls the philosophical backbone of Europe. Let us therefore move forward here in briefly outlining these contours in order to elucidate their pertinence to the present work on the spirit of Europe. In doing so, we may focus our attention on Edmund Husserl's famous Vienna lecture from May 1935, entitled *Die Philosophie in der Krisis der europäischen Menschheit*.

Towards the end of his lecture, Husserl observes that there are only two exit strategies available for escaping the crisis to which he regards Europe to be subjected: *either* the decline of Europe because of an estrangement and hostility toward the spirit (*Geistfeindschaft*) *or* 'the rebirth of Europe from the spirit of philosophy through a heroism of reason' (Hua VI, 347-348). It is important to note, however, that prior to laying out this binary disjunction, Husserl had already been meditating in his lecture on what he calls '"the spiritual figure of Europe" [*"die geistige Gestalt Europas"*]' (Hua VI, 319).[4] In order to shine some light on this figure, Husserl turns his reflections towards that which he characterises as the 'original phenomenon [*Urphänomen*] of spiritual Europe' and whose traits he claims can be established by considering this original phenomenon's 'spiritual birthplace in a nation' (Hua VI, 321). Such a nation, Husserl muses, must be identified with the ancient Greek world in that it is precisely here that we find the basis of a new orientation of the world (that is, of the 'Umwelt' (Hua VI, 317) characterising the spiritual sphere of our historical life in the world) that the Greeks themselves called "philosophy." Whether or not one accepts Husserl's claim here, what is important to understand is how the Greek word φιλοσοφία, according to Husserl, must be translated

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[3] I borrow this expression from Simon Glendinning, who is himself sort of adapting it from Derrida, in order to emphasise the shift of focus from a "European philosophy" to a "philosophy of Europe." (Glendinning 2006: 43) In undertaking an analysis of Europe as 'a question that will always be of current interest' (AC, 11/5), Derrida prepared a way to the question of Europe that has now made its way into philosophy. Hence, the year after Derrida published *L'autre cap* (1991), a group of philosophers from the University of Strasbourg, including Daniel Payot, Denis Guénoun, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, dedicated an entire conference to the question of the "geophilosophy of Europe" under the title *Penser l'Europe à ses frontières* (Guénoun et al. 1993).

[4] The quotation marks here do not indicate reservation, I believe, but rather emphasises the citation and thus a re-citation of a tradition of the spirit of Europe. Yet, the question remains whether or not Husserl's repetition merely supports the tradition of Europe's spirit in spite of its supposed crisis.

correctly and 'in its original sense,' namely, as a 'universal science, science of the universe [*Weltall*]' (Hua VI, 321).

To be sure, when Husserl says that Europe has a spiritual birthplace, he does not refer to Europe merely as a geographical designation, as if the exact extension of Europe could be mapped out in a neat and unambiguous manner.[5] Rather, in putting forth the idea of Europe as belonging to a sort of "spiritual geography," Husserl seeks to transgress the boundary of an empirical geography in the direction of the infinite idea of philosophy that finds both its place and time of birth in the Greece of the sixth and seventh centuries B.C.[6] Indeed, as Husserl argues in his lecture from 1935, in that the idea of Europe is the philosophical idea itself, the name "Europe" thereby comes to designate the event of philosophy as history. In other words, when Husserl situates the breakthrough of philosophy in ancient Greece, he also recognises in this event the original spiritual phenomenon of Europe. In the words of Jacques Derrida (the thinker whose work undergirds my readings of both Heidegger and Valéry and in this fashion figures significantly within this thesis), 'Europe is not the cradle [*le berceau*] of philosophy, it is itself born as a spiritual meaning from the idea of philosophy.' (PG 250/155)[7]

Having rounded off these preliminary remarks concerning the philosophy of spiritual Europe, let us now offer a brief characterisation of the chief philosophical motivation for this thesis. In order to do this, we may begin by turning to Derrida's remarkable work *L'autre cap* (1991). This work, I suggest, proves an effective device not only for attuning our attention but also for preparing us to embark on the central task of this thesis, that is, the task of taking up the question concerning the spirit of Europe in

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[5] In a similar fashion, Husserl does not identify the European humanity with the groups of people who inhabit this appointed geographical site of the world. I note here that Husserl's infamous inclusion of the United States and the English dominions and exclusion of the Indians, Eskimos, and the Gypsies (*die Zigeuner*) vagabonding around Europe, belongs to his discourse about Europe (Hua VI, 318-319).

[6] Surely, a paradox seems to be involved in Husserl's question to situate the birth of the infinite in a definite time and place in history. Marrati describes this aporia as follows: 'If the infinite idea of philosophy, as absolute idea, is buried, hidden, but *also* present in the empirical history that precedes its happening, one would have to say that its "birth," at a particular time and place, and, in the most extreme case, not appeared at all. Europe has no right to be such a privileged place.' (Marrati 2005: 22)

[7] Derrida skilfully deals with these issues in his Master's Thesis (1953-1954) *Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl* (PG, 249-254/155-159) where he writes that 'Husserl would not dispute that Europe in its empirical facticity has no privileged relation to the idea of philosophy. And yet, Europe, philosophy's spiritual place of birth, its mysterious and immaterial residence, resists variation. There is a European *eidos* merging itself with the idea of philosophy.' (PG, 250-251/155) Derrida's interest in this problem is reissued in his 1962 translation and introduction to Husserl's *Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie als intentional-Historisches Problem*.

relation to Heidegger and Valéry.[8] In an important portion of this work, Derrida makes the following important claim:

> In its physical geography, and in what has often been called, by Husserl for example, its *spiritual geography*, Europe has always recognized itself as a cape or headland, *either* as the advanced extreme of a continent, to the west and south (the land's end, the advanced point of a Finistère, Europe of the Atlantic or of the Greco-Latino-Iberian shores of the Mediterranean), the point of departure for discovery, invention, and colonization, *or* as the very center of this tongue [*langue*] in the form of a cape, the Europe of the middle [*milieu*], coiled up, indeed compressed along a Greco-Germanic axis, as the very center of the center of the cape. (AC, 24-25/19-20)

With respect to this guiding intuition regarding the Greco-Roman and the Greco-Germanic axis of Europe's spiritual geography, it becomes possible to see how Derrida himself draws a connection between Valéry and Heidegger. As Derrida suggests, when one turns one gaze to that period between the two world wars one thereby runs up against these two thinkers and their influential thought. On the one hand, one is met by Heidegger and his discussion concerning "the danger of spirit" as central to the danger of Europe as this theme is traced out in the 1935 lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik*; and, on the other hand, one discovers (what is, in this respect, Derrida's primary concern in *L'autre cap*) Valéry's engagement with the crisis of spirit as a crisis of Europe, that is, as a crisis of the *cap*, the cape, or the head of Europe.[9] Indeed, regarding the latter Derrida remarks, 'Valéry is a Mediterranean spirit. […] All Valéry's works are those of a European from the Greco-Roman Mediterranean world' (AC, 37-38/35).[10]

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[8] In this work, I shall not engage in an analysis of the whole range of topics covered by Derrida in *L'autre cap*. Excellent discussions of Derrida's text from which I have benefited are Naas 1992: vii-lix; Bennington 2005: 95-108; Redfield 2007: 373-392; Gasché 2009: 265-338; Weber 2014: 9-29.

[9] As can be seen from the title of two lectures, *"La mort est l'union de l'âme et du corps dont la conscience, l'éveil et la souffrance sont désunion"—P. Valéry, Tel Quel, II, XLI*, Derrida had already discovered Valéry when teaching at the Sorbonne in 1961-1962. On the centennial of Valéry's birth, Derrida revisits Valéry to regret not having "reread" his work for a long time (M, 331/278). In his rereading of Valéry in 1971, Derrida finds a displacement of his relationship to Valéry's texts, especially the notebooks in view of which the theme of 'Valéry for us, Valéry now, Valéry today, Valéry alive, Valéry dead,' appears to us twenty year prior to his appeal to Valéry's capital challenge to us today about the "AUJOURD'HUI" (AC, 17-18/11-12). Thus, after his early encounter with Valéry in 1960s and 1970s, as well as that after *L'autre cap* in the early 1990s, Derrida circles back to Valéry in his final years of teaching when he, at the end of both session four and five of the seminar *La bête et le souverain* (2001-2002), announces his intention to take up Valéry's *Monsieur Teste*. Thus, during the sixth session, Derrida reflects on Valéry's famous statement, 'La bêtise n'est pas mon fort' (BS I, 255/188). Furthermore, towards the end of his fascinating reflections on Valéry, Derrida returns to his 1991 encounter with Valéry, 'who decidedly wagers a lot, stubbornly and pigheadedly,' (BS I, 270/200) on the word *cap*, cape, or head.

[10] When Derrida shows an interest in the Mediterranean shore, it is not only because of its French, Italian, Latin, or Christian heading, but also because of the "other shore," the "other heading," which is not merely another heading (*l'autre cap*), but rather something *other than* the heading (*l'autre* du *cap*), emphasising

Given the connection between Heidegger and Valéry that Derrida draws, it is noteworthy that Heidegger himself, in his lecture *Hölderlins Erde und Himmel*, delivered at the Hölderlin-Gesellschaft in Munich in 1959, cites Valéry and the latter's famous collection of letters entitled *La crise de l'esprit* from 1919.[11] Heidegger quotes from Valéry's second letter:

> This Europe, will it become *what it is in reality* (*en réalité*), that is, a little cape of the Asiatic continent? Or will this Europe, rather, remain *as what it appears to be* (*ce qu'elle paraît*), that is, the precious part of the whole earth, the pearl of the sphere, the brain of a spacious body? (GA 4, 176)

In recognising Valéry's timely questions regarding whether Europe is to become what it is, that is, a mere cape, or whether Europe is to remain as the brain of the entire terrestrial body, that is, the brain that manages the technological-industrial calculation, Heidegger allows himself to add another question by which he presents his own philosophical thought as being essentially that of a questioning.[12] As he asks, 'Must Europe, as this cape and brain, first become a land of an evening from which another morning of world-destiny prepares its rise?' (GA 4, 177/201) What we therefore see in this question from 1959, I would suggest, is that Heidegger does not pass over or move beyond Europe in his questioning. Rather, with his question he instead turns his gaze back by inquiring into the beginning(s) of Europe.

Whereas Valéry characterises Europe as that which has already become what it is, that is, a mere cape at the same time that it remains the (apparent) brain of the terrestrial body, Heidegger, in contrast, conceives Europe fundamentally as an occurrence of the Evening-Land. In mentioning "the Evening-Land" here, we may point out that

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the alterity within the very existence of the heading of Europe (AC, 33/29; cf. Bennington 2005: 106; Crépon 2006: 195). We will return to this point later in the dissertation.

[11] This is, however, not the first time that Heidegger mentions Valéry. During the early stage of the denazification proceedings, Heidegger applies for readmission on November 1945 to teach as an emeritus professor at Freiburg University. In his application, Heidegger explains his position as a rector of the Freiburg University in 1933-1934 by reference to his work on the spiritual made as an attempt to contribute to the 'overcoming of the bewildered site of Europe and the crisis of the Western spirit.' (GA 16, 398) In this regards, Heidegger refers to Valéry's three discourses (*La crise de l'esprit*, *La politique de l'esprit / Notre souverain bien*, *Le bilan de l'intelligence*) as a proof of his 'earnest' and 'careful' attention not only to Germany but also to the 'destiny of the Evening-land' (GA 16, 398).

[12] While appreciative of Valéry's timely question, Heidegger himself regards philosophical questioning as 'essentially untimely [*unzeitgemäß*]' in that philosophy either exceeds its own time or 'binds its time [*das Heute*] back to this time's earlier and inceptive past.' (GA 40, 10/9) Certainly, as Bennington points out, 'nothing hopes to be more timely than meditations which proudly claim to be untimely. The proud or apologetic claim to untimeliness is just a claim that the timeliness of what is being presented as untimely is not obvious or widely perceived, and it thereby adds a supplement of timeliness to the untimely.' (Bennington 2000: 129)

Heidegger's distinction between this notion and Europe will serve as a crucial leitmotif of the thesis. Although we will reserve a more detailed discussion of this leitmotif for later on, we may nevertheless make one brief point regarding the Evening-land. Although Heidegger recognises that Europe has become a mere cape (albeit a cape that still operates as the brain of the globe), which is to say that Europe has become something inessential in the history of the Evening-land, he also claims that the Evening-land has itself, in turn, become Europe. In this fashion, suggests Heidegger, the spirit of Europe is perhaps not entirely missing from this history of the Evening-land. It is precisely in this sense that Heidegger argues in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, for example, that if the Europe of 1935 is not to go down the path of annihilation, it must be itself brought to 'the development of new, historically *spiritual* forces' (GA 40, 42/41).

Having now drawn several possible relations between Heidegger and Valéry in these preliminary remarks, we may now proceed with several historico-philosophical reflections on the double axis of Europe's spiritual geography. In doing so, we follow the lead of Derrida who has, in his own explorations of this crucial topic, left us a well-trodden path on which to move forward.

THE SPIRITUAL GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE

In his 1939 work *La liberté de l'esprit*, Valéry introduces the idea of 'the Mediterranean basin' as 'the most striking and conclusive example' (HP, 195) of the manner by which the freedom of spirit has developed itself. Moreover, in this same work Valéry claims that the shores of the Mediterranean are 'by contagion or dissemination' a '*machine for making civilisation.*' (HP, 196)[13] What is significant about this notion of the Mediterranean, for Valéry, is not merely that it carries a geographical-historical meaning, but also that it serves a *function* that is crucial to the 'development of that European spirit with which we are concerned.' (HP, 312)

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[13] Interestingly, at this point Valéry refers to another 'example,' albeit less commonplace than that of the Mediterranean, namely, the 'Rhine basin.' (HP, 196) Thus, for Valéry, the central example of the Rhine is built up under 'analogous conditions and showed a remarkable similarity in spirit' (HP, 197). See Derrida's essay "Envoi" for a discussion of the Latino-Germanic translation of the relation between *repraesentatio* and *Vorstellung*, *Darstellung*, or *Gestell*, in which the Rhine (and Strasbourg) plays an important role as 'a place of passage and of translation, a margin, a privileged site for encounter or competition between two immense linguistic territories, which are also two of the most densely inhabited worlds of philosophical discourse,' such that one finds oneself 'already caught up, surprised, preceded, anticipated by the linked co-destination, the strange co-habitation, the contamination and the enigmatic co-translation of these two lexicons. The philosophical […] can no longer in this case allow itself to be shut up within the closure of a single idiom, without thereby being set afloat, neutral and disembodied, far from every body of language.' (PSY I, 96-97)

In order to provide a richer account of this spirit of Europe mentioned here, Valéry points to three significant conditions that he argued proved crucial to its formation. The first of these is "Rome," which, for Valéry, is characterised by its power to assert itself as an 'eternal model of organized and stable power' (HP, 316). The second is "Christianity," which transformed 'distant and incongruous gods' into a 'universal and to some extent common' (HP, 317) religion. And the third is "Greece." Of this third condition, Valéry remarks that not only did it transmit to us the virtues of knowledge, science, progress, and technology, but, more fundamentally, it finished 'the portrait of us Europeans,' (HP, 319) In his own words, 'What we owe to Greece is perhaps what has most profoundly distinguished us from the rest of humanity. To her we owe the discipline of the Spirit […], the method of thought that tends to relate all things to man, the complete man.' (HP, 320)

With this brief outline of Valéry's notion of the "Mediterranean" I would suggest that we are thereby provided a good picture of the role played by the Greco-Roman axis within Derrida's schema of the spiritual geography of Europe. Let us, therefore, turn to the second axis of the spiritual geography of Europe posed above by Derrida, namely, the Greco-Germanic.

In exploring the notion of the Greco-Germanic, Derrida primarily has Heidegger in his sights. It is worth recalling, however, that long before Heidegger formulated his views another German had already emphasised how the 'origin and well-spring [*Brunnquell*] of the European essence is mostly to be sought by us.' (Leibniz 1794: 42) These are the words of Leibniz from the 1697 essay *Unvorgreiffliche Gedancken, betreffend die Ausübung und Verbesserung der Teutschen Sprache*. In this work, Leibniz develops the claim that the "us" that he mentions in the quotation above refers to the Germans to whom the languages of French, Spanish, and English (the latter language called half-German, *halb Teutsch*) largely owe their origin. With this claim, he thus suggests that the arch-ancient (*uhralten*), if not immemorial, German language therefore exceeds the ancient Greek and Latin grammar and in this fashion throws light on the language and people of the entirety of Europe (Leibniz 1794: 38-41). In this fashion, then, Leibniz places Germany at the very centre of Europe—a move reflective of the claim he makes in another work that 'the kingdom is the centrepiece [*Hauptglied*], Germany the middle of Europe.' (Leibniz 1670: 198)[14]

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[14] The Heidegger-Leibniz relation has been examined by Riedel 1993: 51-53.

The theme of Europe's Germanic centre also makes an appearance in Hegel's *Vorlesungen über die philosophie der Geschichte*. Here we are told that 'the heart of Europe [*das Herz Europas*]' (HW 12, 133) consists of only three countries, England, France, and Germany, which together constitute the 'centre [*Mittelpunkte*] of Europe' (HW 12, 133). Moreover, in the fourth and final part of this same lecture, Hegel gestures again to the Germanic world, this time making reference to the 'Germanic spirit' as 'the spirit of the new world' (HW 12, 413). Prior to these reflections, Hegel has undertaken the task of examining the geographical preconditions of history that themselves serve both to determine the 'ground of the world-historical people' (HW 12, 106) and to help us unearth the 'true theatre for the world history' (HW 12, 106). Towards this end, he divides the "old world"[15] into three parts: Africa, Asia, and Europe. Whereas, for Hegel, "Africa" is abandoned and excluded from the world-history due to its deprived relation to spirit (HW 12, 120; 129) and "Asia" is seen merely as that which marks the beginning (*Aufgang*) of history, it is "Europe" that takes centre stage in the world-historical theatre. With the West thereby serving as the end (*Zweck*) of the trajectory of spirit that had begun in the East (i.e., 'the *Orient* quarter of the globe—the region of origination' (HW 12, 130; 133-134)) that itself draws the unfolding of spirit to this end, Hegel concludes that the end must thereby have been established from its very beginning (*von Anfang an festgestellt*). From this we may therefore note, along with Marc Crépon, that the arche-teleology of a Hegelian notion of history seems to build upon an understanding of how the spirit becomes itself through its historical-geographical figurations (Crépon 1996: 327-363).

At this point, let us return to the double axis schema of Europe that we introduced above. Regarding this schema, allow me the liberty of briefly complicating the relation between the Greco-Germanic and Greco-Latin axes of Europe. As Lacoue-Labarthe has shown, the Greeks have been 'transmitted to modern Europe through the Roman filter.' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 107n.18) What this means, according to Lacoue-Labarthe, is that Europe, ever since the Renaissance, 'has been prey to the Ancient' because 'it is *imitatio* that governs the construction of the Modern' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 117). Accordingly, what Lacoue-Labarthe envisages within the history of Europe is the historical drama by

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[15] Hegel's distinction between an "old" and "new" world is not a matter of geological age but rather of the world's 'physical and spiritual character [*Beschaffenheit*]' (HW 12, 107). According to this schema, "America," in Hegel's view, designates the land of the future but only as a 'land of nostalgia [*Sehnsucht*]' in that the spiritual history still 'echoes the old world,' so much so that America is yet to play a role in its course (HW 12, 114).

which Germany, in its very formation, has suffered an imitation *twice removed* from its ancient Greek origin. What this means is that Germany thus finds itself obligated to imitate the imitation of the Greeks. In addition to this, however, such a Germanic process of imitation is itself mediated through the Roman tradition of France and its own "quarrel between the Ancient and the Modern."[16] With Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, we may thus say that, in the end, Germany only comes into being by entering into a sort of mimetic-agonistic relation with France (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 117; Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 1990: 299).

The conclusions drawn above carry significant implications for how we are ultimately to conceive of Germany. As Lacoue-Labarthe argues, if "Germany" exists, it does so primarily as a 'force of resistance against Rome and all its various substitutes' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 107n.18). Moreover, continues Lacoue-Labarthe, in order to validate itself Germany was forced to '"invent" a Greece which had up to that point remained unimitated, a sort of meta-Greece if you will, which would allegedly be at the foundation of Greece itself' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 120/79). In other words, Germany sought in its "invention" of *the Greeks* a manner by which to establish a model of a more "direct" imitation that rids itself of the intermediary Latin *imitatio*. Such a Germanic attempt of self-identification by means of attempting to trace a direct and unmediated line to the Greek other is nicely summed up by Johann Joachim Winckelmann when he notes, 'There is but one way for the moderns to become great, and perhaps inimitable; I mean, by imitating the ancients.' (Winckelmann 1969: 2)

But what consequences does this dynamic of identification, a dynamic by which Germany imitates the Greeks in order to make itself inimitable, carry for Germany? In Lacoue-Labarthe's view, such a dynamic, in which Germany attempts to accede to its historical *Dasein* and thus to become a "people" who aspire to appropriate the unappropriability of the Greeks, ultimately leaves Germany in a state of 'historico-spiritual schizophrenia' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 122/80). Schizophrenia here is but another way to say that Germany never really possessed a sense of "people" to begin with. As Lacoue-Labarthe nicely sums up this point, Germany 'never belonged to World History (*Weltgeschichte*) as politically identifiable peoples, that is, as properly national peoples. What the *spiritual* history of Germany indicates—and there is one, it is even *the*

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[16] This quarrel is often referred to as the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, that is, a cultural discussion in France between 1685-1715, which had its *relation* to the Ancient as its point of departure. For a discussion, see Cave 1999: 417-425.

history of Germany—is that Germany […] is lacking in identity [*en défaut d'identité*]. "German distress," *die deutsche Not*, has but one meaning: *Germany does not exist.*' (Lacoue-Labarthe 2002: 170-171/90)

Having now complicated the relation between the Greco-Germanic and Greco-Latin axes of Europe, let us proceed in the penultimate section with the task of unravelling the logic of Europe's spiritual landscape.

THE LOGIC OF EUROPE

It is my hope that with our brief outline of the disjunction of *either* the Greco-Latin *or* the Greco-Germanic at play in the question of Europe's heading we have been able to display how Heidegger and Valéry might prove to be invaluable resources for our discussion of Europe. For, not only does each of these thinkers trace his origin back to his respective German and French context comprising the disjunction, which means that each has a particularly important perspective on his respective aspect of the disjunction, but, (to recall what I have suggested above) in that these two thinkers share a similar account of the significance and crisis of Europe, they can both as a crucial *mochlos* offering us the leverage to displace and as such to approach what would otherwise be an intractable either/or. In short, in Heidegger and Valéry we find ways of taking up the historical question of Europe anew in repeating it one more time differently. Furthermore, in carrying out a reading of Heidegger and Valéry as examples of readers of Europe, my aim is not only to illustrate how they (albeit in different ways) consider Europe as being essentially *of* spirit, but also to demonstrate how their exemplary illustrations of Europe bring into view an entire European discourse about Europe. Such a reading, in other words, is not a matter of 'mixing everything together,' as Derrida would have it, 'but of analysing the traits that prohibit [*interdisent*] a simple break between the Heideggerian discourse and other European discourses' (PS, 198/185) such as that of Valéry.

Hence, if we are to understand the differing discourses of Heidegger and Valéry regarding Europe, we must also understand how these discourses resemble each another in a *resemblance* of discourses.[17] Of course, this does not mean that we can merely

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[17] Here Derrida speaks about how the discourses from Hegel to Valéry, from Husserl to Heidegger, differences notwithstanding, still resemble one another due to their resemblance to a '*traditional* discourse [that] is already a discourse of the *modern* Western world. […] This old discourse about Europe, a discourse at once exemplary and exemplarist, is already a *traditional discourse of modernity.*' (AC, 31-32/27-28) In *De l'esprit*, Derrida addresses a similar issue by directing our attention to the 'common focus towards which, between 1919 and 1939, the discourses of worry gather or rush headlong: around the same words (Europe, Spirit), if not the same language.' (DE, 97/61) However, Derrida adds, 'the perspective would be

employ the examples of Leibniz, Hegel, Valéry, Husserl, Heidegger, etc. as instantiations of the self-same European discourse. Rather, as Michael Naas has demonstrated in his introduction to the English translation of *L'autre cap*, what one can do is to extract a sort of logic of the *example* from Derrida's argument concerning Europe that rests on 'a certain relationship between a particular place and the general notion of place' (Naas 1992: xxv). Thus, even if it may seem that Derrida's logic of the example would afford Europe a place of privilege, this logic in fact demonstrates how the particular example of Europe's heading turns out to be essential to the world in general. That is to say, the logic of the example concerns how a particular example becomes a 'universal heading for all the nations or peoples of the world' (Naas 1992: xxvi).

It is against this background that I would like to argue that Europe is not just an example among others, but rather it constitutes the example *of* the example *of* spirit. When it comes to examples, Derrida suggests that spirit is already both an example and something more than an example among others, namely, exemplary. As he notes, 'Spirit is one of the categories of the analogy *and* the incomparable condition, the transcendental, the transcategorical of the whole economy. It is an example and an exemplary example, the example *par excellence*. There is no other.' (AC, 94n.8/123n.8) Thus, what Derrida helps us to realise is how Europe is bound together with spirit in such a manner that the particularity of Europe—for example, as a geographical designation belonging to the Asian continent—discloses the more general idea of Europe due to Europe's very position within the composition of an arche-teleology. As Derrida writes,

> The idea of an advanced point of *exemplarity* is the *idea of the* European *idea*, its *eidos*, at once as *arché*—the idea of beginning but also of commanding (the cap as the head, the place of capitalizing memory and of decision…)— and as *telos*, the idea of the end, of a limit that accomplished, or that puts an end to the whole point of the achievement, right there at the point of completion. (AC, 29/24-25)

With these preliminary remarks on the historico-philosophical example of the European spirit now adequately developed, we may now bring our introduction to a close by providing an overview of the structure of this dissertation.

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falsified and the most acute difference missed if certain analogies between all these discourses—troubling and significant, although local—were selected, on the pretext, for example, that Heidegger might have subscribed to such and such a formulation.' (DE, 97/61)

This thesis is divided into two main parts that correspond respectively to the two thinkers involved in working out the question of Europe. Moreover, each of these two parts is further divided into three main chapters. The first part is concerned with Heidegger's question of Being as the very locus where the question of the spirit of Europe comes into play. The focus of this first part is above all the 1935 lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. The second part is dedicated to Heidegger's contemporary, Valéry, whose work on Europe resembles Heidegger's in that both of these thinkers emphasise the motif of *spirit* in relation to Europe. For the remainder of this introduction, I will now offer a brief chapter-by-chapter outline of the thesis.

Chapter One, entitled "Introducing Heidegger's Europe," introduces Heidegger's question of Europe and its intimate connection with the question of Being. Here I seek to broach a path unto the question of Europe in Heidegger's thinking by means of a preliminary discussion of Heidegger's focus on the fundamental question of metaphysics in the 1935 lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. This chapter should provide the necessary background for Heidegger's important discussion of both the question and the word of "Being." Furthermore, in order to understand why Heidegger himself raises the question, 'Is "being" a mere word and its meaning a vapour, or is it the spiritual destiny of the evening-land?' (GA 40, 40/40) I trace this discussion of the word "Being" back to Heidegger's *Nietzsche*. This task, in turn, leads us to a consideration of "European nihilism."

Chapter Two, "Heidegger and the Greeks," looks closer at Heidegger's engagement with "the Greeks." Whereas the preceding chapter dealt with the question of Being and the manner by which this question has been bequeathed to us through the history of metaphysics, this chapter explores Heidegger's return to "the Greeks" in whom he finds the first and definitive unfolding of metaphysics as well as the true beginning of the question of Being. This return to "the Greeks" brings us to the central question of what philosophy is—a question which Heidegger discusses in his 1955 lecture *Was ist das— die Philosophie?* In light of this investigation, we focus in on Heidegger's somewhat provocative declaration that "Western-European philosophy" is a tautology, after which we conclude the chapter by making several remarks on Heidegger's *Der Spruch des Anaximander* wherein he develops the claim that the destiny of Europe hinges on the manner that Being has been translated.

Chapter Three, "Breaking the Silence on Spirit," begins with an overview of the central features of Heidegger's engagement with the spirit motif. By means of this overview (which extends from Heidegger's influential work *Sein und Zeit* (1927) up through his infamous Rectoral Address delivered at the University of Freiburg in 1933) we will see how Heidegger wrenches "spirit" out of its quotation marks and allows something like the spirit as the empowering of the powers of beings to move from a metaphysical concept of spirit to a being-historical designation. The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a description of how spirit gains renewed significance in Heidegger's work from the 1930s onwards. By doing so, we follow closely the argument from *Einführung in die Metaphysik* in which Heidegger enacts the drama of spirit upon which the destiny of Europe hangs. A special emphasis will be placed on Heidegger's understanding of the "darkening of the world"—a term that indicates a characteristic feature of the prevalence of modern technology. To conclude this chapter, I discuss Heidegger's exposition of the German question in which the inner relationship between the German and the Greek language comes into view. I argue that the singularity of the German language and, in particular, the German word *Geist*, brings along with it a redoubling of spirit inasmuch as *Geist*, as Derrida argues in *De l'esprit*, assumes the figure of 'the Geist of Geist' (DE, 67/41).

Chapter Four, "The Archive of Europe," examines Valéry's understanding of Europe in *La crise de l'esprit*. This chapter begins with a preliminary outline of the manner by which Europe becomes pertinent to Valéry in 1919. I argue that the experience of the Great War is a fundamental issue in Valéry's reflection on Europe. One way in which I seek to articulate this is to look at Walter Benjamin's essay on Valéry from 1931 in which Valéry's approach to the world is oriented towards an "infinite horizon." I then go on to explain how the experience of war carries with it an alteration of our relation to death in such a radical sense that this experience disrupts the very historical self-understanding of Europe as being privileged over against all the other civilisations of history. Finally, in drawing on Derrida's claim from *L'autre cap* that the term "crisis" is perhaps no longer an appropriate term to describe the situation of Europe, I conclude the fourth chapter by affording attention to how Valéry's understanding of the "crisis of Europe" carries along with it a sort of "crisis of crisis."

Chapter Five, "Disorder as a General Equality," deals with the notion of disorder in Valéry. This is a notion that Valéry hits upon in *La crise de l'esprit* but more fully develops in *La politique de l'esprit*. I argue that this disorder is the result of the

globalisation of the world according to which the inequality on which the predominance of Europe had hitherto been based is gradually disappearing. To understand how the disappearance of (international) inequality for Valéry results in a "perfect state of disorder," we must therefore try to understand how Europe has specialised itself in the universal in such a manner that it has organised the world to its own ends only to reach an experience of no longer being anywhere or anyone in particular.

Chapter Six, "Economy of Spirit," turns to the question of spirit from the point of view of the disorder treated in Chapter Five. I begin here with a brief sketch of Valéry's notion of spirit, as developed in *La liberté de l'esprit*, after which I briefly demonstrate how the question of spirit that Valéry read in the fateful signs of his own age leads him to ask about our belief in the spirit as the foundation of the world. Following this, I introduce and discuss Valéry's definition of the spirit as a power of transformation in order to examine in greater detail the intimate relationship between spirit and disorder. The challenge is to shed light on what Valéry at one point describes as the spirit that has *not* been exempt from the disorder of the world. I approach this relationship through Valéry's employment of the analogy between spiritual and material values in order to describe, on the one hand, the decline of the value of spirit, and, on the other hand, the manner by which the spirit appears as an analogical equivalent to matter only in its withdrawal.

The journey through Europe and its spiritual crisis taken in this thesis, via Heidegger and Valéry, is far from smooth, and it may come to seem that the spirit in question has exhausted itself, or simply given up the *Geist*. However, at the end of our journey, I hope to show that we have perhaps not yet arrived at the end of the end of spirit, even though the spirit perhaps does not name anything else than the exhaustion of the very power of spirit. As we shall see, for both thinkers, Heidegger and Valéry, Europe appears as such only as it is shaped and reshaped by its spiritual relation, but it is one which Europe today retains only in its absence, that is, in its spiritlessness.

PART ONE

HEIDEGGER'S EUROPE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In the following three chapters, we shall be concerned with Heidegger's approach to the question of Europe. This task, however, is complicated by the fact that the notion of "Europe" does *not* appear to be a hallmark of Heidegger's philosophy. Indeed, we do not find a place within Heidegger's oeuvre where he consistently engages with the notion of Europe.[18] Yet, as some attentive readers of Heidegger such as Rodolphe Gasché, Marc Crépon, Peter Trawny, Françoise Dastur, Jacques Derrida, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe have pointed out, one can recognise in Heidegger certain indications of how the name of "Europe" is inextricably woven into the history of Being.[19]

However, although Heidegger does not thematise Europe as such or for itself, the notion of Europe nevertheless forces its way into his account of the history of Being in the form of an effect of what Heidegger calls the *Evening-land* (*das Abendland*).[20] Seeing as the notion of the Evening-land gathers momentum in Heidegger's thinking of Being during the 1930s and 1940s, this term could therefore also be read as an indicator of an implicit thought of Europe. Such a gesture of reading would seem to be validated by Heidegger's own claim that Europe is to be found exclusively in the realm of the 'modern

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[18] I note here that Ziegler, as Heidegger himself, places quotation marks around "Europe" so as to mark how this word appears somewhat unfit to designate the thinking of Being conceived of in relation to Being's history. Cf. Ziegler 1991: 340. Concerning Heidegger's use of quotations marks around "Europe," see, for example, an entry from his *Schwarze Hefte*: '"Europe" is the modern figure of oblivion, in which the Evening-land is withheld.' (GA 97, 144) More on this below.

[19] See, for instance, Gasché 2009: 95-207; Crépon 2007: 105-124; Trawny 2004; Dastur 2006: 1-22; Lacoue-Labarthe 1987; Lacoue-Labarthe 2002.

[20] By employing the word "Abendland," Heidegger becomes interlinked with an entire tradition of which Spengler's *Das Untergang des Abendlandes* (1918) presents the following conception of *das Abendland*: 'We select a single province [*eine einzelne Landschaft*] as the natural centre position of a historical system. At this place is the central sun [*die Zentralsonne*]. From it all the events of history receive their true light.' (Spengler 1972: 23) To my knowledge, only a few comparative dictionaries suggest the translation of New High German word *Abendland* coined by the theologian Kaspar Hedio in his *Chronica der alten Christlichen Kirchen* from 1529-1530 in order to designate the Latin *occidens* with the "Evening-land" or "land of the evening." See Berthold 1830: 2; TRE I: 17-42. Nevertheless and in spite of the history of this word, I prefer the term "Evening-land" over terms such as "West" or "Occident" for two reasons. The first has to do with Heidegger's claim in *Der Spruch des Anaximander* that *das Abendland* overwrites the distinction between the Occident and the Orient (GA 5, 326). The second reason is that Heidegger plays on the word "evening" which prepares the way in Heidegger for its overcoming in the Morning-land (GA 71, 94-100).

Evening-land,' (GA 71, 155) which is characterised by the hegemony of technology and machination (*Machenschaft*). Sceptics might object that such an excavation of the notion of Europe from out of Heidegger's history of the Evening-land will require what may very well look like a forced reading of his texts. Nevertheless, this is a risk that I am willing to run in order to see what might come into view through such excavation work the results of which must be assessed at its completion.

To begin excavating, then, one of the few places where Heidegger mentions Europe explicitly is in his work from 1941-1942, entitled *Das Ereignis*, which was published posthumously.[21] In the second chapter of this text, Heidegger draws on the notion of *das Abendland* to describe how it—in contrast to the notion of Europe—plays into the history of Being. As Heidegger explains, whereas '[w]hat is European is a preliminary form of the planetary,' which designates 'the ending and completion' of metaphysics, the Evening-land, in contrast, 'is the beginning.' (GA 71, 95/80)

Leaping forward in time, Heidegger in his 1959 lecture *Hölderlins Erde und Himmel* radicalises the relationship between Europe and the Evening-land by raising the question whether or not 'the Evening-land still is [*Ist das Abendländische noch*]' (GA 4, 176). After discussing the manner in which the smallness (*das Geringe*) of the Evening-land means that the Evening-land only *is* insofar as it *becomes*, Heidegger gives a surprising answer to his question, namely, that the Evening-land 'has become Europe [*Europa geworden*].' (GA 4, 176) This answer already seems to confirm our excavating approach to Heidegger's texts, yet, in order to *understand* Heidegger's answer it is necessary to explicate the difference between the Evening-land and Europe, which is of utmost importance to Heidegger's thinking of the history of Being. First, in Heidegger's writings "Europe" frequently but not exclusively functions as a historiographical-geographical designation, whereas the "Evening-land," even if not entirely deprived of geographical designations, concerns the history of Being (GA 13, 88; GA 39, 171; GA 4, 13; 22). Accordingly, in his 1946 essay *Brief über den "Humanismus,"* Heidegger distinguishes between Europe and the Evening-land in that the latter 'is not thought regionally as the Occident in contrast to the Orient, nor merely as Europe, but rather world-historically out of nearness to the origin [*Nähe zum Ursprung*].' (GA 9, 338) We will return to the question of what this origin designates in the chapters to come, but for

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[21] This work is closely related to Heidegger's better known *Beiträge zur Philosophie* (1936-1938).

now we will stay with our preliminary characterisation of the various manners in which Heidegger employs the terms of "Europe" and "Evening-land."

When Heidegger in 1959 argues that the Evening-land is becoming Europe, it is because Europe represents the 'technological-industrial district of hegemony [*Herrschaftsbezirk*]' (GA 4, 176). Thus, Europe serves not only as a geographical designation, but also assumes a figure in the history of Being. Given that Europe as the hegemony of technology 'takes over the entire earth' and, even more ominously, distends itself 'in the interstellar cosmic space' (GA 4, 176). In this regard, what becomes important for our excavation project of Europe is to chart the landscape that Heidegger characterises as the 'present planetary-interstellar condition of the world [*Weltzustand*]' whose 'inalienable essential beginning [*unverlierbaren Wesensanfang*] is determined through and through by that which is European-Evening-landish-Greek.' (GA 4, 177) We shall return in more detail to the Greek question and its relation to Europe in Chapter Two, but for now it remains an open question whether Heidegger, when he begins to write more explicitly about "Europe" from the 1930s and onwards, primarily identifies Europe as a planetary concept conceived solely in terms of a technological framework or whether the notion of Europe has more to offer. This question, moreover, leads directly to others: Does Heidegger's account of the incipient Evening-land remain unaffected by the vicissitudes pertaining to the history within which Europe is conceived as nothing but an ending and a completion? Does the notion of the Evening-land remain uncontaminated by this Europe, the latter of which Heidegger intends to abandon by drawing attention to the opening of another beginning?[22] Furthermore, considering Heidegger's planetary and, as will become evident, eschatological designation of Europe within the history of Being, one might question whether or not Europe, in addition to possessing a geophysical signification in Heidegger's work, also belongs to a *spiritual geography*.

As any attentive reader of Heidegger will recognise, the concerns raised by the questions above touch upon very difficult matters that, as Derrida has shown in *De l'esprit*, have to do with the notion of spirit (*Geist*). To be sure, the notion of spirit displays itself at various places within Heidegger's textual corpus, but one significant place is his 1935 lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik* where precisely a sort of geophilosophy is woven together with a spiritual geography. Moreover, one could mention the way in which "spirit" figures into Heidegger's numerous commentaries on

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[22] Cf. Vallega-Neu 2016: 136-137.

Hölderlin, Schelling, Hegel, and Nietzsche as well as into his later 1952 essay on Trakl in "Sprache im Gedicht"—to say nothing of the role played by spirit in Heidegger's understanding of the Jews, most notably in his *Schwarze Hefte* (1931-1948).[23]

Hence, if indeed it is the case that Europe plays a covert, yet significant role with regards to Heidegger's history of Being, then a better understanding of the issues introduced here is certainly warranted. Moreover, this would mean that Heidegger's works in the 1930s and 1940s certainly serve as interesting sites for our excavating inquiry into the relation between Europe and the Evening-land and their respective destinations within the history of Being.

My plan for the first part of the thesis concerning Heidegger's Europe is therefore to begin with a brief introduction to Heidegger's notion of Europe in the 1930s in order to address what I see as Heidegger's most explicit even if not consistent engagement with the question of Europe, namely, his lecture course entitled *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Having established a provisional account of the occurrence of Europe in Heidegger's thought, we then proceed in a more piecemeal fashion to examine a number of Heidegger's key claims concerning both the Evening-land and Europe. In this fashion, we will come across several attempts to delineate Heidegger's understanding of Europe when viewed in the light of the question of Being.

Let it be clear from the outset, however, that the approach to Heidegger's thought and texts that I assume here is concerned less with either scholarly exegesis or political assessments and more with exploring the questions of Europe that through Heidegger's text open themselves up to us.[24] As such, my intent is not merely to examine the historical

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[23] In the present work, I shall not give voice to the topos of "Heidegger and the Jews." Instead of pretending to be able to delimit such a topos, if it is one at all, let me merely outline the main interpretative problem, which is to understand how Heidegger understands "the Jews" as part of the history of Being. In one of his ponderings (*Überlegungen XII*) from the fall 1939, Heidegger speaks about 'why Judaism has temporarily increased its power' (GA 96, 46). This escalation (*Steigerung*), he argues, has to do with the metaphysics of the Evening-land particularly in its modern shape. Metaphysics, Heidegger continues, offers a starting point for the spread of 'empty rationality and calculating ability, which have, consequently, acquired a shelter [*Unterkunft*] in the "spirit" without nevertheless being able to grasp […] the hidden ambits-of-decision [*Entscheidungsbezirke*]. The more original and captured in their beginning the prospective decisions and questions, the more they remain inaccessible to this "race."' (GA 96, 46) Whilst metaphysics gives way to the calculative mentality, this mentality is itself sheltered "in" spirit. For a discussion of Heidegger's "Judaism" with respect to spirit, see di Cesare 2016b: 183-186. The literature on Heidegger and the Jews has attracted much attention both before and after the publication of the controversial *Schwarze Hefte*. See, for instance, Lyotard 1990; Trawny 2014; di Cesare 2016a; Heinz and Kellerer 2016; Nancy 2017.

[24] This is, of course, not to say that an exegetical or a political assessment of Heidegger's writings are less accurate investigations of Europe. It is not to say, either, that the present excavation of Heidegger's Europe could escape Heidegger's engagement with politics in the 1930s and the political overdetermination of identification (or mimetology as Lacoue-Labarthe calls it) as well as the overdetermination of politics with identification (Lacoue-Labarthe 1986: 170/297).

sequence of Heidegger's development of thought, but also, following to some extent the advice of Reiner Schürmann, to read Heidegger 'backward, from the end to beginning.' (Schürmann 1990: 13; 2003: 581-582) The scope as well as the strength of such an inverse reading becomes evident, however, only under the condition that we refrain from treating Heidegger's earlier texts as nothing more than a frame awaiting to be saturated with Heidegger's later political discourse. For, as Lacoue-Labarthe underscores, we cannot be content with stating that 'Heidegger put the thought and the language of *Sein und Zeit* at the service of National Socialism' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1986: 141/271). To proceed in this fashion, Lacoue-Labarthe continues, would be 'to provide oneself in advance with the means of breaking through, of making the leap from the philosophical to the political—which is precisely what is to be called in question.' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1986: 141/272) According to Schürmann, the 'hermeneutical dilemma of whether Heidegger should be read forward or backward' thus serves to specify how Heidegger, if he is read backwards, may come to 'appear in a different light' (Schürmann 1990: 13-14). In other words, to *read* Heidegger should be understood as an attempt neither to save nor to reject, but rather to recognise how Heidegger's thought allows us to pose the questions and problems of the political.[25]

Before exploring Heidegger's "Europe" in more detail, let us therefore clarify that the introductory remarks we make here are meant to emphasise that if one wants to focus on Heidegger's treatment of "Europe," one should remember that this term becomes interesting (and perhaps the most troubling) for us when it is understood as playing a covert role in the history of Being, rather than, as it often does in Heidegger's writings, the role of a geographical-historical designation. As such, one of my aims in this chapter is to bring to the fore Heidegger's Being-historical (*seinsgeschichtliche*) understanding of "Europe" and to show how this understanding creates the scaffolding for Heidegger's more well-known investigation of the Evening-land. I will argue that the term "Europe" serves as a monitor for a recurring problem, namely, the difficulty of understanding the word "Being"—a difficulty that lies at the heart of Europe's spiritual situation.

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[25] Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe 1987; Lacoue-Labarthe 2007; Janicaud 1989; Krell 1992: 137-216; Beistegui 2002; Bennington 2016.

INTRODUCING HEIDEGGER'S EUROPE

As I have already alluded to in the above, the terms "Europe" and "European" do not appear in Heidegger's intellectual repertoire until the 1930s. Moreover, when they do finally appear, they are employed, for the most part, in reference to Western-European history or the modern-European scientific thought. To be sure, while Heidegger's earlier references to "Europe" present many possibilities for interpretation,[26] I would like to suggest that from his 1929-1930 lecture course *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik* and onwards the terms "Europe" and "European" not only become more frequent in the *Gesamtausgabe*, but they also come to play a more important role in assessing the question concerning the sense of Being.

Let me therefore offer a provisional and perhaps somewhat simplified account of Heidegger's Europe in the 1930s by following the most evident path suggested in *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik*. It turns out that in Heidegger's reflection on the task of philosophy and its significance to the world, 'the spirit and future of Europe' (GA 29/30, 18) becomes a central issue. Moreover, Heidegger discusses four interpretations (those of Spengler, Klages, Scheler, and Ziegler) of "our present realm" by reflecting on the "us" that belongs to the university as well as on "our" participation in the formation of spirit (*der Bildung des Geistes*). In relation to this discussion Heidegger thereby raises the question: Does the history of spirit happen 'only as German or as Western [*abendländisches*] and thus as European?' (GA 29/30, 104) It is important for us to note already at this point that this question, as centred on the themes of Europe, spirit, and

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[26] At this point, let me provide a short overview of Heidegger's use of the terms "Europe" and "European" in the time up until the 1930s. This list is by no means exhaustive, but serves to illustrate the most common references to "Europe." In *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* (1919-1920) in a discussion of the "science of origins" (*Ursprungswissenschaft*), Heidegger for the first time mentions the term "European" with regard to the 'European citizen' (GA 58, 3) called Spengler whose book *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* is referred to as 'seinem "europäischen" Buche' (GA 58, 9; 48; cf. GA 63, 55). However, in the section on the historical overview, Heidegger mentions the *Geistesgeschichte*, which he juxtaposes with the European history in that this history of spirit is stamped by the Greeks (GA 58, 23; cf. GA 60, 167). Later, in his lecture course on Augustine and Neo-Platonism (1921), Heidegger speaks about the formation of ideas in the Christian epochs 'and thereby also the European development of culture [*Kulturentwicklung*]' (GA 60, 167). In *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs* (1924), Heidegger presents his notion of the being-present-at-hand (*Vorhandensein*) as a mode designating a unitary reference to Being such as when 'the buildings in the city of Marburg, Marburg in Hessen, in Germany, in Europe, on the earth, in a solar system, in the world space, in the world,' (GA 20, 212) express an indifference towards their being-relational. Finally, in his 1925-1926 *Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit*, Heidegger mentions how Aristotle's definition of truth and falsity appears trivial to a European (GA 21, 163).

"us," will later serve as the subject for Heidegger's August 1934 address on the essence of the German university.[27]

However, it is not until the summer of 1935 that Heidegger's first significant effort to take up the question of Europe appears in his lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik* at the University of Freiburg. *Einführung in die Metaphysik* nevertheless remained unpublished until 1953, but despite this late publication date, Heidegger, in a preface to a later edition of *Sein und Zeit*, remarks that he regarded this 1935 text as explicative of the question concerning the sense of Being that he had developed elsewhere (SZ, v). Following its 1953 publication, however, *Einführung in die Metaphysik* became infamous for an altogether different reason, namely its pronouncement that the 'inner truth and greatness' of National Socialism, understood as an 'encounter between planetary determined technology and modern humanity,' had only the slightest to do with the 'works that were being peddled about today as the philosophy of National Socialism' (GA 40, 208/213; translation modified).[28]

In what follows, I do not intend to take up Heidegger's lecture course in all of its complexity, politically or otherwise, for, were we to take seriously Heidegger's political engagement as part of this task, it would require that we both reflect on and question the philosophical implications of such an engagement, which exceeds the scope of this thesis. I would, however, like to highlight some of the key points from the lecture course inasmuch as they not only record Heidegger's first foray into a sort of geopolitics, but also in that they provide us with a preview of why the reflection on Europe proves significant for his overall outlook on the question of Being.

In *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger is clearly attempting to address the question of Being (a question that lies at the very heart of his reflections on Europe) as well as to bring forward "the Greeks" who are said to have laid the groundwork for such

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[27] At the opening page of his speech, Heidegger alludes to the history of the German university as the history of the German spirit pertaining to the destiny of the German people, wherein Heidegger sees Hitler representing the 'essence of the revolution of national socialism'—a revolution out of which a new beginning will arise from Europe's decline (GA 16, 285; 302; 307).

[28] In the 1953 publication of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, this passage occurs in parenthesis, suggesting that it is added afterwards to the 1935 manuscript. Immediately after its publication in 1953 Habermas and Lewalter discussed in the newspaper *Die Zeit* the significance of this parenthesis. As Jaeger, the editor of the *Gesamtausgabe* volume in question, notes, whether the parenthesis on page 152 in the 1953 Niemeyer edition was already stated in the 1935 manuscript remains undecided even though it does not occur in the first proof (GA 40, 232-234). For a discussion of this issue, see Habermas 1993: 187-188; Pöggeler 1987: 276-278; Janicaud 1992: 348-363. For a discussion of the expression "inner truth of National Socialism" in Heidegger's 1935 lecture course as well as in Heidegger's first reference to this expression in his 1934-1935 lecture course on Hölderlin's hymns (GA 39), see Ireland 2015: 315-346.

a question. Heidegger's purpose in his lecture, however, is not simply to replace a history of metaphysics, ontology, or onto-theo-logy with his own thought regarding Being, neither is it to serve as an annulment or refutation of such history, which, as Derrida shows in his 1964-1965 lecture course on *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*, would implicitly presuppose 'an anti-historical metaphysics of truth' (HQEH, 24/2).[29] Rather, Heidegger's purpose is ultimately that of a destruction (*Destruktion*) of the way (or ways) in which Being has been thought throughout its history or histories. Clearly then, the undertaking in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* seeks to establish a destruction of the history of ontology and should therefore be located as a prolongation of the principal task set out in *Sein und Zeit*. Thus, as Heidegger himself defines such undertaking, it concerns 'the destruction of the traditional content [*überlieferten Bestandes*] of ancient ontology which is to be carried out along the *guidelines of the question of Being* [*Leitfaden der Seinsfrage*]. This destruction is based upon the original experiences in which the first, and subsequently guiding, determinations of Being were gained.' (SZ, 22)

Yet, even if one admits that *Einführung in die Metaphysik* is organised in large part as a sort of supplement to *Sein und Zeit*, or even as its final part, there are, I believe, intimations of a sense of Being within the former that differ from the sense of Being at work in the latter. Allow me to make two points in support of this claim. First, the question with which the 1935 lecture course is preoccupied fundamentally differs from the 'guiding question [*Leitfrage*] of metaphysics,' which, according to Heidegger, is not to be understood as 'a passage over to something that lies or stands around somewhere,' (GA 40, 21-22/21) but rather as something that must be (re)awakened and (re)established. Insofar as Heidegger sees the fundamental question (*Grundfrage*) of metaphysics as guiding our understanding of Being, the destruction of metaphysics brings with it a disorienting effect on the very direction of this question such that this question can no longer appeal to any steadfast point of departure: 'The sheer fact, apparently so unstable, to which metaphysics blindly appeals, has now been shaken [*erschüttert*].' (GA 40, 91-91/90-91)

Second, in Heidegger's 1935 understanding of the question of Being it becomes interwoven more profoundly with a concern for Europe and the Evening-land. Closer inspection shows how Heidegger not only turns to the Greeks in order to retrieve the

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[29] Derrida explains: 'If it is possible to refute, this is because the truth can be established once and for all as an object, and only particular conceptions of truth, more or less valid approximations to this ahistorical truth, belong to history.' (HQEH, 24-25/2)

"authentic" question of Being—a question which has been covered over by the subsequent stratifications of a traditional ontology permeated by ontic criteria—but also how this very "return" to the Greeks is endowed with a thought of Europe and the Evening-land. As we will come to see, one can, in borrowing a term from *Sein und Zeit* (SZ, 133), say that the thought of Being happens "equi-primordially" (*gleichursprünglich*) with the occurrence of Europe and the Evening-land—an occurrence that appears to be far from simple coincidence.

As far as *Einführung in die Metaphysik* is concerned, it appears that the equal originality of the question concerning Being and the question concerning the Evening-land (or Europe) leads to the further question of whether the sense of the word "Being" is merely a *Dunst*, a stink, a reek, a vapour, or whether the sense of this word is 'the spiritual destiny of the Evening-land,' (GA 40, 40/45)—a question which Heidegger, at least in 1935, also sees as concerning Europe.

As the discussion above displays, the attempt to bring together the question of Being with the question of Europe within Heidegger need not to be a forced reading. Indeed, Heidegger himself even appears to believe that his focus on the question of Being will lead to (or, as Lacoue-Labarthe says, "invent")[30] a "Greece"—the idea of the *Morning-land*—that still awaits the Evening-land and thus represents, as Heidegger notes in the *Parmenides* course, the 'coming of the great beginning' (GA 54, 175). Before broaching this question of beginning and as such perhaps catching a glimpse of the *European morning* (Trawny 2004), it is imperative for us first to clarify what precisely Heidegger means by the question of Being and of Europe. Moreover, such clarification requires that we probe more deeply into *Einführung in die Metaphysik* insofar as this text prepares the first step in elaborating the relationship between these two questions. In order to demonstrate the problem outlined here we proceed in in four steps: first, we introduce Heidegger's *Einführung in die Metaphysik*; second, we address Heidegger's fundamental question of metaphysics; third, we discuss the word "Being"; and fourth, engage with Heidegger's account of "European nihilism."

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[30] This kind of Greece, Lacoue-Labarthe argues, remains 'unimitated, a sort of meta-Greece if you will, which would allegedly be at the foundation of Greece itself (but which then also ran the risk of never really having taken place in itself).' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 120/79)

In the prefatory note to the 1953 publication of his 1935 lecture course, Heidegger notes that 'what was spoken no longer speaks in what is printed [*das Gesprochene spricht nicht mehr im Gedruckten*].' (GA 40, 1/xxix) thus reminding his reader that there is something no-longer-speaking or even unspoken within the printed text. Moreover, the printed text presents a challenge not only to the once-speaking subject, that is, to the Heidegger of 1953 who no longer professes his introduction to metaphysics, but whose once spoken words have now turned into writing, but also to its readers who are challenged to attend to the sense and development of Heidegger's discourse on Europe.

At this point in the *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, however, there is still relatively little basis for the claim that Heidegger's introductory remarks have Europe as their unspoken focus. As such, in pursuing the present chapter's main aim of tracing out how the question of Europe emerges within *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, a good deal of groundwork still remains.

Moreover, Heidegger is quite reluctant to carry out the laborious work required for making a serious commitment to Europe's "minor" philosophical prominence in that he does not find "Europe" to contain within itself 'the bearing that is essential here' (GA 40, 45/44).[31] Thus far, then, the venture of excavating Europe from Heidegger's text may seem to be no more than a foray into the blindness, the imbecility—or, as Heidegger himself says in the infamous *Spiegel* interview from 1966 where he reflects on his political career in the Nazi party, the *Dummheit* that reveals a "lack of judgment"[32]—which are characteristics that Heidegger demonstrated throughout the decade of the 1930s. This stupidity is what further prompted Janicaud in his careful study of Heidegger to ask: 'But why believe in a philosopher?'[33]

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[31] When I say that the question of Europe is *minor*, this means neither that Europe appears less frequently compared to other philosophical terms in Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* nor that it is of little importance. Instead, the minor question of Europe works within Heidegger's major being-historical language by enabling a whole other but unspoken story to vibrate within it. For a discussion of the "minor," see Deleuze and Guattari 1975: 16-17.

[32] For a discussion of Heidegger's stupidity as a lack or, as Kant says, an inaptitude of judgment, see Taminiaux 1992: 233; cf. KrV, B173. See also Derrida's reflections on *stupidity*, *Dummheit*, *bêtise*, and *bête* in *La bête et le souverain* (BS I, 223-251/164-186).

[33] Janicaud 1990: 14. As Arendt notes in the preface to *The Human Condition*, 'nothing could be worse' (Arendt 1958: 5) than believing in a philosopher. One reason why Heidegger may have failed so disastrously regarding the nature of totalitarianism is the fact that he saw in it a possible "liberation" of man from the closed horizon of what he took to be an identity. As Lacoue-Labarthe notes in a roundtable discussion with Derrida and Gadamer, 'Heidegger's gesture in favor of National Socialism […] can be explained in terms of the hope of seeing Germany, in revealing itself capable of fulfilling its philosophical destiny, become something like the last figure of the West, and precisely thereby acquire finally something like its identity' (Lacoue-Labarthe 2016: 39). That is to say, Heidegger wishes to find the coming true of

These observations on the Europe of Heidegger's times are, however, not insignificant for understanding the account of Europe that Heidegger develops in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Already in this text, he foreshadows a defining feature of Europe: 'even if some future thinker [*ein Künftiger*] should reach the center [of philosophy] again—we today can only prepare the way—he will not avoid entanglement either; it will just be a different entanglement.' (GA 40, 208/214; translation modified) It is therefore important to note that, if only in a preliminary manner, an account of Heidegger's work from the 1930s based on the chronology of his publications, lecture courses, and, most recently, the *Schwarze Hefte*, undoubtedly cast a shadow over Heidegger's thought. And, as Heidegger himself reminds us, 'no one can leap over his own shadow [*Keiner springt über seinen Schatten*]' (GA 40, 208/214)—not even those who readily acknowledge it.[34]

How are we to proceed with our task of excavating Europe then? At this point, it may be helpful to take a look at how Heidegger's texts from the 1930s, in likeness to (and perhaps in part because of) Husserl's recurrent titles and themes, portray a historical period of Europe in which three types of power emerged: Fascism in the South, Stalinism in the East, and Nazism in the centre. These three types of power have, as the French translator of both Husserl and Heidegger, Gérard Granel argues, one thing in common, namely, 'the claim to destroy the economic, political and spiritual order by which Europe (but also America) recognized itself and replace it with a "new order".'[35] Moreover, Granel argues that how we conceive of the 1930s (today) will, in fact, not only concern what is *behind us*, but also what lies *before us* insofar as Europe still faces an unknown figure returning to it from its past. Perhaps better put, the wholly other of Europe remains unfigurable and therefore incessantly threatens to disturb the European logic, its λόγος. Whereas Husserl recognises that *the* singular and decisive *Krisis* of Europe (with its capital letter) carries with it the ominous connotations of an "end of Europe," (cf. Hua

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his own philosophy, whose essence he searched persistently and which had to be the agreement of theory and praxis, but he found it, for a while at least, in a politics that represented its reversed image: a universalism proclaimed by nationalism, as Derrida has shown, whereby the discourse of nationalism avails itself of the language of universalism (OTNH, 1-2; 10).

[34] The case of Heidegger exposes the embarrassment of our confrontation with, as Janicaud says, 'one of the greatest metaphysicians who ever lived' but who, at the very same time, was 'capable of being a contemptible imbecile' (Janicaud 1990: 17). However, we cannot merely distinguish between the Dr Jekyll and the Mr Hyde of the sehr geehrter Herr Professor Dr Martin Heidegger, in that the stakes of his thought cannot be isolated within too simplistic a scheme of dark and light, bad and good sides. Janicaud is therefore right in saying that what the Heidegger case shows is that 'after Heidegger, it is no longer possible to philosophise as before' (Janicaud 1990: 22).

[35] Granel 2004: 113.

VI, 347-348) Heidegger's engagement with Europe as the epoch marking the end of the Evening-land—even if such an engagement still falls prey to apocalyptic tones— nevertheless appears to depart in an important sense from that of Husserl in that it also hints at a radically different notion of epochality.[36] As such, rather than describing the thirties as a mere memory of an age of Europe long gone, we might instead ask, as does Granel, if not *the thirties are still before us*?

In this regard, I believe it is important in our reading of the Heidegger of the 1930s to attempt to remain attentive to the broader temporal aspect of his writings and their reflections of "our history," that is, the history of "us (Europeans)." This does not mean, however, that we should take this history simply as that which designates a belonging to some common origin or end. To the contrary, we should understand such history as that which refers to the condition of that age in which we live, and which Heidegger describes as 'the end of the day of the gods [*das Ende des Göttertages*]' (GA 5, 269). With this latter designation, Heidegger suggests that it is precisely the flight of gods that has become the defining characteristic of our "age of the world" (*das Weltalter*). In the years following *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger becomes increasingly fascinated by how the disappearance of the gods becomes significant for the manner by which time and history cease to be defined in terms of horizon-terms. As he sees it, the vanishing of such terms or, rather, vanishing horizons (that is, the failure of the gods to arrive, which is at the same time their coming *on the horizon*), designates what Heidegger, broadly speaking, calls the "'default of God' [*der Fehl Gottes*]." (GA 5, 269) Leaving aside for the moment further questions concerning Heidegger's peculiar use of terms such as "the default of God" and "the end of the day of the gods," we may note here that Heidegger, in several of his post-war texts, links the vanishing horizons and the disappearance of the gods with the *darkness* from which the world night (*die Weltnacht*) unfolds itself. What does this vanishing, disappearance, and distending darkness entail for our discussion of Europe? In short and preliminarily, one could answer this question by saying that Europe is the destined site where these "negative" phenomena come to show themselves as such.

According to Heidegger, however, this end site of Europe that moves emphatically in the direction of a closure of metaphysics is perhaps also the opening of a new enclosure,

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[36] While Husserl's notion of the crisis of Europe is a crisis of reason that, as Gasché points out, 'divides reason, but that reason is able to diagnose, and for which it can offer a critical solution,' the crisis of Europe seen 'from a Heideggerian perspective,' is rather 'a concept of calculating ratio, something that reason calculates and predicts in advance and with which it reckons.' (Gasché 2009: 105)

an "other beginning." In order to grasp how such a beginning might emerge from the closure of metaphysics, however, we must first understand the significance of this notion in Heidegger's philosophical project.

THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION OF METAPHYSICS

One of the key terms in Heidegger's vocabulary from the 1930s is "metaphysics." As I hope to show in what follows, this term is not only of particularly relevance for Heidegger's understanding of the question of Being, but, as indicated above, it also plays a central role in his scattered statements concerning Europe. It is important for us to emphasise, however, that Heidegger is not simply condemning or rejecting "metaphysics;" rather, he is engaging with this notion "destructively" in order to bring to light the (forgotten) question of Being. In his 1933 summer course *Die Grundfrage der Philosophie*, Heidegger discusses how the expression "metaphysics" extends back to a text in the Aristotelian corpus that was situated "after" his book on *Physics* and therefore assigned the title μετὰ τὰ φυσικά (GA 36/37, 20ff.). The reference to Aristotle is important here, because it is in the first book of the *Metaphysics* that the direction of a questioning that is of decisive importance to Heidegger is established—that is, the question concerning the original causes (ἐξ ἀρχῆς αἰτίων). Metaphysics, in other words, is the examination of the ἀρχή, meaning that it aims, on the one hand, to prove the essence of that which is (Met. 983a24-993a26), and, on the other hand, to impose on metaphysics an inquiry into first and last principles (Met. 994a1-995a20).

At this point, we find an important link between Aristotle and Heidegger with respect to how the expression "metaphysics" carries with it a sense of reduplication of Being *as* Being, a reduplication that becomes determinative for Aristotle's study of metaphysics as the τὸ ὂν ᾗ ὂν (Met. 1003a21). We will come back to this reduplication of Being in the next section, and here merely remark that when Heidegger dedicates several courses to the study of Aristotle, he appears to acknowledge the Greek philosopher as a crucial source for his own thought regarding the history of Being and within this history also the destiny of Europe.

As mentioned above, the question of Europe is not, strictly speaking, a philosophical concern for Heidegger, but rather more of a name for the modern epoch signifying the end and completion not only of the Evening-land but also of metaphysics. Indeed, as we have already noted, Heidegger describes the figure of Europe as that which does not contain within itself "the bearing that is essential here." Given this claim, one

might therefore raise the question of how this lack of essential bearing significant to Europe relates to the closure of the metaphysical quest for the essence of Being. A tentative answer to this question seems to lie in the manner by which Heidegger unfolds the very question that not only opens up his lecture course of 1935 but also, more pointedly, inaugurates a whole history of metaphysics. This question is, of course, the famous grounding question of metaphysics: 'Why are there beings at all instead of nothing?' (GA 40, 3/1) In that Heidegger returns time and again to this question, it may therefore be appropriate to say a few words about it as well as to investigate the manner by which it designates the 'centre and core that determines all philosophy.' (GA 40, 20/19)

Throughout his works Heidegger, by means of his various engagements with thinkers such as Leibniz, Schelling, and Schopenhauer, assiduously approaches the broadest, deepest, and most originary question, that is, the question concerning Being as such and as a whole. While Heidegger particularly draws on Leibniz' observations concerning the question of metaphysics,[37] his task, as he argues, is not merely one of commentary, but a far more fundamental task that requires as rigorous of articulation as possible. As Heidegger puts it as early as his inaugural lecture *Was ist Metaphysik?* from 1929, metaphysics is identified with the fundamental question (GA 9, 122) regardless of whether one is speaking of metaphysics as a subject of school philosophy (*Schulphilosophie*) or as a field of arbitrary ideas (*willkürlicher Einfälle*). When Heidegger therefore narrows his focus to this fundamental question, he discovers the central insight that Evening-landish thought (*abendländische Denken*), from its very beginning, assumes as its point of departure the wonder (θαυμάζειν) of Being. As Heidegger explains it in an echo of Aristotle, the hallmark of originary philosophical questioning and thus of metaphysics as "first philosophy" is the *wonder of all wonders*, namely, '*that* Being *is*' (GA 9, 307).[38]

At this point, however, one ought to proceed with caution regarding the fundamental question of metaphysics, for, despite its promising beginning, its history

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[37] See Leibniz 1993: 602.

[38] After having noted that metaphysics is a science that investigates first principles and causes, whereby science as a matter of production is rejected, Aristotle states: 'For it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophise [διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν]' (Met. 982b12-13). In the dialogue *Theaetetus*, Socrates offers a similar response when he speaks about the emotion (πάθος) of a philosopher, namely, that of wondering. For, Socrates says, 'nothing else than this is the origin of philosophy [ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας]' (Thea. 155d). For a discussion of the "wonder," see Matuschek 1991: 8-23.

shows that metaphysics, in Heidegger's view, does not aim at asking about Being *as such*. Rather, metaphysics, according to Heidegger, concerns the determination of that which constitutes beings in their Being, that is, of the essence of Being *as something* and thus promotes Being to the highest of beings (GA 19, 221-222/153-154).[39] Through his de(con)structive approach to the history of metaphysics, Heidegger therefore attempts to reformulate the question of Being, and it is precisely through such a reformulation that the entire building of metaphysics is made to tremble.

As Heidegger explains, the crucial problem with the metaphysical approach to "Being" is that it would appear to lead to a kind of oblivion of *Being as such*, that is, to the Being that would not be the Being of beings. Hence, Heidegger claims that if we do not try to reflect on the question of Being in a manner otherwise than the metaphysical question, then Being 'remains in oblivion—and so decisively that the oblivion of Being, an oblivion that itself falls into oblivion, is the unrecognized [*der unbekannte*] yet enduring impulse for metaphysical questioning.' (GA 40, 21/20)[40] As Heidegger further emphasises, it is not as though Being figures into the history of metaphysics *as* forgotten; rather, in order for something to be forgotten, the forgetting itself must be forgotten. In this sense, any relation to the oblivion of Being consists in a non-relation that can nonetheless be traced in its disappearance.

That this issue concerning oblivion is a genuine implication of Heidegger's destruction of metaphysics is confirmed by his attempt to shake up metaphysics and to make us realise how, as he puts it in an outline of the history of Being as metaphysics from 1941, there remains an unresolved (*Unentschiedenheit*) ambiguity between the nominal and the verbal construction of the Greek ὄν (GA 6.2, 417). As Emil Angehrn has pointed out, when Heidegger takes as his point of departure the question concerning Being, he thereby introduces a difference (not a segregation) between beings and Being as that which is *other than* its entities—that is to say, once again, Being not as a substance but as the marvellous event *that* there is Being.[41] As such, if we entertain Angehrn's point,

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[39] Furthermore, when Aristotle defines metaphysics as "first philosophy" (πρώτη φιλοσοφία), it is, according to Heidegger, intersected by "theology" (Met. 1069a18). Hence, Heidegger coins the term "onto-theo-logy" as a designation of metaphysics.

[40] Or, as Heidegger puts it in a preparatory study for his monograph on Nietzsche: 'Thus metaphysics thinks the beings as such; but it never ponders the "as such" itself.' (GA 67, 217-218) In a sense, what remains forgotten is the *as* of "Being as Being," that is to say, the moment in which Being itself comes to itself. However, in coming to itself, the *essence* of Being is not something "behind" the appearance but rather is the movement of the coming-into-appearance that is hidden (GA 67, 219). Put differently, Being is coming into presence *as* Being only insofar as it withdraws.

[41] Angehrn 2007: 187.

we may therefore say that Heidegger regards "Being" not as something that could ever be taken as a replacement of "beings," but rather as something that serves to remind the human dasein of the metaphysical forgetting of the difference *between* Being and beings.[42] Moreover, this forgetting of the ontico-ontological difference is tantamount to understanding the forgetting of the originary—a forgetting which is significant to the world night spreading itself over Europe. Consistent with such a view, Angehrn identifies a more advanced form of Heidegger's ontological difference between Being and beings, which is the covering up of the errancy of metaphysics (*den Irrweg der Metaphysik*) in that such a difference designates not merely a logical distinction but rather a fundamental way of questioning. As Angehrn explains, 'To fix attention on the beings as such leaves the "fundamental question of metaphysics" unquestioned [*ungefragt*]' (Angehrn 2007: 187).

INHERITING THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF BEING

Without venturing into the gigantic discussion about Being in Heidegger's work, we may nevertheless claim here that the single most important point to grasp at the outset is that Being is not itself something that "exists" like a being, which is to say that Being is neither one entity amongst others, nor the totality of entities, nor a property of entities. In this respect, in taking up the issue of Being, Heidegger ultimately aims to make a break with the metaphysical tradition of understanding Being—regardless of whatever such Being *is*.[43]

Many of the hallmarks of Being in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* are already visible in Heidegger's analysis in *Sein und Zeit*. In this regard, I like to recall one point made in the 1927 analysis that carry an enduring significance for the 1935 lecture course, which is that the question of Being is not a question Heidegger himself invents. Rather, it is one that he inherits from Plato's dialogue the *Sophist* (Soph. 246a5; SZ, 2) in which the Stranger tells his interlocutor, Theaetetus, how this particular question finds its origin in the struggle of the giants over Being (γιγαντομαχία περὶ τῆς οὐσίας). In other words, in inheriting the question of Being from Plato (and Aristotle), the question of Being as well as all of its misrepresentations is already given in such fashion that, as René Char puts it, 'our heritage is preceded by no testament [*Notre héritage n'est précédé d'aucun*

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[42] Because the term *dasein* is nowadays commonly accepted in English specialised philosophical vocabulary, I have neither italicised nor capitalised it.

[43] For a discussion of the various aspects of Heidegger's question of Being, see Carman 2013: 84-99.

testament]' (Char 1962: 102)[44] from which it is possible for "us" to receive a single and unequivocal understanding of Being.

In view of this undecided meaning of Being, Heidegger clearly wants to avoid what he sees as the central pitfall of metaphysics, that is, the (preconceived) identification of beings *as* Being. As we noted above, Heidegger's venture into the question of Being proceeds by way of a consideration of the ontico-ontological difference. Interestingly, however, it turns out that there remains yet another question that comes to occupy Heidegger's attention, namely, ' *"How does it stand with Being?"* [*Wie steht es um das Sein*]' (GA 40, 36/35) In seeking to understand Heidegger's reformulation of the question of Being we encounter a double gesture. On the one hand, Heidegger's use of quotation marks around the reformulated question of Being might suggest that he wants to suspend, as it were, the entire problem inherent to this question. On the other hand, the use of quotation marks might, in a certain sense, serve the purpose of quoting and, as such, repeating a deeply-seated question in the tradition of metaphysics—a question of which he thus finds himself to be an inheritor. By virtue of such a double gesture of suspension and repetition, in the act of posing the question of Being, we therefore encounter ourselves as standing out from the tradition of the question of Being in which we are always already situated.[45]

In Heidegger's view, then, the outstanding and prior question (*Vor-frage*) about Being is a *historical* question through and through in that it opens up to the happening of human dasein in dasein's situated relation to beings as such. Therefore, our asking the question of Being 'opens it [i.e. the human dasein] to possibilities not yet asked about, futures to come [*Zu-künften*], and thereby also binds it back to its inception that has been, and thus sharpens and burdens it in its present.' (GA 40, 48/47)

In summary, Heidegger's question of Being shows a remarkable challenge to the exercise of reflecting on Being in that this question has to do with a form of thinking that not only tries to think the sense of Being, but also—and fundamentally—is aware of itself as being sent or designated to think such sense. It is for this reason that Heidegger states that to ask the question of Being is to 'repeat and retrieve [*wieder-holen*] the inception of our historical-spiritual dasein, in order to transform it into the other inception [*den anderen Anfang*]' (GA 40, 42/41). Heidegger therefore asserts that the question of Being is not given to us as a property, but rather it is only acquired by the repetition of the

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[44] Cf. Schürmann 1990: 272.
[45] See Grøn 2007: 233-260.

beginning of our historical dasein in order to transform this inceptive site into a radically *other* beginning.

As we will come to see, when Heidegger uses the term "other beginning" he is not describing a mere succession of beginnings. That is to say, he is not describing a beginning that is located within a temporal succession of multiple conclusions and beginnings. Instead, as Heidegger explains it in *Beiträge zur Philosophie*: 'The other beginning of thinking is called such not because it is merely different in form from any given previous philosophies, but rather because it must be the only other beginning arising in relation to the one and only first beginning.' (GA 65, 4)[46]

Seeing as the term "other beginning" enjoys wide currency in Heidegger's later writings, we should note here that it is always employed in an ambiguous fashion. Hence, despite the fact that this discourse is haunted by a heroic pathos[47] that permeates the very concept of "beginning" insofar as it is accompanied by other key words such as "decision," "allotment," "abandonment," and "leap," Heidegger's employment of the *other* beginning seems to signal toward an opening, which might call for a decision to be made, but which itself remains the undecided origin of every decision.

In order to clarify this significance, let us look closer at Heidegger's claim that the "other beginning" has to do with beginning as repetition. As Heidegger sees it, if a beginning is not repeated, 'one shrinks back to it as something that once was, something that by now is familiar and simply to be imitated [*Nachzumachendes*]' (GA 40, 42/41). In other words, if the other beginning ends by repeating the first beginning as what once was, this would mean that the first beginning is thus self-enclosed in a manner that essentially isolates it from the other beginning precisely because this first beginning would in this fashion be determined by an ideal past and by our desire to imitate it. Thus, Heidegger notes that the other beginning as the repeated beginning is to begin 'more originally' than the first beginning. It is this that Heidegger identifies as the metaphysical questioning about the grounds of beings. As he remarks, 'With this question it [i.e.

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[46] I would even say that this *other beginning* puts in suspension an understanding that seeks to frame a theory of historical development. For a discussion of the "other beginning" in *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, see Schüßler 2007: 215-232. See also Vallega-Neu 2003: 64-75.

[47] As de Beistegui points out, 'Heidegger's address [i.e. *Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität* (1933)] resonates like a pathos-filled call to the will to essence of the university, like a burning desire to convince and to find the political legitimacy to construct the university of essence.' (Beistegui 2002: 62) He goes on to suggest that 'the whole problematic of "the other beginning"' can be seen as 'the direct result of what Heidegger interpreted as the "movement's" [i.e. National Socialism] failure to properly respond to the historical challenge of the time' (Beistegui 2002: 62).

philosophy as metaphysics] had its inception,' and it is 'in this question it will find its end [*ihr Ende finden*]' (GA 40, 26/26).

Hence, to say that the fundamental question of metaphysics is both the beginning and the end of metaphysics (or philosophy), ultimately implies a differentiation in the very concept of beginning itself—a differentiation between an inception and an ending. This differentiation, Heidegger claims, is already found in the Greek beginning: 'We overcome Greek philosophy as the beginning of Western philosophy only if we also grasp this beginning in its inceptive end [*anfänglichen Ende*]; for it was solely and only this end that became the "beginning" for the following times, in such a way that this "beginning" also covered up the inceptive beginning.' (GA 40, 188/191; translation modified) I shall return to this point in the next chapter, but before we approach Heidegger's engagement with the first beginning of "the Greeks," we will first attempt to draw out some qualifying and preparing questions for this engagement that uncover "*how it stands with Being*." This requires, however, that we seek greater clarity concerning what Heidegger means by the word "Being" as this is displayed in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*.

THE LANGUAGE OF "BEING"

In *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger presents the *question of Being* as that which is to be disclosed by means of an inquiry into the *word* "Being." According to Heidegger, we must therefore ask what happens when and by which path Being comes to language as "Being." Whilst Heidegger's starting point is indeed the question concerning the sense of Being, the *manner* by which Heidegger considers this question in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* nevertheless calls into question the stability of such a starting point. To begin with, Heidegger evokes the word "Being" as a dramatisation of the question of Being: 'How does it stand with Being?' (GA 40, 37/36) Moreover, he raises the question of whether or not Being by this dramatisation becomes available to our senses in the same manner that entities become available to us through seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching.

In 1931, Heidegger would remind us of his ontico-ontological difference in order to avoid the confusion that results from misunderstanding both the difference as such and the 'inner relationship [*inneren Bezug*]' (GA 33, 18/15) between beings and Being. Of course, Heidegger's differentiation between Being and beings is for him far from a senseless and arbitrary play of words. Thus, although Heidegger, in 1931, assumes that language is the very source and wonder of philosophy and in this respect language did

not misspeak at the time of its inception, his manner of transforming the question concerning language, as Courtine notices in his reading of Heidegger's 1934 course on *Logik*, nevertheless reissues the question of λόγος as an endeavour to locate the essence of language.[48]

Thus, in 1935, Heidegger argues that what is brought to language by the word "Being" exceeds our attempt to exemplify what Being *is*. Indeed, even when we take into account the full weight afforded to this word by its "hints," such as van Gogh's sturdy peasant shoes, the motorcycle roaring along the street, the mountain forest, or the mountain range under the vast sky, the word remains curiously undiscoverable—'almost like Nothing [*fast so wie das Nichts*]' (GA 40, 39/38). But why this persistent interest in the word "Being" given that it appears to be indicating almost nothing?

In the first chapter of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger underscores that 'words and language are not just shells [*Hülsen*] into which things are packed for spoken and written intercourse. In the word, in language, things first come to be and are' (GA 40, 16/15). Hence, every time we speak (even if not necessarily *about* Being) we come to experience Being as that which we have always already named (*Nennkraft*). As Düttmann explains it, 'the "naming power" has always already accrued to or grown upon us. Being is a being-ahead-of-itself of language' (Düttmann 2002: 177). The problem in Heidegger's view, however, is that the question of Being, as well as the question of language, is itself historically and destinally overdetermined by its oblivion (GA 40, 20-21/19-20). The overdetermination of the word "Being," however, is not just 'a particular case of the general abuse of language [*Sprachvernutzung*]—instead, the destroyed relation to Being as such is the real ground for our whole misrelation to language.' (GA 40, 55/54) This is the case, Heidegger explains, because 'the fate [*Schicksal*] of language is grounded in the particular *relation* of a people to *Being*, [and as such] the question about *Being* will be most intimately intertwined with the question about *language* for us.' (GA 40, 55/54)[49]

Heidegger's manner of inquiring into the word "Being" thus carries two important implications. First, it emphasises how the imposition of language (that is, language as the

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[48] Courtine 1999: 37. Part One of Heidegger's *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache* reconsiders the question of logic in view of a renewed understanding of λόγος (GA 38, 2-30). From this perspective, Heidegger goes on to discuss more pointedly the question of the essence of the human being on account of the pronouns "I," "you," "we," and "your," (GA 38, 30-56) so as to attend to the pertinent question of the lecture course, namely that of the "people" (*Volk*) (GA 38, 56-77) and its three modes of being: "mission and sending" (*Auftrag und Sendung*), "work" (*Arbeit*), and "attunement" (*Stimmung*) (GA 38, 126-150).
[49] Cf. Courtine 1999: 50-51n.54.

grammatical forms or the philosophical-propositional grammar that seizes speech) upon "Being" does not recognise its own subsumption of Being. As Heidegger explains it, 'The word is an instrument of hunting and hitting, namely in the "process" and the "labour" of representing [*Vergegenständlichung*: reification, thingification] everything in terms of *precision-firing* [*schußsicheren*].' (GA 55, 70-71)[50] Second, to say that "Being" *is* this or that is to lay hold of Being, meaning that the "word" has the function of rendering Being into an object in retainment (*sicherstellen*). Yet, in such a process of naming, Heidegger argues, we are reaching into a void in that Being, from the perspective of the signifying process, is turned into little more than an empty word: 'Its sense is an unreal vapour.' (GA 40, 39/38)

Interestingly, Heidegger's considerations of the word "Being" described here are inspired by Nietzsche. More specifically, in his *Götzen-Dämmerung* Nietzsche points out the *hysteron-proteron* (i.e. the latter first) idiosyncrasy of a philosophy that employs the '"highest concepts," that is, the most general, the emptiest concepts, the last smoke of evaporating reality [*den letzten Rauch der verdunstenden Realität*], in the beginning *as* the beginning.' (KSA 6, 76)[51] It is against the backdrop of Nietzsche's unveiling of "Being" as an empty fiction that Heidegger attempts to disentangle the apparent irresoluteness of the word or the concept of "Being" from what would then in contrast be the sense of Being.[52] That is to say that the inherited meaning of the word or concept of "Being" no longer refers (if it ever did) to the sense or direction of Being inasmuch as the sending of the question of Being arrives at or departs from a different site than that of all the positions handed down to us in the form of the metaphysical questioning of Being. Indeed, if the question of Being is bequeathed to us with any direction or sense at all, we

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[50] Today the German "schußsicher" is synonymous with "kugelsicher," meaning "bulletproof," whereas "precision-firing" would be rendered as "treffsicher" or "zielsicher." However, from the context of 1935, it makes the most sense to translate it as "precision-firing." Cf. Duden, 714-715.

[51] Already in 1931 Heidegger devotes attention to Nietzsche's conception of Being as the 'bloodless abstraction undisturbed by any reality' (KSA 1, 836) to which Parmenides' doctrine of Being testifies. Heidegger revisits Nietzsche in 1943 by discussing the latter's conception of Being in *Der Wille zur Macht*: 'the "Being"—we have no other representation [*Vorstellung*] of it than "*life*."—How can something dead "be" then?' (KSA 12, 153; cf. GA 55, 91-92; cf. GA 51, 33-34). For a discussion, see Müller-Lauter 2000: 184-188.

[52] However, such a discussion of Being also appears in Heidegger's 1938-1939 unpublished thesis on Hegel entitled *Die Negativität*. What Hegel meant by "being" as "reality," Heidegger sees as "objectivity" (*Gegenständlichkeit*) of being (GA 68, 10). According to Hegel, the pure being (*reines Sein*) makes the beginning because it is both pure thought and undetermined immediacy (*unbestimmten Unmittelbarkeit*), all the while the first beginning cannot be anything mediated and determined (HW 5, 82-83). Hegel writes: 'But this pure being is the *pure abstraction*, and hence it is the *absolutely negative*, which when taken immediately, is *nothing* [*das Nichts ist*].' (HW 8, 186) For Hegel, both being and nothingness are the absolute-negatives and therefore indeterminable, so much so that the negativity itself disappears in the positivity, which, however, is empty. See Vetter 2014: 147.

must take a step back through the destruction of metaphysics in order finally (if ever) to be able to follows this direction towards the sense of the question of Being.

But if we cannot meaningfully define the word "Being," especially since the very manner of questioning into *what* Being is already seems to lead us astray, should we then open our eyes to the reality that that which is put into question becomes nothing but a vapour, and thereby give up the questioning of Being altogether? For Heidegger, this is a paramount question. Still, with respect to the question it remains undecided whether "Being" is merely vapour or smoke (*Rauch*), or whether, when thought properly, Being is 'the innermost hidden fire [*innerste verborgene Glut*] of human dasein' (GA 33, 20/16). Hence, it also remains undecided whether the thinking of Being will one day become properly epochal: 'We do not know; for that reason we are questioning, that is, we are struggling to inquire correctly.' (GA 33, 20/16). These queries will carry Heidegger further into a discussion with Nietzsche, and thus to another articulation of metaphysics in the most extreme void of Being. Here is Heidegger:

> The question of how it stands with Being also proves [*enthüllt*] to be the question of how it stands with our dasein in history, of whether we *stand* in history or merely stagger [*taumeln*]. Seen metaphysically, *we are staggering*. Everywhere we are underway amid beings, and yet we no longer know how it stands with Being. We do not even know that we no longer know it. We are staggering even when we mutually assure ourselves that we are not staggering, even when, as in recent times, people go so far as to try to show that this asking about Being brings only confusion, that it has a destructive [*zerstörend*] effect, that it is nihilism. (GA 40, 211/217)

The question of our standing in history *as* an experience of staggering is one that we will reserve for a later discussion. We may, however, make one preliminary remark regarding this topic, namely, that the situation of the human dasein at stake in history is due to the fact that the word "Being" is no longer intelligible to this human dasein wherefore the supposed "knowing" of its own dasein no longer means anything.

Heidegger then critically asks whether or not we are to entertain a blind worshipping (*einer blinden Heroisierung*) of Nietzsche who, in abolishing the axiological schema of a true world and with this world also the apparent one, spoke the truth about the error of Being (GA 40, 39/39). Ultimately, Heidegger answers by arguing that Nietzsche himself is a product of a long-standing errancy and neglect of a rigorous account of the question of Being. Indeed, Heidegger argues that Nietzsche *is* the final

victim of metaphysical errancy but *as* this final victim he perhaps also opens up the thinking of Being to a new necessity (*neue Notwendigkeit*).[53]

Nietzsche, in Heidegger's reading, is therefore a complex figure. On the one hand, he is said to be entangled in the history of metaphysics; but, on the other hand, he is entangled to such an extent that, through this very entanglement he is able to articulate and make manifest the structure of this dynamic. The consequence of all this is that Nietzsche thereby prepares the path to think the question of Being differently upon which Heidegger is ready to embark. Heidegger begins on this path of thinking Being differently by asking whether it might be inherent to Being that it is confused with beings, and whether it is a fault of the word "Being" that it remains empty or if it is rather that "we" no longer understand the question of Being and indeed have been drawn so far into the oblivion of Being that "we" have 'fallen out of Being [*aus dem Sein herausgefallen*]?' (GA 40, 40/39)

It is surely a remarkable, yet strangely unremarkable, moment in the history of Being if we have forgotten Being. But what does it mean to forget Being and what does Heidegger mean by *falling out of Being*? In order to avoid the impression that Being represents a state of fullness or even grace (*status gratiae*) from which the falling-out of Being would come to signify a state of corruption (*status corruptionis*), Heidegger refers his readers to § 38 in *Sein und Zeit*. In this paragraph, we are told that to ascribe to the "falling out of Being" metaphors is a 'bad and deplorable ontical property' (SZ, 176) if one does not first clarify in what sense dasein is determined ontologically. This then provides the context for Heidegger's ontological understanding of the "falling out of Being" inasmuch as it designates one of the ways in which dasein is a being-in-the-world. In other words, just as an erring and an emptying out of itself inherently belongs to the very structure of Being so the possibility of forgetting and of falling out of Being belongs.

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[53] This understanding of *Nietzsche* as the "final victim" of the errancy of metaphysics, or better put, as "the last metaphysician," is a recurrent topic in Heidegger's works. He explores it explicitly in the section of his Nietzsche course entitled "Nietzsche als metaphysischer Denker," in which he also argues that the notion of the will to power becomes emblematic for Nietzsche's determination of what constitutes the 'basic character of all beings' (GA 6.1, 2; cf. GA 47, 10). The same determination is also explored by Heidegger in "Wahrheit im Platonismus und im Positivismus," where he advances the argument that Nietzsche sets out to invert Platonism, but in doing so gets himself caught up within the very framework of thought that he seeks to overturn (GA 6.1, 153-154; cf. GA 5, 217). However, whether Nietzsche in fact gets tangled up in a thought of being *qua* totality so that he "is" the last metaphysician—Heidegger himself questions. Furthermore, whether Heidegger in fact defines metaphysics as the thinking of beings as a whole, and whether his own questioning of the Being of beings escapes metaphysics are, in my view, unsettled questions, which merit a study of their own. For an excellent account of the "at least twice-told" story of Heidegger's Nietzsche, see Sallis 1986: 160-169.

With this peculiar formation of falling out of Being, Heidegger then sums up his considerations by posing yet another question: '"Is "Being" a mere word and its meaning a vapour, or is it the spiritual destiny of the Evening-land? [*Ist das "Sein" ein bloßes Wort und seine Bedeutung ein Dunst oder das geistige Schicksal des Abendlandes?*]"' (GA 40, 40/40) Here, then, we have an explicit relation being drawn between Being and the question of the Evening-land, and, as will become evident as we go along also between Being and the question of Europe understood as the "final" destination of the Evening-land. As such, in moving forward with our project of excavating Europe from Heidegger's work, we may suggest that the proper sense of Being for Heidegger is sought precisely by bringing out its intimate relation with the historical-destinal configuration of the Evening-land.[54] In light of this relation, we will therefore proceed to question how Heidegger's re-articulation of the question of Being concerns an original forgetting of Being that itself constitutes the spiritual destiny of the Evening-land.

"EUROPEAN NIHILISM"

As we have seen in the previous sections, the question of oblivion is crucial to that of Being. As Heidegger says in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, to treat the question of Being in the midst of the oblivion of Being is to become aware of *nihilism*, and nihilism is how it stands with Being in "our age." In this section, I am therefore going to approach the term "nihilism" in Heidegger's text by examining aspects of his 1940 course on Nietzsche entitled *Der europäische Nihilismus* in which he considers Nietzsche as *the* thinker for whom Europe and nihilism coalesces as the final outcome of the history of Being. More specifically, Heidegger unfolds the notion of nihilism in this text (as also in the 1935 lecture course) in terms of the 'history in which there is *nothing* to Being itself.' (GA 6.2, 304; emphasis added) As such, the nothing (*nihil*) of Being that in a certain sense nevertheless "is," designates the historical forgetting and annihilation of Being that reaches its apex in the modern epoch of technology. Nihilism is therefore not simply the negation of Being as a *no-thing*, but rather it designates precisely the inability to think the *nothingness* of Being itself and as such to properly pose the question of Being.

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[54] Without engaging in a discussion of the notion of *Schicksal* in Heidegger's thinking, it is worth noting that in the preceding winter course of 1934-1935 Heidegger is particularly occupied with "fate," which may, of course, have to do with the political events occurring in Germany at that time. Here Heidegger writes: 'The first overcoming of the Asiatic sense of *fatum* was accomplished by the Greeks in an overcoming that, in the manner of its accomplishment, remains unrepeatable […]. We must not, however, equate Hölderlin's knowing of destiny [*Schicksal*] with the Greek one. We must learn to use this essential German word to name an essential beyng in its true German content' (GA 39, 173/158-159).

Indeed, by 1929 Heidegger had already touched upon the question of nothingness as this most awkward subject of philosophy that does not allow itself to be spoken of without subjecting itself to the domain of philosophical-propositional logic. In Heidegger's view, nothingness is not at our disposal in the same manner as a logical inquiry into objects or beings, and, moreover, it almost deprives itself of its own worthiness as a question (GA 9, 107). Furthermore, as Heidegger's analysis of the experience of anxiety displays, nothingness is not nothing *per se*, as though nothingness were derived from nothing and negation; rather, nothingness "is" more original than the logical negation of some*thing* into no*thing* (GA 9, 111-112). It is precisely for this reason, argues Heidegger, that the negation takes its bearings from the 'nothing that arises [*entspringt*] from the being-nothing of nothingness [*Nichten des Nichts*].' (GA 9, 116-117)

Given the relevance that Heidegger's discussion of Being and nothingness carries for our current topic on Europe, it would be odd were we not to take into consideration what Heidegger in his investigation of Nietzsche's inversion of metaphysics and its planetary scope identifies as "European nihilism" (GA 6.2, 325-336). In the 1943 essay *Nietzsches Wort "Gott ist tot,"* Heidegger explains that Nietzsche's inversion constitutes a stage belonging to the metaphysical history of the Evening-land, and presumably heralds the end stage (*Endstadium*) of metaphysics as such (GA 5, 209). As the culmination of metaphysics, nihilism occurs within modernity, or, in German, *Neuzeit*, which, for Heidegger, designates the "new age" out of which we are compelled to ask '*what is now*' (GA 50, 97).

As Heidegger sees it, it is Nietzsche who brings into focus the force of nihilism that becomes manifest only in this age of closure, but this does not mean that the metaphysics of Plato is 'any less nihilistic than the metaphysics of Nietzsche' (GA 67, 210). In order to explicate how nihilism is related to metaphysics, I would like to underscore the radical nature of Heidegger's interpretation of both nihilism and Nietzsche. This radicality becomes most clear, I believe, when one takes note of the degree to which Heidegger both borrows from and departs from Nietzsche's account of metaphysics and its nihilism. I therefore bring this first chapter to a close with a brief discussion of Nietzsche's interpretation of nihilism in order to set the stage for Heidegger's understanding of nihilism as a concept significant to the history of Being.

We find Nietzsche's discussion of nihilism to be scattered throughout his essays, notes, and journals. As Nietzsche tells the story, nihilism names an epoch in which the

devalorisation of the highest values carries along with it a lack of direction and goals. Briefly put, nihilism is simply 'the lack of the answer to the why?' (KSA 12, 350) In other and more Heideggerian words, what lacks is an answer to the metaphysical question of "why there is something rather than nothing." For Nietzsche, however, it is not merely that this question lacks an answer, but also that such lacking renders the entire metaphysical question radically 'senseless [*das "Sinnlose"*]' (KSA 12, 213). As Nietzsche explains, 'For the history of European nihilism: what is *missing*? Essentially: sense is missing [*der Sinn fehlt*]' (KSA 13, 215). The account of senselessness introduced here is certainly important to take note of in that such senselessness is exactly the issue that Heidegger desires to address in his own reflections on "European nihilism" as a historical attitude that neither can nor will understand the nothingness of Being.

If indeed one of Nietzsche's challenges to us is that one must think nihilism in terms of the sense gone missing in the modern epoch, it is because with the provocation of "the death of God" the essential horizon of orientation withdraws. Evidently, God means God and especially the Judeo-Christian God who "is who he is," but God also means everything else that in the course of the history of metaphysics precipitately and inadvertently has sought to replace the monolithic position of divinity. It is for this reason that Nietzsche's account of the "death of God" amounts to far more than a facile and simplistic claim of atheism.[55] Instead, Nietzsche intends it to serve the nuanced purpose of displaying the mutation of the horizon passing infinitely beyond horizon: '*In the horizon of the infinite*.—We have forsaken the land and gone to sea! We have destroyed the bridge behind us—more so, we have demolished the land behind us!' (KSA 3, 480)[56]

The opening of horizon, which Nietzsche invokes in paragraph 124 in *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, is not simply the delimitation of the limit within which we see whatever we come to see. To the contrary, the entire horizon has been wiped away

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[55] What one would have to think, Heidegger claims as he mentions how Nietzsche himself was surprised by this thought, is that it is humans who have killed God, which is unthinkable. Thus, to think "the death of God" is to think the unthinkable (GA 5, 260ff.). The time in which God has lost his power, Heidegger argues, is not the time when Christianity has come to an end, because nihilism, designating the end of power, has been acute from the very beginning of metaphysics and thus also of Christianity, although it becomes manifest only at their end. This is why Nancy can argue that 'Christianity is accomplished in nihilism and as nihilism, which means that nihilism is none other than the final incandescence of sense, that it is sense taken to its point of excess.' (Nancy 2008: 147)

[56] For a discussion of Nietzsche's metaphoricity of the open sea, see Stegmaier 2012: 114ff. Nietzsche's calling forth to the sea again—that is, calling forth 'the man without horizon' (Blanchot 1993: 66-74)—is no doubt a comment over against Hegel's discovery that with Descartes 'we properly enter upon a self-supporting philosophy. Here, we can say that we are at home and, like the sailor who was journeyed on the stormy sea for a long time, cry: "Land-ho!"' (HW 20, 120) A comment which Heidegger, above all, brought into focus in his readings of modern philosophy, cf. GA 9, 258; GA 68, 77-78; GA 5, 128-129.

(indeed, Nietzsche wonders who could have given us the sponge to do so now that God is dead) with the consequence that the horizon of finitude becomes displaced and deferred in infinite nothingness. To complement this point, let us read the subsequent famous paragraph 125 in which the madman, in an outburst of desperation, is looking for the God whom *humans have killed*:

> But how did we do this?...What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Where is it moving to now? Where are we moving to? Away from all suns? Are we not continually falling? And backwards, sidewards, forwards, in all directions? Is there still an up and a down? Aren't we straying as though through an infinite nothing? Isn't empty space breathing at us? (KSA 3, 481)

As these questions indicate, the issue here concerns not only the responsibility of those who have killed God, but also the terrifying and "apocalyptic" kind of catastrophe which, as Michel Haar points out, has been invoked by the transformation of the cosmic proportions pertaining to the death of God.[57] In this manner, we are led back to one of the departure points of this chapter, namely, that the entire question of the relation between Europe and Being shows itself to be intimately tied to issues such as vanishing horizons, the unchaining of the earth from the sun, and the open, which are all associated with nihilism.[58] Let us therefore attempt to unfold this relation a bit further.

The "death of God," as Nietzsche sets it up, begins with the unchaining of the earth from the sun and thereby inaugurates a 'sunset [*Sonne untergegangen*]' or a 'solar eclipse [*Sonnenfinsternis*]' (KSA 3, 573). Moreover, this unchaining represents, in some sense, the realisation of a parting with an image of the earth as situated beneath the heavens that has already occurred but that only now is beginning to be recognised. Even more crucially, though, I believe this account of the death of God exposes an image of the world where there still remains an earth but no longer a heaven for it to imitate and reflect itself in. Yet, if the earth beyond which there is no longer any divine heaven is the orbit in which the history of the collapse of an old representation of the world, that is, the representation of earth as an image of the heavenly archetype, comes to the fore, then this same earth is ultimately left to inhabit an infinite, cold, dark, and empty space.[59] One

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[57] Cf. Haar 1996: 131-150.

[58] Because the death of God is, Lütkehaus argues, 'the true "Big bang" that tears apart the cosmos.' (Lütkehaus 2010: 274)

[59] As Lütkehaus says, this emptiness carries with it a familiar yet frightening name: 'The emptiness is the God forsaken space of the "infinite nothing"' (Lütkehaus 2010: 710). He continues: 'Nietzsche's "infinite

could then say that because of this Nietzschean-proclaimed catastrophe of cosmo-centric proportionality, we must reassess what is undertaken in the name of the "death of God."[60] The aim of such a reassessment is for us to witness how, as Nietzsche says, the 'greatest event [*Ereignis*] of recent time—that "God is dead"…has already cast its first shadows over Europe.' (KSA 3, 573)

Whereas Heidegger and Nietzsche as thinkers converge in certain important respects, at times they also diverge from one another. First the convergence: just as Nietzsche, Heidegger sees nihilism as representing the declining completion of ideals, values, principles, ends, and meaning—or, to say the same thing differently, for Heidegger the completion of nihilism occurs only when there is no longer anything to complete (GA 6.2, 32-33). In addition, Heidegger certainly holds an appreciation for Nietzsche as the thinker who was called upon to reflect on the essence of metaphysics. Coming to the divergences, however, Heidegger is also critical of Nietzsche's failure to think through the essence of nothingness as pertaining to Being by which Nietzsche comes to represent the culmination of the decline of metaphysics.

Hence, in Heidegger's interpretation of the history of metaphysics, something more radical than Nietzsche's inversion of Platonism as well as his disclosure of Being as an empty word is required to reflect on the destitution of Being that is within the grip of nihilism. Moreover, for Heidegger, Nietzsche's attempt to overcome nihilism by means of a re-evaluation of values also proves inadequate to the task of raising the question of Being in that Nietzsche's gesture of inversion is premised on the idea that the value of *something* is still valued as valid, which carries the consequence that Being remains debased (*entwürdigt*) to the realm of beings (GA 67, 256). As Heidegger puts it, a thinking of nothingness into the question of Being needs to take place, which is precisely what Nietzsche failed to do and which, thereby, leaves Nietzsche firmly positioned within the nihilism of classical metaphysics (GA 6.2, 44).

Heidegger therefore conceives of Nietzsche in and even as the end stage of the history of metaphysics, which, in Heidegger's view, can be characterised as the historical moment in which metaphysics has exhausted its essential possibilities (GA 5, 209)—a

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nothing" is the gaping heart wound [*klaffende Herzenswunde*] of a metaphysical fatherlessness building up to a cosmic catastrophe.' (712)

[60] Maurice Blanchot has described this displacement of the horizon with respect to its cosmic catastrophe as introducing the necessity of thinking under a "double contradiction:" to think it first as distortion of a field that is nevertheless continuous, and as a dislocating and rupture of discontinuity—and then to think it as the infinite that is without terms 'and as the infinite termination of a term without relation' (Blanchot 1993: 74).

movement that, as indicated above, is bound up with the oblivion of Being (GA 6.2, 45). Of crucial importance for Heidegger is therefore the encounter with the question of how Being takes itself to the limit of nothingness, which could be said to be Heidegger's "step beyond" Nietzsche. Thus, in contrasting his own interpretation of nihilism with the Nietzschean inversion of the metaphysical hierarchy, Heidegger writes that an inclusion of "nothingness" into the question of Being prepares 'the first and only fruitful [*fruchtende*] step to a truthful overcoming [*Überwindung*] of nihilism' (GA 40, 212/218).[61]

It would therefore appear that Heidegger, to some degree works within the same basic understanding of the category of nihilism as Nietzsche, albeit in a differing manner. In particular, it would appear that both of these thinkers can agree that the "death of God," which includes both the infinite horizon and the collapse of highest principles, indicates a history-making event in a twofold manner in that it designates the end of metaphysics while at the same time casting its shadow over Europe by opening Europe to nihilism. Or, to put it differently, the European nihilism serves as precisely that which unveils the logic of this historical event (GA 6.2, 278-279). Furthermore, rather than designating one historical phenomenon among others, as though nihilism were merely a spiritual tendency (*eine geistige Strömung*) in the history of Europe, nihilism constitutes nothing less than 'the basic movement of the history of the Evening-land [*die Grundbewegung der Geschichte des Abendlandes*]' (GA 5, 201).

However, whereas Nietzsche, with his account of nihilism, refers to the question of nothingness only from the ontic perspective of beings, Heidegger ventures to take a step further in reflecting on how nothingness and Being belong together (GA 5, 239). Given this line of argument, then, what generally remains unthought with regards to nihilism, according to Heidegger, is what he calls the *essence* of nihilism, that is, how Being still articulates itself in the epoch of nihilism (GA 5, 243).[62]

As we have already touched upon above, the issue of nihilism is pertinent to the question of Being in that Being "is" what has no property in itself, that is, Being "is" the

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[61] To see why Heidegger seeks to take this "step beyond" Nietzsche, thereby running the risk of re-inscribing himself in a discourse of the otherworldly, it is important to recall that his interpretation of nihilism is centred on what he takes to be the "inverted Platonism" of Nietzsche according to which the world of the beyond is abolished. One might say that Heidegger casts a bifocal glance on the history of metaphysics. Metaphysics is said both to have achieved its goal and to decline inasmuch as the simultaneity of completion and decline significant to metaphysics becomes evident in Heidegger's synoptic observation of the modern human being dislodged from its essence so as to compensate its 'homelessness by the organised global conquest of the earth' (GA 6.2, 395). For a discussion, see Schürmann 1990: 191.

[62] Cf. Guzzoni 1980: 81.

Being of *nothing*. What makes one uncomfortable with this issue is not only that, as Nietzsche says, 'nihilism stands at the door [*Der Nihilismus steht vor der Thür*],' but also that there still remains something unknown and undecided of nihilism—a point reflected in Nietzsche's question, 'whence comes this uncanniest of all guests? [*woher kommt uns dieser unheimlichste aller Gäste?*]' (KSA 12, 125; 120; GA 79, 134; GA 55, 66; GA 5, 217-218; GA 9, 387) To conclude this discussion on Nietzsche's understanding of nihilism and Heidegger's understanding thereof, allow me to make several remarks on this particularly uncanny question.

First, we may note that the uncanniness mentioned here pertains not so much to the *de facto* meaninglessness of nihilism, but rather to the notion of *nothingness*. According to Nietzsche, the will is always a will to something, even if it wills nothingness, such that the *horror vacui* of will '*needs a goal*' (KSA 5, 339). Let us leave aside the question of whether Heidegger is right to suppose that Nietzsche's account of the will to power is itself a purpose that refills the emptiness of not-willing (GA 6.2, 54). Let me instead speak of the *horror vacui* in relation to Being. As we have pointed out above, nothingness is not some-*thing*, as if it were a Being among other beings. Moreover, inherent to Being is no-*thing*, which is to say, a void, an emptiness, an abyss of Being itself, and it is precisely this no-*thing* that both evokes uncanniness and anxiety. In other words, the word "Being" is as void as the empty space pressing in upon us. In this manner, Being *is* the horror of the void that constitutes the weightiness of Being that Heidegger is trying to think.

Indeed, the uncanniness of which Nietzsche speaks Heidegger interprets as that *of* Europe inasmuch as nihilism is the basic feature, or better, the *logic* of the modern epoch that he identifies with Europe. As Heidegger sees it, Europe as the epochal determination of the end of metaphysics recapitulates the unfolding of the essence of metaphysics—a dynamic which he identifies with nihilism. In this sense, then, European nihilism simply *is* the thought of Europe. That is to say, *nihilism is that which Europe thinks of itself*. A key insight for Heidegger is therefore that nihilism does not come from outside of or beyond Europe, but rather it has been present and has been an issue already from the very beginning of European metaphysics. As such, in the process of shaking up metaphysics— and before we have even begun to reflect on the death of God—nihilism has already arrived. What this means is that by the time we have greeted our uncanny guest it already seems too late to show this same guest the door. Moreover, we sense the disturbance of nihilism precisely in that, due to this uninvited intruder already roaming in the history of metaphysics, we are always already disturbed. In this respect, nihilism does not belong to

a temporal schema according to which the arrival and departure of this guest could be predicted. Hence, if nihilism is indeed a guest, one might suggest that it is a guest that either comes from or serves as the exteriorisation of the innermost essence of metaphysics, which is to say from the history of metaphysics that unfolds the void that Being *is*.

 As we have seen, the issue driving Heidegger is the horror of the void to which Nietzsche as well as "we" fall victim in that we have fallen out of Being only to discover how Being offers "us" *nothing* by which to make sense of it. That is to say that the experience of Being opens onto nothing other than Being and hence, as Lacoue-Labarthe says with Celan, onto 'the no-thing of Being' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1999: 67).

 It is precisely the absence of any proper Being *of* Being that exposes the "proper" *horror vacui*, as it were, by exposing to Being its intimate void as though it were outside Being itself. Thus, the nothingness of Being is that excluded interior (or emptiness), which, as Lacan puts it, is 'excluded in the interior [*cet intérieur exclu qui […] est ainsi exclu à l'intérieur*].' (Lacan 1986: 122)[63] This nothingness of Being, which is also to say "our" falling out of Being, suggests that the horrific void of Being is also within "us."[64] As we shall come to see in more detail in Chapter Three, Heidegger regards this unfolding of nihilism within the history of Being as intimately bound up with the hegemony of technology already ruling over the Europe of his day and spreading itself across the globe and into interstellar space. However, before we proceed to this end destination of metaphysics we must first return to its origin, which means that we must first return to Heidegger's philosophical encounter with "the Greeks."

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[63] My account of Heidegger's understanding of the "horror of Being" is indebted to Lacoue-Labarthe's reading of Lacan's *la Chose*, which again borrows from Heidegger's *das Ding*. See, Lacoue-Labarthe 2012: 57-70.

[64] Hence, 'when being lacks, when nothingness becomes power [*pouvoir*],' Blanchot remarks, 'man is fully historical. But when being lacks, is there a lack of being? When being lacks, does this mean that this lack owes nothing to being? Or rather does it mean perhaps that the lack is the being that lies at the bottom of the absence of being—that the lack is what still remains of being when there is nothing?' (Blanchot 1955: 343/251; translation slightly modified) In other words, something appears where lack *is* lacking, namely, the Being of lack that appears as an apparition of what has disappeared.

CHAPTER TWO

HEIDEGGER AND THE GREEKS

We are still Greeks, certainly, but perhaps other Greeks, we were not born from just that Greek send-off [*d'envoi*]; *we* are certainly still *other* Greeks, with the memory of events that are irreducible to the Greek genealogy, but other enough to have not only, also, altered the Greek in us, but to bear within us something wholly other *than* the Greek.
(Derrida, "Nous autres Grecs," 263)

One of the central themes of Chapter One was Heidegger's analysis of the question of Being. Moreover, while Heidegger remains appreciative of certain aspects of the metaphysical articulation within this analysis, with his project he nevertheless inquires beyond metaphysics. This double gesture, Heidegger stresses, is precisely that which is characteristic of the limitations of discourse, that is, the limitations where one is required to speak in the language of that which one is trying to overcome. Despite imbuing the question of Being with a metaphysical orientation, Heidegger recognises in the transmission of this question its very reification according to which our relation to Being not only attests to our knowledge of Being but also to our 'inability to stand by what is given [*Gesetz*] by the truth of this knowledge' (GA 9, 304). As Heidegger points out in the 1943 postscript to *Was ist Metaphysik?*, although metaphysics is the history of the truth we come to know as that of Being, such metaphysics also, at the same time, renders the beingness of Being into a concept without thinking the truth of Being. Thus, in Heidegger's view, the history of metaphysics bequeaths to us not only an understanding of Being, but also an unfolding of its own inability to think Being as such, that is, to think the 'absolutely other [*schlechthin Andere*]' than beings that 'essentially sways [*west*] as Being.' (GA 9, 306)

Yet, as one moves through Heidegger's encounter with the history of metaphysics, it becomes clear that he desires to assume a more circumspect approach to the question of Being. As we argue in what follows, he does so by pondering (*Andenken*) the beginning of the history of Being that, as he notes in the 1949 introduction to *Was ist Metaphysik?*, reveals itself in the thinking of the Greeks. Consequently, for the one who takes up the question of Being, as does Heidegger, it will be of utmost importance to keep in mind the basic insight that the 'Greeks early on experienced the Being of beings as the presence of what is presenting itself [*die Anwesenheit des Anwesenden*].' (GA 9, 376)

To recall our earlier discussion, in the first chapter we pointed to how Heidegger's thought of Being takes issue with the Greeks in that it was within Greek thinking that Being was most originarily and explicitly emplaced. This emplacement (*Erörterung*), as already suggested by Heidegger in both *Einführung in die Metaphysik* and *Sein und Zeit*, is itself an indication of as well as an attending to the most original place of Being. Throughout his philosophical undertakings, Heidegger thus never ceased to emphasise the central importance of "the Greeks." The question remains, however, in which sense "the Greeks" are pertinent to the question of Europe in Heidegger.

The present chapter attempts to approach this question by means of engaging with Heidegger's engagement with the Greeks. In considering this task, one cannot but be struck by the immensity of the latter engagement—a fact confirmed not least of all by the vast research literature on "Heidegger and the Greeks." In what follows, however, our purpose is not to account for Heidegger's overall approach to "the Greeks," especially given that Heidegger's grasp on Greek thought tends to gather such thinking before us in order to open us to what remains unthought therein.

Rather, in the following remarks my primary aim is to shed light on what Heidegger describes as the tautology of "Evening-landish-European philosophy," which he points out is tautological not because philosophy is European, but rather because 'philosophy is essentially Greek' (GA 11, 9). What emerges from this tripartite schema of philosophy-Europe-Greeks, I argue, is that the history of Being in which the word "philosophy" is determinative is *philosophical* through and through. Having developed these ideas, I shall then turn my attention to Heidegger's essay from 1946 entitled *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, in relation to which I suggest that what is at stake is once again the word "Being." According to Heidegger, a certain displacement of this word took place already in Greek thinking when the epsilon of the Greek word ἐόν had been elided in the later rendition of Being as ὄν. In raising the question of Being from this perspective, I am particularly interested in how, according to Heidegger, the emphasis put on the word "Being" and the elision of the epsilon in ἐόν are decisive in pointing to the destiny of Europe (GA 5, 345).

"To the Greeks Themselves"

The heading of this chapter, "Heidegger and the Greeks," is less of a title than it is a pivotal axis around which the question of Being resolves. As many interpreters have noted, the conjunction "and" in "Heidegger and the Greeks" is not to be understood as

rendering Heidegger's concern with the Greeks subjacent to a historiographical exposition of the Greeks.[65] In fact, even if we consider the Greeks on account of their historiography, which, Heidegger concedes, may have its place, one might nevertheless still raise the question *why* this privileged appeal to "the Greeks." Such a question is especially relevant given that the word "Greek" does not itself derive from the Greek language, but rather comes from the Latin *graecus* (remembering Heidegger's often unflattering perspective on Latin) and connotes the belonging or relation to that which is characterised as "Greek."[66]

The question that remains to be answered, then, is "who" are Heidegger's Greeks? Perhaps it is already apparent who "they" are: we find in Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* an abundance of courses on Plato, Aristotle, Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides, as well as multiple references to poets such as Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, and Sophocles.[67] Yet, for Heidegger the notion of "the Greeks" stands for more or other than a mere veneration of names: "the Greeks" refers not only to a concrete, historical people who lived in a certain place at a certain time, but such a notion also constitutes a mode of attention by which the question of Being incessantly yields a thinking of Being. This latter point is already developed by Heidegger in his early engagement with the Greeks where he notes that 'the fundamental question of Greek philosophical research is the question of Being, the question of the meaning of Being, and characteristically, the question of truth' (GA 19, 190/132). Thus, as early as in the 1924-1925 lecture course on Plato's *Sophist*, Heidegger is committed to the idea that the notion of "the Greeks" is not merely an arbitrary (*beliebig*) assertion of philosophy, but rather such a notion serves as the foil for understanding the question of Being.

Heidegger is aware that his understanding carries with it a certain kind of pitfall in the sense that the mere attempt to convey an account of the question of Being in terms of "the Greeks" is inevitably to pass through an 'exploration [*Erkundung*] of the past from the perspective [*Gesichtskreis*] of the present' (GA 45, 34). Such an approach, as Heidegger argues, will turn out to be disappointing for two reasons. The first reason being that this approach is historiographical—and a historiographical orientation of the question

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[65] See, for instance, Figal 2007: 9-14; Emad 2006: 115-116; Manoussakis 2006: 2-8.

[66] To be precise, the word "Greek" is found in Greek as Γραικός (an archaic equivalent to Ἕλλην). In *Meteorologica*, for instance, Aristotle mentions the river of Acheloüs by which 'the people then called Greeks and now called Hellenes' (Mete. 352b2) dwelt.

[67] As Dastur stresses, Heidegger's Greeks are not *one* but rather 'multiple in its essence' (Dastur 2000: 180).

of Being is precisely what Heidegger wants to avoid. The second reason being that Heidegger's philosophical undertaking means something quite different than an engagement with the Greeks as a "dead language" or a "dead body" seeing as Heidegger characterises "the Greeks" as the historical that 'becomes ever again something present [*immer neu Gegenwart*]' (HKD, 11-12). Furthermore, Heidegger's critique of the strictly historiographical approach to the Greeks hinges on his distinction between *Historie* and *Geschichte*, which is crucial to his understanding of the question of Being, and which we shall therefore clarify as briefly as possible.

In *Wissenschaft und Besinnung* from 1953 (as well as in other writings), Heidegger sets forth the distinction between *Historie* and *Geschichte* in the following manner: 'The word "Historie" (ἱστορεῖν) means to explore and make visible, and therefore names a kind of representation [*Vorstellens*]. In contrast, the word "Geschichte" means that which takes its course [*was sich begibt*] insofar as it is prepared and disposed in such and such a way, i.e., set in order and sent forth, destined.' (GA 7, 58/175)[68]

As Heidegger sees it, in order to retrieve what remains unopened in the historical, one would therefore have to seek a point *more originary* than that which is reckoned chronologically "first" by historiography. To be sure, one may read within Heidegger's employment of the word "first" an effort on his part to think the return to the Greeks as a means of recuperating the origin as ἀρχή, that is, the origin as commencement and commandment. On the whole, then, Heidegger's "return to the Greeks" would seem to constitute a sort of "historical *a priori*," to put it in Foucault's terminology, according to which "the Greeks" were to establish a totality of experience pertaining to the order of history. In short, this would mean that for the first time "in" history there emerged an awareness of the possibility of defining the conditions by which a philosophical discourse could manifest itself in epochal terms.[69]

Although Heidegger's return to the Greeks could certainly be seen as a sort of attachment to the origin, and although the archaeophilic desire for determining the essence of the "origin" associated with this attachment could also be seen as determinative of Evening-landish-European history, I would still argue that such a reading misses the nature of Heidegger's engagement with the Greeks. As Heidegger himself underscores,

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[68] Already Heidegger's habilitation from 1915 presents a tentative look into his interest in philosophy and its relation to the *history* of philosophy, which, he argues, is different from, e.g., mathematics and its relation to the history of mathematics, in that the emphasis is put not on 'the *history* of philosophy but on the history of *philosophy*.' (GA 1, 195)
[69] Foucault 1966: 13/xxiii-xxiv; 171/172.

his concern with the Greeks does not aim at reconnecting us with the mode of thinking that Greek thinkers had initiated, as if this return to the Greeks were 'striving for some sort of "classicism" in philosophy.' (GA 65, 504/396)[70] What, then, does Heidegger's "return to the Greeks" designate? How are we to think this return, which demands us to 'think more Greek than the Greeks themselves [*griechischer denken als die Griechen selbst*]' (GA 53, 100)?

As we pointed out in the first chapter, Heidegger's retrieval of the Greeks serves as an attempt to attain a more originary insight into the beginning—an insight that is even more original than the first. Moreover, this originary beginning is related to the history of Being which, in Heidegger's view, 'is never past but stands ever before us [*steht immer bevor*]' (GA 9, 314). Such a sentiment was already at play in the infamous "Rectoral Address" from May 27, 1933, where Heidegger remarks that the 'German people' are led by the 'inexorability of that spiritual mission [*jenes geistigen Auftrag*] that forcefully stamps its proper historical character on its destiny [*Schicksal*]' (GA 16, 107), in that 'we [Germans] place ourselves once again under the power of the *beginning* of our spiritual-historical dasein.' (GA 16, 108) This beginning, Heidegger continues, is the 'breaking up [*Aufbruch*] of Greek philosophy' (GA 16, 107) so as to regain the greatness of the beginning. As Heidegger puts it,

> The beginning still *is*. It does not lie *behind us* as something that has long since been [*das längst Gewesene*], but it stands *before* us. The beginning, as what is greatest, has in advance already passed over all that is to come and hence over us as well. The beginning has fallen into [*eingefallen*] our future; it stands there as the distant injunction [*ferne Verfügung*] upon us to recapture its greatness. (GA 16, 110)

Hence, in Heidegger's view, to recapture (*einholen*) the Greeks becomes the manner by which to overtake or to catch up with the relation to the Being from which we have fallen out or grown estranged. At this point, it may therefore be worthwhile to take a closer look

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[70] See Gadamer 1986: 394-416. Certainly, Heidegger's return to the Greeks sends us back in a questioning way to a sense, as Husserl notes in *Die Frage nach dem Ursprung der Geometrie* (1939), whose sedimented origin is yet there for us to be unearthed (Hua VI, 366). Since Husserl's work also contains numerous references to the Greeks, one may ask in what sense the "return" (*Rückfrage*) to the Greeks bring us closer to the originary origin? This is not the place, however, to rehearse Husserl's argument, nor to present Derrida's brilliant thesis *Le problème de la genèse dans la philosophie de Husserl* (1953-54), let alone his 1962 introduction to the translation of Husserl's *Origin of Geometry*, even if Derrida's analysis of the *iterative reduction* (OG, 34-35/47-50), which precedes the reactivation of the origin so that any principle of order is always already exposed to disturbances, seems to touch on crucial aspects of Heidegger's return to the Greeks too.

at Heidegger's understanding of the Greeks *as* origin. In doing so, it is important to keep in mind that, for Heidegger, what follows the origin so as to recapture this origin is neither less nor equally as original as the origin; rather, in a certain sense this new phenomenon has the possibility to become more original. Accordingly, the task set by Heidegger's encounter with the Greeks would appear to touch upon the logic of origin itself.

In developing this logic, Heidegger addresses the very economy of beginning by opening up a relation to beginning in terms not only of recapturing but also of repetition (*Wiederholung*). Hence, if the beginning stands before us, it appears as if it is *second* to its repetition in such a fashion that the very hierarchy of "first" and "second" or "before" and "after" becomes itself displaced. Indeed, while Heidegger revisits "the Greeks" with the intention of repeating the beginning in an even more original manner than the first time, what becomes apparent through this process is that the origin is already taken outside "itself" precisely because of the *figure* of originary repetition.

Clearly, then, the return to the Greeks is not, for Heidegger, an attempt to restore to the origin something of what this origin has lost through the forgetting of Being as a forgetting of the origin. Rather, such a return has to do with the fact that, as Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy point out, the postulated simplicity of the origin 'is always broached or cut open,' and as such 'it is divided or dissociated, set apart—set infinitely apart from itself.' (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 2003)[71] Thus, if Heidegger's return to the Greeks represents a certain understanding of the past, this is the case only because the past of which we are speaking about here is itself a retro-projection of the present that recognises the present as a refabrication of itself as a future anterior. The future tense employed here indicates what has *not yet* arrived and hence remains indeterminable in itself, determined only retrospectively as a past that will have been for the future.[72] Accordingly, the temporality of the future anterior at stake in Heidegger's return to the Greeks implies a tense in which the time of the present as an excess of "our time" is avoided by pointing towards both a future and a past. As the discussion on Heidegger's return to the Greeks has underscored, the history as *Geschichte* is not the past understood as what was, but

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[71] Put differently, an origin does not have a sense, a direction, or a meaning before the arrival of what it originates. But this means that the origin is conditioned by a genitivity before its very own fact, which, as Derrida remarks, comes to only mark the origin *of* whatever it engenders and orients. In Derrida's words, an origin will always already have been 'an *inscribed* origin.' (ED, 169/115)

[72] What one may find in the term "the Greeks," then, is perhaps nothing but a configuration, as Derrida says, that cannot be configured, which lends to the 'configuration the figure or the face of the mask or of the simulacrum […]. And this figure is perhaps no longer simply Greek or non-Greek' (NG, 258/23).

rather a past that has been sent to the future in order to be repeated as the destinal history that will have been in the process of thinking.

It could be said, then, that for Heidegger the central purpose of gathering together the knowledge of ancient Greek thinkers is to provide insight into the future question of Being. Such gathering of ancient knowledge, however, cannot mean the mere accumulating and continuing of an ancient tradition precisely in that lacking from this process is the seamlessness of time and culture that would make such accumulation and continuing possible. As Heidegger points out, separating ancient Greece and the Germany of the 1930s is not only a temporal gap of more than two and a half millenia, but also not insignificant cultural differences.

What this gap calls upon, argues Heidegger, is a critical encounter with our own understanding of the origin. Indeed, since the idea of origin will be a recurrent theme in this chapter, it would be good to summarise Heidegger's position with regards to it. To do so, we may look to an image he paints in his 1932 lecture course *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie*—an image that takes its bearings precisely from the problem of the temporal span of two and a half millennia '*between us* and the *beginning* of Evening-landish philosophy' (GA 35, 33/27) and that attempts to render this problem understandable. Consider, Heidegger suggests, the image of a wanderer in an arid region. Over the course of time, this wanderer distances himself more and more from the well where he draws water. At first, the wanderer, despite his wandering, retains some sense of contact with the well. However, with the increasing distance due to his further wandering the wanderer eventually loses his orientation with respect to the well whereby it becomes inaccessible to him.

Perhaps counterintuitively, Heidegger somewhat surprisingly argues that this analogy of the wanderer displays that the wanderer retains a relation to the source precisely in his excessive distance from it. While tracing the relation to the source from distance to the proximity of which this distance is what enables a proximity with the source, Heidegger accentuates the fact that the 'closest proximity of the beginning [*nächste Nähe des Anfangs*] had to remain *concealed* precisely on account of the advancement' (GA 35, 40/32).

Proximity, understood as a double entendre by which something remains related to a source in the very distance that it has to that source, is what Heidegger has in mind when discussing the temporal span between "us" and "the Greeks." A chasm separates "the Greeks" from "us," but in such a manner that this spacing of distance does not annihilate

but rather defines our relation to the origin as 'a *non-relation* [*Un-verhältnis*]' (GA 35, 39/31). The fact of historical distance between "us" and "the Greeks," he writes, 'includes the possibility that the relation between us and the beginning is a non-relation, a non-relation thanks to which the beginning stands concealed in our closest proximity.' (GA 35, 40/32; translation modified) Heidegger suggests that this *relation* without-relation is far from exhausted by its reference to the source (i.e., sources such as, for example, the fragments and thoughts of Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus) as a resource for our thinking today in that such thinking is 'not the first, detached, deposited result, behind which we can go no further back.' Rather, this thinking is itself a response to the question concerning the sense of Being. As Heidegger puts it, '*The beginning is thus an act of beginning in the mode of a questioning.*' (GA 35, 49/38)[73] This issue concerning beginning as questioning will be discussed more thoroughly in the final section of this chapter wherefore we may set it aside for the time being. Instead, in what follows we may pursue a bit further Heidegger's question of the Greeks and his inquiry into the beginning.

BEGINNING WITH THE END

Heidegger's return to the Greeks in 1932 heralds the question of Being that his lecture course in 1935 goes on to pronounce. As suggested, Heidegger's relation to the Greeks can be read in an analogous fashion to the relation between the wanderer and his source of water. Given this background and the way in which the analogy employed by Heidegger brings forward the issue of proximity, it is perhaps not surprising that one finds in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* a discussion of the word "Being" that moves towards an understanding of the question of Being in terms of the proximity of our questioning that plays out only by keeping its distance. Moreover, we must keep in mind that for Heidegger the question of Being arises in and as 'the decisive beginning of Evening-landish philosophy' (GA 40, 132/130). In this respect, Greek thought as that to which we are proximally related in distance in our very act of questioning can thereby provide us with an indication of our originary connection to Being.

Interestingly, this connection between the beginning of philosophy and the question of Being is so proximate that it has often gone entirely unnoticed, which has the

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[73] Schürmann points out that the origin to Heidegger is no longer to be understood as a desire for the *fons et origo*, meaning that the *Ursprung* is the source of everything (Schürmann 1990: 120). This means that Heidegger's *Ur-sprung*, as that which literally means "primordial springing," reveals that there is no origin as such. For, if it were, its very being would make it opposable to other beings. Thus, Heidegger's source names this coming-to-presence of that which is never presence unto itself.

consequence that the history of philosophy becomes the very history in which the question of Being remains unasked. For Heidegger, to think the history of Being therefore means 'to ask again the unasked question of Being [*die ungefragte Seinsfrage wiederfragen*],' as well as thus 'to begin again the unbegun beginning [*den unangefangenen Anfang wieder anfangen*].' (GA 32, 97/74) In this respect, I believe that the point Heidegger desires to make by speaking of a return to "the Greeks" is that if we were to achieve such a return, such an achievement would not represent a *restitutio ad integrum*, but would rather mean that we come to occupy the place of the "first beginning" as an "other beginning."

Heidegger's engagement with "the Greeks" in the 1930s and 1940s, however, is not always enacted in his "own" name. As a case in point, in the lecture entitled "Hegel und die Griechen," held at the University of Aix-en-Provence in 1958, the name *Hegel* plays the lead role. According to Heidegger, his lecture on Hegel (who arrives in the history of Being *belatedly* or *after the fact*) and the Greeks evinces a tension between the beginning and the end of philosophy, which 'addresses the whole of philosophy in its history' (GA 9, 427).

In this regard, I think that Heidegger's essay on "Hegel und die Griechen" might help us to answer the question of what this return to the Greeks signifies. As Heidegger sees it, the lecture title is crucial because the conjunction "and" that joins together what two and a half millenia separates, serves to indicate an essential and being-historical (*seinsgeschichtlich*) proximity in that it prepares the path of thinking an "other beginning." As Heidegger points out, the representation of Greek thinking within the horizon of modern philosophy brings to light how, on the one hand, "the Greeks" denote the beginning of philosophy while, on the other hand, the name "Hegel" and its conception of the system of science signifies the completion of philosophy (GA 9, 427). Moreover, such a view of philosophy is at the very heart of Hegel's philosophical project. As Heidegger puts it, 'Hegel for the first time thinks Greek philosophy as a whole, and, furthermore, thinks this whole philosophically.' (GA 9, 428)

Let us pass over the gaping question opened here regarding that which comes in-between "the Greeks" and "Hegel," that is, to follow Hegel's image of Descartes as the beginning of modern philosophy, the conception of the Cartesian *cogito* as 'the solid ground upon which philosophy can settle truly and completely' (GA 9, 325). Instead, we may concentrate on the manner by which "Hegel" as the completion (τέλος) of the history of metaphysics makes explicit what is already presumed at the beginning of this history.

In this respect, the name "Hegel" thus inscribes itself within an archeo-teleological schema such that "the Greeks" as the first beginning (ἀρχή) becomes what they are only in terms of what they bring about.

Accordingly, Heidegger's heading "Hegel and the Greeks" provides us with an account of how the beginning of philosophy represents the first attempt to formulate the question of Being. Yet, as we have already seen with respect to Plato and Aristotle, the question of Being was covered up in its very beginning by the oblivion of the difference between Being and beings, which leads the thinking of Being on an aberrant path of metaphysics. For this reason, it is important to point out another feature of Heidegger's Greeks, namely how they are deeply divided. Such a division of "the Greeks" runs between Plato and Aristotle, on the one hand, and the Presocratics (in particular Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides) on the other. Moreover, what this division reveals, as Heidegger makes clear in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, is the extent to which the "beginning" itself is already bifurcated—that is to say that Greek philosophy divides itself into "the first beginning" and the "end."

In *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger evokes the term λόγος with the intent to emphasise how the dislodgment of this term from Greek philosophy already occurs within Greek philosophy in such a manner that it becomes Greek philosophy itself that determines its own end. As Heidegger remarks,

> We surmount Greek philosophy as the beginning of Evening-landish philosophy only if we also grasp this beginning in its inceptive end; for it was solely and only this end that became the "beginning" for the subsequent age, in such a way that this "beginning" also covered up the inceptive beginning. (GA 40, 188/191)

The conclusion arrived at in 1958, that Hegel brings philosophy to its end by completing what was initiated with the Greek beginning, is thus anticipated in 1935 when Heidegger comes to realise how the 'philosophy of the Greeks attains dominance in the Evening-land not on the basis of its originary beginning but on the basis of the inceptive end [*anfängliche Ende*]' (GA 40, 197/202).[74]

Given our discussion here, it is important to point out, as many interpreters of Heidegger have already done, that Heidegger adopts a kind of philosophical-historical

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[74] As Nietzsche puts it in more graphic terms in *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, Greek tragedy died a tragic death because it committed suicide: 'sie starb durch Selbstmord.' (KSA 1, 75)

framework similar to that of Hegel.[75] Thus, Angehrn, for example, develops an interpretation in which he claims that Heidegger's aim—precisely in its attempt to lay claim (*Anspruch*) to the Greeks—is to challenge (*Einspruch*) the Hegelian understanding of the history of philosophy that takes its point of departure with "the Greeks" as a basis for the one and only development of the history of thinking.[76]

To sum up, then, we begin from an imperative to return to the Greeks so as thereby to retrieve the basic experiences in relation to which the question concerning the sense of Being is bequeathed to us. This beginning to which we are being returned, however, is itself the "inceptive end" that has to be retrieved in order to begin the unbegun beginning anew. Hence, in returning to the beginning of thinking the question of Being, Heidegger returns not only to the history that declines from the great beginning of the Greeks, but also to the question of what philosophy is in the first place. Accordingly, Heidegger reveals that the question of philosophy as that of returning to the great beginning of the Greeks is attended by another question, namely, the question of the beginning in which the Evening-land and its European destination is situated.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE END OF METAPHYSICS CALLED "EUROPE"

In August 1955 at a colloquium in Cerisy-la-Salle, Heidegger gave the lecture *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*—or, in German, *Was ist das—die Philosophie?* As the title suggests, the question Heidegger tackles here is that concerning what philosophy is. There are at least two good reasons for leading off with this lecture as we begin to think about the way in which "Europe" and "the Evening-land" become thematised as philosophical. The first reason is that, in Heidegger's view, in that the term "philosophy" retains an intimate connection to its origin, it becomes crucial to recognise that the history into which we are

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[75] Thus, in agreement with Derrida's 1964-1965 lecture course *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*, I submit that there is a "proximity" between the Hegelian relation to the history of philosophy and Heidegger's. Derrida, however, immediately points out the decisive difference between them. To put it briefly, Heidegger's destruction of the history of Being is not a Hegelian refutation, because philosophy, for Hegel, is the *logic* that Heidegger sees only as a moment in the history of Being (HQBH, 29/6). In *Die onto-theologische Verfassung der Metaphysik*, Heidegger himself underscores the difference between his history of philosophy and Hegel's in that the latter seeks to comprehend history as a dialectical gesture of thought that rules history. For a discussion, see Haar 1980: 48-59; Krell 1986: 118-121; Jeanmart 2006: 103-114.

[76] Cf. Angehrn 1993: 183. Another interpreter of the relationship between Heidegger and Hegel, Vetter, discerns three differences: (1) both thinkers take issue with Being, but Hegel aims at 'the thinking as such,' (GA 88, 476) whereas Heidegger examines 'the Being with respect to its difference with beings' (GA 11, 56). (2) Hegel's history of philosophy displays the dialectic-speculative movement of absolute thought, while Heidegger approaches 'the force of earlier thought' (GA 11, 57). (3) Hegel's encounter with history happens through sublation (*Aufhebung*), whereas Heidegger "steps back" in order to gain a view to what makes possible that which happens (GA 15, 367). See Vetter 2014: 143-144.

not only thrown but about which we also come to bear witness to an understanding of history is the basis upon which Europe and the Evening-land can be premised in the first place.[77] The second reason is that the German title *Was ist das—die Philosophie?* already signals how this specific way of questioning has shaped the entire history of philosophy called metaphysics and thereby also paved the way to the end of this metaphysical history called Europe.[78]

Hence, given Heidegger's destruction of metaphysics understood as a manner of asking about the ground of metaphysics, and more specifically as a manner of pondering the oblivion of Being as significant to the history in which the question of Being is handed down to us, this way of questioning itself becomes worthy of questioning (*frag-würdig*). It is worthy of questioning precisely in that it has the character of asking about the principle, that is, the ἀρχή or the beginning of all that stands and rules (GA 31, 39). As Heidegger tersely puts it, 'the question of philosophy as the question concerning the ἀρχή' is about 'what Being is insofar as it takes a view of it as Being' (GA 44, 209).[79]

When Heidegger therefore questions the question of *what* philosophy *is* he does so from within a history of metaphysics, emphasising *that* there is already at play within philosophy a very questioning about philosophy.[80] What this means is that in the process of affording the question of Being metaphysical pre-eminence over the question of *what* Being is, it is nevertheless imperative that we are clear about how this *essential* sense of Being is "preceded" by another sense of Being in relation to which it is said both *that* something is and *how* this same something is. Heidegger, I believe, uses this distinction between "*that* Being is" and "*what* Being is," that is, roughly speaking, between *existentia* and *essentia*, in order not only to prepare the groundwork for his understanding of the

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[77] For a discussion of this hermeneutical aspect, see von Herrmann 1999: 31-40.

[78] In a course on Nietzsche from 1937, Heidegger refers to such way of questioning as the *one and only* question of philosophy—in German, 'die *eine* Frage der Philosophie' (GA 44, 208)—or, to put it somewhat bluntly, the essential question of metaphysics.

[79] Heidegger adopts this question from Aristotle's question from the *Metaphysics* concerning what being is (τί τὸ ὄν). Cf. Met. 1028b4.

[80] In a certain sense, the question of "what philosophy is" appears to be an impossible question insofar as the name of "philosophy" would become subordinated to the ontology at stake in the question. Thus, when Heidegger asks the question "what is philosophy?" he does so by already having chosen the "Greeks" as the metaphor whereby an interpretation of the meaning of Being is produced. In this sense, the "Greeks" may be seen as a kind of "ontic metaphor," as Derrida would have it, since the "Greeks" seem to constitute the metaphorisation that enables Heidegger to think Being as 'the presence of the present' (M, 157/131). Interestingly, in his 1964-65 lecture course *Heidegger: la question de l'Être et l'Histoire*, Derrida discusses how Heidegger's *destruction* of philosophy as metaphysics and as onto-theology seeks to break radically with the *philosophical novel*, which produces those ontic metaphors describing the philosophy that was supposed to be free of such (mythological) determinations (HQEH, 57-64/26-31).

first beginning and the history of his guiding question of Being,[81] but also, ultimately, to set up his case for 'the question of how this distinction arises out of the beingness of beings and accordingly belongs to the essential occurrence of beyng [*Wesung des Seyns*]' (GA 65, 270/212; cf. GA 71, 123).[82]

An additional feature of the question of philosophy *as* a question of Being is its critical nature. More specifically, in that the *whatness* is determined differently in each historical period, it becomes necessary, claims Heidegger, to engage critically with the tradition of philosophy. Tradition in this sense means not only a handing down of past philosophy, but, more significantly, a disclosure of the *mode* in which philosophy is being transmitted or administered institutionally. Hence, in admitting the perspectival character of philosophy, Heidegger argues that what the question of philosophy calls for is not a straightforward answer, but rather that we come to *experience* philosophy as a question so as to understand what is said in it.[83]

To proceed with our reading of the 1955 lecture, then, we may note that Heidegger's return to the question of "philosophy" bears on a dismantling (*Abbruch*) of philosophising that Heidegger several years prior had seen as 'our mission [*unser Auftrag*]' (GA 35, 1). As we have seen, this dismantling of philosophising brings into view the '*end of metaphysics* by way of an originary questioning of the "sense" (truth) of beyng.' (GA 35, 1) As such, the path that Heidegger's 1955 lecture broaches for uncovering the originary sense of Being, as it were, is precisely a philosophical questioning of philosophy that goes

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[81] Heidegger criticises this opposition between *existentia* and *essentia* in order to indicate how his term "dasein" exceeds this metaphysical opposition. See, for instance, GA 9, 189. In *Brief über den "Humanismus*,*"* Heidegger stresses how the existential concern of dasein or, as he notes, the essence of the human being, is not identical with the transmitted concept of the existential. As Heidegger's often-misunderstood statement from *Sein und Zeit*, which he restated in his 1946 letter on humanism, says: the '"essence" of dasein lies in its existence.' (GA 9, 325; SZ, 42)

[82] The archaic spelling of *Seyn* indicates, on the one hand, a difference from Being as beingness (*Sein als Seiendheit*) and, on the other hand, an 'anteriority with respect to the metaphysical concept of being' (Sallis 2004: 86).

[83] In what may be read as a kind of response to Husserl's definition of "we philosophers" as the '*functionaries of humankind* [*Funktionäre der Menschheit*],' that is, the 'responsibility of our own true being as philosophers, our inner personal vocation [*Berufenheit*], [which] bears within itself at the same time the responsibility for the true being of humankind' (Hua VI, 15), Heidegger seems to disregard sentiments as foundational to philosophy, without, however, wanting to anticipate a decision as to what philosophy is, namely, 'that philosophy is a matter of reason [*eine Sache der Ratio*]' (GA 11, 8). Notwithstanding their significant differences, a resemblance of discourses emerges when Husserl writes that 'we are what we are as functionaries of modern philosophical humanity; we are heirs and cobearers [*Mitträger*] of the direction of the will which *pervades* this humanity; we have become this through a primal establishment [*Urstiftung*] which is at once a reestablishment [*Nachstiftung*] and a modification of the Greek primal establishment. In the latter lies the *teleological beginning*, the true birth of the European spirit as such.' (Hua VI, 72) For a discussion, see Gasché 2009: 30-32.

back to the roots of the Greek word φιλοσοφία whose sense still lies before us.[84] According to Heidegger, the word φιλοσοφία can be traced back to φιλόσοφος (a term presumably coined by Heraclitus), which in turn suggests that the ἀνὴρ φιλόσοφος does not (yet) mean the "philosopher man."[85] Moreover, the one who loves the σοφόν expresses his or her act of love (φιλεῖν) in terms of the Heraclitean ὁμολογεῖν, meaning 'to speak in the way in which the Λόγος speaks, i.e. to correspond [*entsprechen*] with the Λόγος' (GA 11, 14).

With this understanding of "philosophy" we see the emergence of a certain thrust that moves beyond philosophy as a mere historiographical-geographical occurrence. It is for this reason that one could say that when Heidegger, in 1955, returns to the word φιλοσοφία, he does so because he understands it to be informative concerning the existence of what is properly Greek (*Griechentum*). Yet, what this Greek thing called φιλοσοφία *is*, seems to be held in abeyance inasmuch as the arrival of the word "philosophy" shows itself to us as untranslated, if not untranslatable.[86]

Certainly, the idea of the relation between philosophy and the Greeks is contained in embryo form as early as in the doxographical work of Diogenes Laertius (*floruit* third century AD). In *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, we are thus told that even if there are some who say that the work of philosophy (φιλοσοφίας ἔργον) has its origin among the barbarian (βαρβάρων ἄρξαι), it is presumably neglected that 'the achievements which they attribute to the barbarians belong to the Greeks, with whom not merely philosophy but the human race [γένος ἀνθρώπων] itself began […], it was from the Greeks that

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[84] However, in *Die Geschichte des Seyns* (1938/40), Heidegger rejects the discourse of a philosophy of philosophy, since philosophy surely prepares a readiness (*Bereitschaft*) for thinking but only because of its belonging to beyng (GA 69, 6-7). 'In truth,' Heidegger says, 'the beyng-historical thinking is no longer and not again "philosophy".' (GA 69, 167) This places the term "philosophy" in an 'essential ambiguity' within Heidegger's thinking inasmuch as philosophy, on the one hand, can be rejected (*ablehnen*) with respect to the Being of beings. On the other hand, however, "philosophy" must be overcome inasmuch as it is the essence of metaphysics. Yet, "overcoming" is radically different from "rejecting" in that the latter represents an anti-metaphysics (*Widersacherschaft*) that would still remain bound to metaphysics (GA 69, 169) all the while overcoming would "overtake" what it overcomes in projecting it repetitively towards another beginning.

[85] The ἀνὴρ φιλόσοφος as the one who loves σοφόν is located not only in Heraclitus (DK B35) but also in Empedocles (DK B15) with whom Heidegger—interestingly enough—never really engages, although both Hölderlin and Nietzsche took issue with him.

[86] In forwarding his analysis of the special relation between the German language and the Greek, Heidegger was not alone. Since the German translation of philosophy as *Weltweisheit* never really made an impact, Heidegger's view of the German language can be categorised, for example, alongside Fichte's 1805 address to the German nation: 'We have to refer to it [philosophy] by its foreign name, since Germans have not accepted the German name that was proposed a long time ago' (Fichte 2013: 58). See Brague 2014: 324. When I suggest that the word "philosophy" remains untranslatable for Heidegger, it is to stress how this word no longer serves an ordinary vocabulary but rather 'speaks in the service of thinking [*im Dienst des Denkens sprechen*]' (GA 11, 45).

philosophy took its rise [Ἑλλήνων ἦρξε φιλοσοφία]: its very name refuses to be translated into foreign speech [αὐτὸ τὸ ὄνομα τὴν βάρβαρον ἀπέστραπται, literally, turning back the name itself to the *barbarous*].' (DIO, I. 1-4)

In one sense, Diogenes' archeophile answer appears to be a humble one in that it prioritises which comes earliest—as though what is closest to the origin is automatically accorded authority. Heidegger, however, in his argument from 1955 calls into question such a view. As he notes, the essence of philosophy entails an *Anspruch*, that is, a demand, requirement, or claim to the Greeks. Moreover, such an *Anspruch* means, first of all, that the Greeks have not "invented" philosophy in that even their pre-philosophical language is essentially philosophical, and second, that philosophy has only laid claim to the Greeks.[87] To put it another way, if philosophy is Greek, it is not because it was (chronologically) "first" articulated in Greece, but more specifically because it lays claim to the Greeks. This is why Heidegger can write that the language of the Greeks shows itself to be philosophical *through and through* and not just in restricted areas of discourse. Indeed, as Heidegger emphasises, '*Greek language* is *philosophical*' since it 'philosophises as language and as language formation [*Sprachgestaltung*].' (GA 31, 50)

What, then, does this intimate connection between philosophy and the Greeks mean for Heidegger? Before answering this question, allow me briefly to say that I do not presume the term "Greeks" to be unambiguous in Heidegger. I recognise that "the Greeks" means troubled waters in Heidegger's works in general, seeing as his "return" passes through a peculiar distortion of the Greek language, as though it were Germanised and made into a conquered province so as to call into service the thinking of Being.[88] As such, my purpose here is not to accomplish the task of defining "the Greeks" in Heidegger. Rather, my aim is far less ambitious: I would like to suggest that it is the notion of "the Greeks" that sets the backdrop for Heidegger's particular take on philosophy precisely in that the Greeks remain unappropriated not only for "we latecomers," but also for the Greeks "themselves." We may say with Derrida that if "we"—whoever "we" are to whomever—'are still or already Greeks, we ourselves, we

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[87] Additionally, one may say that, in Heidegger's view, the essence of philosophy is not part of the institution of philosophy. If Heidegger's return to the word "philosophy" is about reading the Greeks, one might say with a short piece from 1954 on reading in mind, that reading the Greeks is the 'gathering [*Sammlung*] of what, without our knowing, has already reclaimed our being [*unser Wesen in den Anspruch genommen*] so that we might wish to respond [*entsprechen*] or conceal [*versagen*] ourselves before this demand' (GA 13, 111). In other words, to read the Greeks means to have always already been addressed so as to answer to and for the demand—or to renounce it.

[88] Cf. Rogozinski 2014: 41.

others [*nous autres*], we also inherit that which made them [the Greeks] already other than themselves, and more or less than they themselves believed.' (NG, 262/27)

In light of these reflections, it becomes clearer that Heidegger's retrieval of the Greeks as a way of repeating the question of Being constitutes a sort of appropriation (*Ereignis*) of what is proper to the Greeks (*das Griechentum*) only on the condition that we understand this appropriation as being already intimated with a certain "ex-appropriation" (*Enteignis*).[89] This movement of appropriation, Heidegger writes,

> makes manifest what is proper to it, that appropriation withdraws what is most fully its own from boundless unconcealment. Thought in terms of appropriation, this means: in that sense it expropriates itself of itself. Expropriation [*Enteignis*] belongs to appropriation [*Ereignis*] as such. By this expropriation, appropriation does not abandon itself—rather it preserves what is its own. (GA 14, 27-28/22-23)

"The Greeks" thus ex-appropriated requires careful consideration, for in order to keep "the Greeks" open to "our" encounter with "them," we must try to place "them" elsewhere than in our metaphysical tradition only to experience how "the Greeks" have already displaced (*Versetzt*) "themselves" in the direction of another thinking.[90] Accordingly, by this movement of ex-appropriation, "the Greeks" appear to us only from out of their own disappearance or from out of the disappearance of what is their own. In Heidegger's view, then, the cipher of "the Greeks *themselves*" seems to be opening up to the *unthought* of Greek thinking—an opening by which Heidegger seeks to uncover the unasked question of Being present in its absence both in the first beginning of philosophy and in the history of metaphysics (GA 15, 366-367).

To sum up our understanding of Heidegger's Greeks thus far in a few words, we could say that it seems that whenever Heidegger attempts an appropriation of the "Greeks" he runs up against the difficulty of a certain "unappropriability" of what arrives or surges forth in his thinking of (what may no longer be) "the Greeks" such that this very thinking comes to surprise itself. What this failed gesture of appropriating "the Greeks" thus brings into view, argues Heidegger, is a kind of strangeness (*das Befremdliche*) that proves significant to the thinking of Being that celebrates its world-historical esteem under the name of "philosophy" (GA 9, 362). What this means, moreover, is that for

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[89] Cf. PTT, 90.

[90] Yet, as Derrida might say, this saving of the Greeks from our metaphysical conception of thought is a place where the Greeks will not be safe or protected from us. Cf. FS, 26-27.

Heidegger a radicalisation of philosophy's "own" historicity becomes intertwined with the question of Being as that which *withdraws* from the possibility of an objectifying thematisation providing an answer to the question of "what is…"

THE TAUTOLOGY OF "EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY"

After this long exploration of the ex-appropriative dimension of Heidegger's understanding of "the Greeks," one could ask why it should be necessary to go back so far and so painstakingly to the Greek φιλοσοφία in order to find an answer to the question of philosophy. The reason for the "return," as I noted above, is that Heidegger is advancing the argument that the word "philosophy" is something that first and foremost determines the existence of what is properly Greek. But more than that, Heidegger's recourse to the word φιλοσοφία shows how the 'innermost basic feature of our Evening-landish-European history [*den innersten Grundzug unserer abendländisch-europäischen Geschichte*]' (GA 11, 9) is constituted by this word. Let us therefore consider how Heidegger arrives at the conclusion that Europe and the Evening-land are essentially philosophical. Heidegger's words cut to the core of this basic feature and are worth quoting at length:

> The often heard expression "Evening-landish-European philosophy" is, in truth, a tautology. Why? Because philosophy is Greek in its nature; Greek, in this instance, means that in origin the nature of philosophy is of such a kind that it first appropriated [*in Anspruch genommen*] the Greek world [*Griechentum*], and only it, in order to unfold. However, the originally Greek nature of philosophy, in the epoch of its modern-European sway [*Waltens*], has been guided and ruled by Christian conceptions [*Vorstellungen*]. The dominance of these conceptions was mediated by the Middle Ages. At the same time, one cannot say that philosophy thereby became Christian, that is, became a matter of belief in revelation and the authority of the Church. The statement [*Satz*] that philosophy is in its nature Greek says nothing more than that the Evening-land [*Abendland*] and Europe, and only these, are, in the innermost course of their history, originally "philosophical." This is attested by the rise and dominance of the sciences. Because they stem from the innermost Western-European course of history, namely, the philosophical, consequently they are able, today, to put a specific imprint [*Prägung*] on the history of humankind upon the whole earth. (GA 11, 9-10)

Three points from this passage stand out in particular, which we may briefly touch upon here.[91] (1) Philosophy is essentially Greek, and for this reason the expression "Evening-

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[91] See Vetter 1993: 175-184.

landish-European philosophy" proves tautological because *if* the Evening-land and Europe amount to the same thing, they do so *only* in accordance with their innermost historical development as originally philosophical and thus as originally Greek. (2) The diremption of the originally Greek essence of philosophy occurring within the modern European epoch manifests itself within historical Christianity, but at the same time also marks its absence within such history due to the fact that philosophy must be heard otherwise than through revelatory Christianity and church authority. (3) Science testifies to the philosophical essence of Europe since such science originates from the historical development of Europe. Thus, science leaves an imprint upon the earthly history of humankind. Let us focus on the first point.

In carrying out our interpretive task of trying to understand why the syntagma "Evening-landish-European philosophy" is a tautology, the first question we should raise is simply why Heidegger employs the specific *terminus technicus* of "tautology"—a word choice that, for a thinker who pays such careful attention to language, is surely not accidental. Whereas formal logic often depicts the tautology with the notation A=A in order to state the empty content of such a proposition, Heidegger reworks the question of tautology in order to run 'counter to logic' (Zoll, 30) so as to employ the tautology as an entry point into developing an understanding of the question of Being.

According to Heidegger, Being in its original sense has drifted into oblivion due to the way in which λόγος has been (mis)interpreted in terms of "logic." As he explains it, the formation of "logic" began when Greek philosophy came to an end, and moreover it began precisely by becoming 'a matter of schools, organizations, and technique.' (GA 40, 129/128) In returning to the first beginning of philosophy as that which, at the same time, conceals the end of this beginning, Heidegger thereby prepares the way for a non-logical understanding of the tautology as that which in fact characterises the primal establishing of the task of philosophy.

In Plato's dialogue *Gorgias*, the sophist Callicles cannot hide his frustration with Socrates' tiresome questions. This is due, not least of all, to the fact that these questions tend always to say the same thing. Even more pointedly, in replying to Callicles' frustration Socrates remarks, 'these questions even say 'the same about the same [περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν].' (490e) In contrast to Callicles who never says the same about the same, Socrates conceives of the very task of philosophy as that of thinking only one thing, namely, how to say the same about the same (ταὐτὰ λέγειν περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν). In other words, to say the same about the same is to think the tautology (ταὐτὰ λέγειν). Heidegger

himself addresses this anecdote about Socrates, stressing this tautological task as the most difficult thing to think.[92] Yet, to what degree is "Evening-landish-European philosophy" saying the same, and to what degree is it the most difficult to think?

Regarding the tautology, it is significant that Heidegger too represents the figure of tautology as A=A. Just as significant is that Heidegger, in his 1957 lecture *Der Satz der Identität*, discusses the notation A=A as the highest law of thought. Here Heidegger sticks with the form and movement of the notation rather than its content. As such, he points out that the tautological relation between "A" and "A" makes sense only insofar as A is already different from A. In order, then, to articulate the principle of identity in terms of the tautological relation, one must therefore put the A outside of itself, as it were, so that identity becomes defined in terms of difference. Thus, as Heidegger stresses, A and A belong together (*Zusammengehörigkeit*) only on the condition that they constitute a differentiating relation (GA 11, 36-37). In assuming this approach, it may seem that Heidegger thereby reformulates the notion of tautology—in terms of what Figal calls tautophasy—in order to lay out the relation between philosophy and Europe (or the Evening-land) as a way of speaking about the *same* in the heart of which difference is already in effect.[93] In drawing this relation, however, the problem remains concerning how to account for the movement or passage from A to A, that is, (to connect this discussion back to our previous discussion) the problem of how one moves from philosophy to Europe. Put differently, the problem is that the same *about* which the same is to be said, is never *the* same (itself).[94]

As we have indicated previously, Heidegger affords a place of centrality to the philosopher who expresses his act of love for the σοφόν in terms of the ὁμολογεῖν, that is, one who speaks in the same manner as Λόγος. Given this, the relation between philosophy and Europe becomes a relation of one to the Greeks with whom "we Europeans" speak in order thereby to listen to or to hear an account of how this relationship is put together (*zusammen*gehören) and belongs together

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[92] Cf. Zoll, 30. *Der Spiegel* interview in 1966 confirms Heidegger's fascination with the tautology in that he refers to his earlier Nietzsche lecture (GA 6.1, 33) stating that 'All great thinkers think the same—this same is so essential (deep) and rich that no single thinker accomplishes (exhausts) it; rather every thinker is bound even tighter and more rigorously to it.' (GA 16, 674)

[93] Cf. Figal 2014.

[94] On this understanding, "there is" a difference (or *différance*) that passes through the difference and distance between A *and* A *as* A, albeit this difference "is" not. Certainly, this difference opens up the discussion of Heidegger that Derrida presents in "La différance:" 'There is no essence of différance; it (is) that which not only could never be appropriated in the *as such* of its name or its appearing, but also that which threatens the authority of the *as such* in general, of the presence of the thing itself in its essence.' (M, 27/25-26) For a discussion of Derrida's reading of Heidegger on this matter, se Brogan 1988: 31-40.

(zusammen*gehören*). In that Heidegger clarifies his approach to the relationship between Europe and the Greeks in *Der Spruch des Anaximander* from 1946,[95] we will dedicate the next section of this chapter to drawing out and exploring Heidegger's reflections on this thesis concerning the dynamic of speaking and hearing that he develops in this particular work. Towards this end, we divide our project along the lines of two major tasks. First, we explore the sense of history, tradition, and transmission of classical texts as well as the manner by which such texts have been translated. Second, and more important to our context, we engage with Heidegger's question of Being as decisive to the destiny of Europe. In that Heidegger's argument in *Der Spruch des Anaximander* is highly complex, we may proceed slowly in pursuing this second task.

ANAXIMANDER'S SAYING TO HEIDEGGER: THE WITHDRAWAL OF BEING

In an effort to explain how 'beings are spoken of in such a way that their Being is expressed' (GA 5, 332/22), Heidegger, in *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, declares that 'Being comes to language as the Being of beings' precisely in that we speak out of 'participation [*Zugehörigkeit*] in the Same.'(GA 5, 332/22)[96] For Heidegger, this way of *coming to language* is crucial, and, moreover, the participation in the Same is the very thing that enables him to draw the relation between philosophy *and* Europe. This relation represents, in fact, the abyss of history between the beginning of Evening-landish-European philosophy understood as the language of Greek philosophy and the language of our thinking placed at the 'summit of the completion [*Vollendung*] of Evening-landish philosophy.' (GA 5, 332/22) Still, the question remains why this relation is tautological.

At first glance, the "Evening-landish-European philosophy" relation appears tautological in that the first beginning found in the ancient fragments of early Greek thinking is essentially tied to the "end of philosophy" that is perhaps most emblematically

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[95] Heidegger's work with Anaximander in 1946, where he has been forced to retire from his position at the University of Freiburg as a consequence of the denazification process, is in fact preceded by the preparation of a manuscript presumably intended for a lecture course in 1942 but which was never carried out (GA 78). See Richardson 2003: 514-526.

[96] One can say that *Der Spruch des Anaximander* is part of a "turning" in Heidegger's writings according to which "the Greeks" receive increasingly more attention from the 1932 course *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie* (GA 35, 1-100) onwards. According to the editor of the lectures, Peter Trawny, this text prepares a shift from Heidegger's previous and more thorough engagement with Plato and Aristotle to an engagement with the Presocratics (Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus) (GA 35, 269-271). In 1938-1939, Heidegger himself notes that he in the spring of 1932 becomes aware of a change in line with his draft of *Ereignis* by which his distinction between a "first beginning" and an "other beginning" comes to the fore (GA 66, 424). Even though Heidegger's engagement with the Presocratics takes off from 1932 and onwards, he already dealt with Parmenides as early as in the summer of 1922 (GA 62, 209-231).

characterised by Nietzsche's late fragment of recent European thought. But what would it mean to pursue this relation beyond the limits of the "same" and into the trench (*Graben*) of history that distances us from Being, all the while accepting this distancing as the very law (without law) that allows us proximity to Being only in the very abandonment of such Being (GA 5, 325/16)?[97]

With Heidegger's turn to the Anaximander fragment, it thus becomes evident from the very first page that Heidegger's task is less that of offering a reading of an old Presocratic fragment, and rather more that of encountering (*Auseinandersetzung*) what is considered to be the oldest fragment of the thought of the Evening-land.[98] As such, the Anaximander fragment is important to Heidegger's approach to the origin of this thought in that it requires that one reflects on 'the essence of the Evening-land in terms of what the early saying says' (GA 5, 325/16). As Heidegger further emphasises, it is only thinking that can help us 'in our attempt to translate the fragment of this early thinker.' (GA 5, 323/14)

For the purposes of this discussion, it is necessary for us neither to follow in a systematic fashion Heidegger's encounter with the ancient transmission of the Presocratics, nor to evaluate, on the basis of a philological and historical-critical outlook, Heidegger's translation of Anaximander's fragment.[99] With respect to what still needs to be addressed in the chapter, we may nonetheless move forward in attending to Heidegger's concluding historical-critical considerations of the origin of the Anaximander fragment.

To summarise in brief the direction in which Heidegger takes his text on Anaximander, we may say that Heidegger makes reference to the Greeks with the strict

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[97] I am here drawing on Derrida's translation of the Heideggerian *Ent-Fernung* as *l'é-loignement*. Whilst Heidegger's notion of 'de-severing' is a way of 'bringing something close by' so that in dasein 'there lies an essential tendency towards closeness,' (SZ, 105) Derrida argues that there is no essence at stake in this movement inasmuch as the "de-distancing" concerns 'the impossible topic of essentiality.' (P, 33/25)

[98] Although Heidegger refers to both Hermann Diels' authoritative portrait of the Presocratics in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (1903) as well as to the young Nietzsche's account of the same thinkers in a treatise entitled *Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen* (1873), there is nothing inherent to the transmission of this fragment of Anaximander that would substantiate the claim that this particular fragment is of greater importance than any other fragment. Heidegger himself remarks that, *sensu stricto*, when one attempts to locate what is chronologically the first in early Greek thinking, one is necessarily 'expiating on archaic logic, not realizing that logic occurs for the first time in the curriculum of the Platonic and Aristotelian schools.' (GA 5, 322/14)

[99] Although I shall not elaborate the implication of this claim, some of which I have attempted to outline above, what Heidegger is getting at, I believe, concerns his critical view of classical philology that suffers from its incapacity to begin by thinking itself. Indeed, philology remains part of what Heidegger has understood by the term "regional ontology," wherefore the philologists, as Rogozinski explains, 'are content with the knowledge of one region pertaining to beings [*l'étant*] without, however, opening up the question of Being.' (Rogozinski 2014: 39)

purpose of laying hold of what comes to language via the return to the Greeks. As such, Heidegger's engagement with the Anaximander fragment is not an attempt to render the Greek text as literal as possible in that, as Heidegger writes, a reading 'is faithful [*Wortgetreu*] only when its terms are words which speak from the language of the matter itself.' (GA 5, 322/14) In other words, with *Der Spruch des Anaximander*, Heidegger is attempting to lay hold of what he identifies as a *Gespräch*, that is, a dialogue or a gathering of Greek language. Given this aim, Heidegger centres his "return" on 'that Same [*Selbe*] which fatefully [*geschicklich*] concerns the Greeks and ourselves, albeit in different ways.' (GA 5, 336/25) As Heidegger continues,

> It is that which brings the dawn of thinking into the fate of the Evening-land [*das Geschick des Abend-ländischen*]. Only as a result of this fatefulness do the Greeks become Greeks in the historical sense. […] What is Greek is the dawn of that destiny [*Frühe des Geschickes*] in which Being illuminates itself in beings and so propounds a certain essence of the human being; that essence unfolds historically as something fateful, preserved in "Being" and dispensed by Being, without ever Being separated from Being. (GA 5, 336/25)

In light of the quotation above we may note that Heidegger's point in *Der Spruch des Anaximander* is plain enough: we return to the Greeks in order to reach 'what wants to come to language in such a conversation' with the Greeks, 'provided it come of its own accord' (GA 5, 336/25) This accord, as Heidegger further suggests, is the destiny (*das Geschick*) that we share with the Greeks—that is to say, it is the Evening-landish-European history (*Geschichte*) as understood in terms of a decline of the "early" Greek dawn into the European twilight of the Evening-land. For Heidegger, this history in which the Greeks continue to address "us" is a matter of grave concern in that it questions "our" very historical situatedness. In Heidegger's words,

> Are we latecomers [*Spätlinge*] in a history now racing towards its end, an end which in its increasingly sterile order of uniformity [*ödere Ordnung des Gleichförmigen*] brings everything to an end [*verendet*]? Or does there lie concealed in the historiographical and chronological remoteness of the fragment the historical proximity of something unsaid, something that will speak out in times to come? Do we stand in the very twilight [*Vorabend*] of the most monstrous transformation our planet has ever undergone, the twilight of that epoch in which earth itself hangs suspended? Do we confront the evening of a night which heralds another dawn? Are we to strike off on a journey to this historic region of earth's evening? Is the land of evening only now emerging? Will this Evening-land overwhelm Occident [*Occident*] and Orient alike, traversing [*hindurch*] whatever is merely European to become

the location of a new, more inceptive destinal history [*der kommenden anfänglicher geschickten Geschichte*]? (GA 5, 325-326/16-17; modified translation)

Over the course of the remainder of this chapter we will have occasion to return to the questions raised in the quotation above. This proves an important task precisely in that these questions help to bring to the fore in greater detail Heidegger's understanding of Europe. Moreover, these questions are important in that they usher the reader to the first of two occurrences of the word "Europe" in *Der Spruch des Anaximander*.[100]

In continuing with his argument, then, Heidegger refers for the first time to the word "Europe" by quoting from Nietzsche's *Der Wanderer und sein Schatten* where the name of Europe indicates a tension between that which is one's own and that which is foreign: 'A higher situation for humankind is possible, in which the Europe of nations [*Völker*] will be obscured and forgotten, but in which Europe will *live on* in thirty very ancient [*Klassikern*] but never antiquated books' (KSA 2, 608; GA 5, 326/17).

At this point there is no need for us to dedicate any further attention to the impact that Nietzsche has had upon Heidegger. Instead, we may merely note that from the questions raised above in Heidegger's quotation—questions that once again bring Heidegger into proximity with Nietzsche, we discover the transforming orientation of Heidegger's Europe that we have been seeking thus far. This transforming orientation consists, essentially, in the questioning of the Greeks—the Greeks who are not meant to represent 'a people [*völkisch*] or nation, nor a cultural or anthropological group,' (GA 5, 336/25) but rather the Greeks who represent an epoch of Being. As we have suggested in Chapter One, what Heidegger is driving at with this questioning is the unity of this one great epoch of the world—a unity on the basis of which both Greek antiquity, Christianity, and modernity are ruled by philosophy (GA 5, 336/26; HQBH, 199/131). As we have also seen, however, throughout this philosophical ruling the thought of Being has been more concealed by oblivion than it has been revealed by the unconcealment of beings, which, in fact, obscures the light of Being (*Licht des Seins*).

It is worth recalling that already in *Sein und Zeit* one of the hallmarks of Heidegger's philosophical thinking is the notion of the oblivion of Being. However, while working through the history of Being in 1946, Heidegger subtly shifts the emphasis in his thought from an oblivion pertaining to our *thinking of Being* to an account of oblivion as

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[100] The second occurrence of the word "Europe" appears in the passage above when Heidegger asks whether the Evening-land will traverse whatever is merely European (*hinweg und durch das Europäische hindurch*).

essential to Being itself. This shift is instructive with respect to the question of Being in that the unconcealment of beings has to do with a certain concealment and withdrawal of Being. In this respect, we may say that the belonging-together of concealment and unconcealment becomes increasingly significant to Heidegger's thinking of Being. It is important to note, however, as does László Tengelyi, that it is not thinking that is responsible for such a belonging-together.[101] To the contrary, it is Being that serves this function, and in such a fashion that Being befalls thinking. While this interplay of concealment and unconcealment is determined by and thereby changeable in terms of each epoch of Being, the withdrawal (*Entzug*) of Being remains constitutive of the configuration of the thinking of Being pertaining to each of these epochs. As Heidegger puts it in his text on Anaximander, if Being reveals itself to thought in beings, it does so only by withdrawing (GA 5, 337/26).

Indeed, if I have adequately traced out Heidegger's description of the withdrawal of Being (a description which indeed is manifold), then it is difficult to avoid the question of whether Heidegger's understanding of the concealment of Being carries along with it a sort of irreducible buttress of Being. Furthermore, if the withdrawal of Being is that which enables the appearance of beings, and with this appearance also the emergence of the history in which Being has lapsed into oblivion, then this history of Being becomes the realm of error. Underlying the idea of opening up to history the realm of error lies a singularity of Being that, because of its withdrawal, remains uncontaminated by this error. Due to such an avoidance of contamination, we could thus say that Being in a certain sense "saves" itself by way of Heidegger's thought. In the lecture *Die Kehre* from 1949, Heidegger closes in on what Nancy suspects to find in the reformulation of the question of Being, namely, 'a secret egoity of Being' (Nancy 1993b: 134), that is, an ego-ism associated with Being's act of self-preservation. As Heidegger notes, 'what properly is, that is, what properly dwells in and essences [*west*] in the Is, is uniquely Being. Being alone "is;" only in Being and as Being does what is called the "is" appear [*ereignet*]; what is, is Being on the basis of its essence.' (GA 11, 120) In venturing a reading of this passage, Nancy has posed the question of Being not merely in terms of withdrawal and no-thingness, but rather put forward an even more radical interpretation. For, as he asks, does the being-proper (*être-propre*) of Being preserve its property, its essence by once again *withdrawing 'from the withdrawal of Being'* (Nancy 1993b: 134)?

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[101] Cf. Tengelyi 2014: 43.

In following Nancy's lead, we might attempt to circle around the issue we have been discussing here by raising several questions of our own. Consider the following. Does the interplay between concealment and unconcealment of Being according to which Being keeps to itself so as to manifest itself only as *no-thing*, make space for the evil without, however, exposing Being itself to this evil? In other words, is Heidegger with his thinking of Being's withdrawal, in contrast to what one might have expected from his critical destruction of onto-theology, advancing an *ontodicy*? Does Heidegger's history of Being constitute a narrative of struggle between salvage (*das Heile*) and fury (*das Grimmige*) (GA 9, 359)? Is Heidegger's Being like Plato's god who is not responsible for evils: 'Guilt lies with the one who chooses: god has none [αἰτία ἑλομένου: θεὸς ἀναίτιος]' (Rep. 617e4-5)? Is Heidegger's notion of Being, as Rogozinski argues, 'an undeconstructed configuration' that marks 'the limit of Heideggerian deconstruction—of any deconstruction?—the irreducible abutment of the ontological reduction that it cannot break up, because it has not taken the step toward ethics?' (Rogozinski 1995: 51) As these questions display, the notion of evil is certainly significant for the notion of Being. Indeed, as Heidegger himself notes, 'evil and the most acute danger is thinking itself, insofar as it has to think against itself, yet can seldom do so.' (GA 97, 153) As interesting as this discussion is, for the sake of brevity we will not go into any further detail here concerning Heidegger's understanding of Being as a justification of evil.[102]

THE DESTINY OF EUROPE: A MATTER OF TRANSLATING BEING

In order to elaborate further on the history of Being, Heidegger concentrates on the withdrawal of Being in order to emphasise the suspension, ἐποχή, or *Ansichhalten* by which Being retains its truth while at the same time allowing the various epochs of history to emerge (GA 5, 337-338/26-27).[103] When Heidegger therefore returns to the oldest saying of the thought of the Evening-land supposedly announced in the Anaximander fragment, his intention is to show how that which is the "earliest" exceeds the "latest," and in this fashion he attempts to set the being-historical stage for the dawn of our destiny

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[102] Interestingly, Hamacher pursues a reading of Heidegger's ontodicy in terms of an either-or, either Being or beings. The decision between the singularity of Being and the ordinarity of beings, Hamacher says, is always made in favour of Being. Yet, at one point, Hamacher sees how Heidegger cannot maintain this either-or: a singular "or" is no "or," because wherever there is a "or," there is always a double "either-or" which receives its singularity from the possibility of repetition. In this sense, Hamacher suggests, the singularity of Being is no singular being—the ontodicy is originally an *ontocide*. See Hamacher 1997: 50.

[103] At this point, Heidegger refers to Being in terms of ἀλήθεια with the intent to think Being as that ambiguous process of revelation, which withdraws itself from the very beings that it brings to revelation. For a discussion, see Taminiaux 1991: 46-48.

that arrives at last (ἔσχατον), that is, 'at the departure of the long-hidden destiny of Being.' (GA 5, 327/18)

Heidegger, I believe, uses the Greek term ἔσχατον (meaning the "last," "end," or "uttermost") to prepare his definition of the uttermost end of Being as such. In other words, by employing this term he aims to establish the framework of an eschatology of Being, and, ultimately, to make his case for an (apocalyptic) history of Being that is coming to an end. All of this is nicely summed up in Heidegger's terse phrase: 'Being itself is inherently eschatological.' (GA 5, 327/18) The eschatological moment of Being introduced here indirectly reveals what Heidegger has identified as the "sterile order of uniformity," or, what could be described in other terms simply as the essence of technology with respect to which the history of Being is coming to an end—and, moreover, an end that has been stripped of any sense of teleology (whether in the sense of progress or decline). Moreover, and just as importantly, Heidegger's account of eschatology allows him to raise the question concerning the degree to which the history of Being is indeed coming to an end. It is important, however, to keep in mind here that when Heidegger speaks of the "end" in this context, he is referring to an end that, as it were, terminates (*verendet*) the end. What this means, then, is that the ending, which we are discussing here, does not refer to a simple finality but rather concerns a sort of "end without end."[104]

It is upon Heidegger's arriving at this endless ending in his reading of the Anaximander fragment that we as readers discover that Heidegger has already prepared us for the withdrawal of Being that sets beings adrift in the world. As Heidegger argues, the very manner by which beings come to pass, is determined by the 'errancy by which they [beings] circumvent Being and establish the realm of error [*der Irre*]' (GA 5, 337/26). According to Heidegger, then, insistence on the errancy of Being as 'the space in which history unfolds' (GA 5, 337/26) leads ultimately to the movement by which the unconcealment of beings simultaneously discloses the oblivion of Being. Consequently, the notion of "errancy" is not to be understood as 'an isolated mistake [*Fehler*] but the kingdom (the dominion) of history of those entanglements in which all kinds of erring

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[104] As Schuback has argued, such an end without end transforms our very understanding of, for example, "the death of God" in such a way that the significance of this phrase—that is, the exhaustion of the very regime of signification—does not cease to end and therefore reminds us of 'the death without end of God' (Schuback and Nancy 2014: 255).

gets interwoven.' (GA 9, 197)[105] Ultimately, then, it is Heidegger's desire to avoid a relation to the Greeks defined in terms of either chronology or teleology that leads him, in the end, to claim that 'we are in errancy toward' (GA 5, 337/26) them.

To be sure, this claim puts quite a twist on Heidegger's question of the Greeks in that the challenge of engaging with the Greeks now becomes one of 'translating what is said in Greek.' (GA 5, 333/19) However, as we have already seen, to translate the Anaximander fragment is not about providing a translation of it that is as literal as possible (as if such a translation (Über*setzung*) would situate us in a more privileged position for reading the fragment). Rather, to translate (*über*-setzen), as the emphasis on the preposition highlights, indicates a 'leaping over an abyss' (GA 5, 333/19). In other words, to translate the Anaximander fragment is a matter of the *trans-*, or the *Über-*, that is, of being in a position to the Greeks such that this position is preceded by the detachment of a fixed posture whereby this leaping "we" is exposed *to* an abyssal openness. In fact, as Heidegger sees it, the abyss is not a chrono-historical distance of two and a half millennia. Rather, it is a deeper and wider problematic. This is precisely the case in that, on the one hand, our relation to the Greeks is severed; yet, on the other hand, the non-relation consequent to such severing becomes our very relation to and our proximity with this abyss at the edge of which we are standing. Indeed, Heidegger argues that when we stand on the ground at the edge of the abyss in preparation for our leap the very sense of being grounded that we experience in that moment is subjected to a trembling, and, moreover, to a trembling that in turn propels us to leap. Such is the dynamic, argues Heidegger, at play in our attempt to trans-late, or rather to carry over Being as that which withdraws and separates itself from itself.

For Heidegger, the dynamic described above is only made possible when we 'translate ourselves to the source of what comes to language' (GA 5, 339/28) in the word Being. Such a task, moreover, requires that we listen to the Greek τὰ ὄντα. But what, asks Heidegger, do we hear when the Greeks say τὰ ὄντα? This question entails, as Dennis Schmidt points out, a move 'outside of the orbit of metaphysics' (Schmidt 2001: 262). It is here that two important points from Heidegger's exposition of the Anaximander fragment come to the fore.

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[105] However, this is not to say that the history of philosophy becomes the '"history" of errors in the sense of the historiographic apposition of one inaccuracy after the other,' but rather a movement 'in which errancy has come to be experienced' (Trawny 2015: 62). As Trawny underscores, in 'the truth of being, errancy is not only inevitable; it belongs as an essential possibility to truth itself.' (Trawny 2015: 50-51)

The first point is established when Heidegger in Homer's *Iliad* (l. 68-72) discovers a chance 'to cross over to what the Greeks designate with the word ὄντα' (GA 5, 344/32). Heidegger notes initially that what prohibits us from following the Greek way of understanding ὄντα is the same thing that prohibits us from assuming *philosophy* as the guarantee of the future destinies of humankind. Interestingly, then, in his recourse to what he believed to be the highest and ultimate word of the Greek language, ὄντα, Heidegger discovers that this word in actuality is merely a truncated form of the original construction of ἐόν ἐόντα.

With this discovery, Heidegger accentuates the importance of translation for the thinking of Being, since the epsilon in ἐόν—in contrast to the participial ending of ὄν—constitutes the very root of ἔστιν, *est*, *esse*, and *is*. For Heidegger, this aspect of the present participle ἐόν, when compared with the nominal participle "being" and the infinite verb "to be," displays how ἐόν constitutes *the* participle into which all other participles are gathered.[106] Apropos the ambiguous (*Zwiefalt*) aspect of ἐόν, Heidegger remarks that ὄν says "Being" in the sense of "to be" a being, while, at the same time, it names a "Being" which is in such a way that the distinction between the twofold senses of Being remains concealed. Moreover, to draw out this point even further Heidegger says that the verbal-nominal ambiguity of ἐόν already in Greek thinking becomes dislodged from its sense as presencing and absencing, in that ὄν comes to designate the difference between a foundation and its entities.

The second point of Heidegger's exposition of the Anaximander fragment is that the emphasis placed on the archaic ἐόν in the Homeric construction of ἐόν ἐόντα introduced above not only designates the singular participial form of ἐόντα, but also designates 'what is singular as such [*das schlechthin Singuläre*], what is singular in its numerical unity and what is singularly and unifyingly one before all number.' (GA 5, 345/33) Furthermore, the epsilon of ἐόντα designates Being in the sense of the present (*Gegenwärtigen*) by means of which that which is present arrives so as to 'linger within the expanse of unconcealment,' that is to say, that which comes into presence arrives

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[106] In *Was heißt Denken?* Heidegger addresses the issue of ἐόν in Parmenides: χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ᾽ ἐὸν ἔμμεναι (DK B6). The Diels-Kranz translation sounds as follows: 'Nötig ist zu sagen und zu denken, dass das Seiende ist.' In English: it is necessary to say and to think that being is. Heidegger suggests a paratactic construction of Parmenides' sentence so that the present participle stands next to the infinite: ἐὸν: ἔμμεναι. The duality contained in the present participle is explained by an example of the blooming flower: blooming means: something that *blooms* (verb), and *something* that blooms (noun). Cf. GA 8, 221-229.

properly (*die eigentliche Ankunft*) from beyond what is presently present (GA 5, 346-347/34-35).

However, I would like to suggest that Heidegger's harkening back to ἐόν cannot be considered apart from his claim that this singular word, as Schürmann rephrases it, means 'the ensemble of structures that allow one to grasp both Being's genuinely temporal nature and its metaphysical reification.' (Schürmann 1990: 171) Accordingly, the participial nature of ἐόν is restricted to its nominal meaning, a restriction that places 'subsequent European thinking on its enjoined itinerary [*Bahn*].' (GA 8, 241) Given the attention that Heidegger devotes to this archaic word, it is telling how he makes the suggestion that one 'might assert in an exaggerated way, which nevertheless bears on the truth, that the destiny of the Evening-land hangs on the translation of the word ἐόν, assuming that the translation consists in *crossing over* to the truth of what comes to language in ἐόν.' (GA 5, 345/33; translation modified)[107]

The tone of this quite grandiloquent statement is oddly dramatic. Moreover, the statement carries particular implications for developing an account of the Evening-land and Europe's role within its destiny—keeping in mind that this destiny exceeds the difference between Occident and Orient alike. Thus, Heidegger affords significant attention to the translation of the word ἐόν in which he emphasises the elision of the epsilon as a means of shedding light on the question of whether or not the Evening-land (*das Abend-Land*) will *traverse* whatever is merely European so as to herald another dawn, another beginning. Significantly, "Europe" becomes the sign for this space of traversal or this passage through which (*hindurch*) the end of the Evening-land might herald a new dawn. Yet, if the Evening-land will need to pass through this space in which the epoch of the history of Being is coming to an end—an "end without end," as we have seen—then one might ask in what sense the land of twilight, meaning the 'fore-time [*Vorzeit*] of that night which is the mother of the day of the more inceptual beginning' (GA 71, 98/83), can give rise to a forthcoming morning and day?[108]

What are we to make of this single letter "ε" on which the entire destiny of the Evening-land appears to depend? How do we understand the sense in which the Evening-

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[107] Let me refer to the discussion between Schuback and Nancy 2014: 243-273, from which my reading of Heidegger's passage benefits.

[108] On this understanding, Europe shows itself as a kind of traversal through which the Evening-land must pass, all the while Europe remains in, or better as, this space in which it is not fully within itself but rather exposes the Evening-land "itself." As this space of experiencing the traversal of limits, Europe comes to designate an exposition of the self-enclosed landscape of the Evening-land.

land is dependent on the forgetfulness of Being, a forgetfulness that hangs on an elision of this presumably fairly insignificant epsilon that itself represents the movement of the history of Being?[109]

The play on the epsilon and its diacritical mark is no doubt terribly allusive. Despite this, allow me nevertheless to note two things about this "ε" in particular as well as about the word ἐόν in general. First, when Heidegger says that the destiny of the Evening-land *depends* on the translation of ἐόν, one might suggest that this destiny is tied up with anxiety precisely in that the Latin origin of the word "dependence" (*pendere*) implies a state of hanging in suspension (cf. GA 9, 112). Second, if the Evening-landish-European thinking translates ἐόν in such a manner that Being becomes buried in the unconcealment of beings (ὄν), then the destinal sending of Being bears witness not only to the oblivion of Being but also to the exposition of the Evening-land into the elision of the epsilon, which thereby gets entangled in its errant path (*Irrweg*) into Being.

With these points established, let us make one additional suggestion. Were we to accept the Latin translation of the German *anhängen* as *depending* (something to which Heidegger himself most likely would object), we would thereby come to see that what is suspended in the process of translation concerns the language of the Greeks to which we harken back precisely in order to listen to and to translate the abyssal word of Being—a word which is at once ours and not ours. As Heidegger will remind us in one of his significant later works, the participle ἐόν means neither Being nor beings but rather names the ambiguous participation of what comes to presence in the presencing itself (*Anwesend: Anwesen selbst*). In this respect, ἐόν says the same about the same and thus becomes a tautology (GA 15, 397-398).[110] Or, to put it bluntly, ἐόν serves as the *tautegory* of Being insofar as Being enunciates itself at the "heart" of unconcealment (GA 15, 405).

What, then, has been brought to language through this listening to the way in which ἐόν says the same about the same? We have already seen how "we latecomers" hang suspended in the history of Being from which we are 'exiled, [*gebannt*]' as Heidegger says, due to of all the notions and representations we have inherited from Greek philosophy' (GA 5, 335/25). Furthermore, that which Heidegger seeks to evoke is that

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[109] To speak of "Being" in terms of translation, transition, or passage, entails a twofold gesture: on the one hand, it is a transition of sense, and, on the other hand, it is sense itself that is the transition back and forth. Transition is therefore not conserving one signification of sense but exposes the tension from one sense of Being to another.

[110] In Parmenides' fragment DK B8, Heidegger observes signs (σῆμα), meaning that which makes something manifest in that it shows what is to be seen, which indicate how ἐόν 'as the same in the same staying it stands for itself [ταὐτόν τ᾽ ἐν ταὐτῷ τε μένον καθ᾽ ἑαυτό τε κεῖται]' (GA 15, 398).

which is to be thought from within the history of Being wherein he finds 'the abyss [*Abgrund*] of that relation by which Being has appropriated the essence of the Evening-landish man.' (GA 5, 335/25) However, the trouble, as Heidegger sees it, is that we cannot disentangle ourselves from the errancy essential to the destining of Being by attempting a more accurate translation of ἐόν. Given these remarks, it is perhaps worthwhile to reflect in a bit greater detail on what we have been outlining here, namely, Heidegger's argument from 1946 in which he urges us to listen to the language of ἐόν.

Heidegger's stubborn inquiry into the Greeks has to do with this almost obsessive insistence on the most original form of the word Being—ἐόν—a word that, in Heidegger's view, yields not so much the determination of Being as it reiterates the inherent difficulty in the announcement of Being as such. When Heidegger therefore returns to the Greek language, as though he were attempting to access ἐόν itself out of love for this particular word, he is also attempting to rekindle a sense in which 'our German language,' (GA 53, 75) as Heidegger says of Hölderlin's hymns, responds *to* the injunction of Being concerning the translation of the untranslatable singularity of ἐόν.[111] Certainly, in listening to the word ἐόν, the smooth breathing of the epsilon has withheld itself from our eyes and ears by turning into ὄν. In addition to this, however, we may also note that the unarticulated, inaudible, or weak aspiration with which the word ἐόν (about to become Being) is pronounced, announces nothing but the laryngeal voice. Such a voice, as Nietzsche would have put it, may never have enabled us to gather the moment in which the word "Being" disappears into the last breath of a vaporised reality.[112] If we take into account our earlier discussion of the vaporisation of Being, we recognise that if the thinking of Being is a thinking of the voice that pronounces this inaudible *spiritus lenis* (a voice that perhaps never has been),[113] then this thinking of Being has no-thing but vaporised smoke to think about.

Indeed, in *Der Spruch des Anaximander* Heidegger offers no more than hints with regard to the acoustic aspect of ἐόν. Nonetheless, he does make it clear that the destiny of the Evening-land depends on the translation of ἐόν, in the sense that it is left hanging in

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[111] Beistegui discusses Heidegger's 'detour through an idiom other than Greek […] that defines the site of our historical being today to the Greek idiom, yet in such a way that this repetition constitutes a moment of invention.' (Beistegui 2003: 175)

[112] Interestingly, in discussing the Hebrew aleph (א), Scholem finds that this consonant represents nothing but a laryngeal performance (*Stimmeinsatz*), which corresponds with the Greek spiritus lenis, and which precedes a vowel in the beginning of a word. Cf. Scholem 1973: 47.

[113] In his understanding of Heidegger's voice, Agamben suggests that if the voice is placed as the origin, for Heidegger, it is only because the voice is, from the beginning, 'conceived as removed, as voice.' (Agamben 1991: 39)

the very anxiety that is essential to the Being of which there remains nothing to hold onto. In this fashion, the Evening-land becomes attuned as a *medium percussum*,[114] that is, as a sound box through which we fail to hear both the inaudible aspiration of the voice of Being (*Stimme des Seins*) and its smooth breathing of the single letter that appears so as to disappear and expire into another pronunciation of Being as ὄν.

It is impossible to provide a full account of the dependency of the Evening-land upon the disappearance of the aspirated epsilon within the scope of this thesis in that such a task would require an extended analysis of Heidegger's voice (*Stimme*) and attunement (*Stimmung*), hearing (*Hören*) and listening (*Horchen*), speaking (*Sprechen*) and silence (*Schweigen*).[115] Let me nevertheless briefly suggest how the destiny of the Evening-land proves to concern a difference in the way of aspirating Being, in such a manner that the *spiritus lenis* of ὄν is stressed by the acute accent of the vowel in order to indicate the expiration of ἐόν.

Hence, it is perhaps with the word ἐόν that the omission of this inaudible spirit catches Being short of breath. One might, in this regard, recall Celan's words from *Der Meridian* in order to explicate what might be at stake here: 'But who hears the speaker, "sees him speaking," who perceives language as a physical shape […], and also breath, that is, direction and destiny [*Der aber den Sprechenden hört, der ihn "sprechen sieht," der Sprache wahrgenommen hat und Gestalt [...], und zugleich auch Atem, das heißt Richtung und Schicksal*]' (GW 3 188).[116] Of course, Celan's appeal to *Schicksal* diverges considerably from Heidegger's since it is embedded in Celan's own understanding of an asphyxiating spirit according to which we can no longer seize upon the sense that may have been sent in the direction of the one who hears the word ἐόν spoken.

Still, if the speaker's voice is that of Being (*Stimme des Seins*) calling the listener, who is the human being, to hear the 'word of the soundless voice [*lautlosen Stimme*] of Being' (GA 9, 310) and holding the Evening-land in suspension so that we become attuned (*stimmt*) to 'the horror of the abyss' (GA 9, 306), then one might ponder the critical question that Heidegger poses in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*: '"Is "Being" a mere word and its sense a vapour, or is it the spiritual destiny of the Evening-land?"' (GA 40, 40/40)

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[114] I borrow this expression from Sloterdijk 1993: 313.
[115] See Agamben 1991: 54-62
[116] As Pöggeler points out, in the marginal notes to his copy of Celan's *Der Meridian* Heidegger had underlined the word "Atem." (Pöggeler 1994: 436)

CHAPTER THREE

HEIDEGGER'S SPIRITUAL EUROPE

There is only one proof of spirit, and that is the spirit's proof within itself
(Kierkegaard, SKS 4, 398)

In the first two chapters on Heidegger we offered a survey of the question of Being with particular emphasis on *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Moreover, we focused on the history according to which the transmission of the question of Being is conceived not merely as a story of the decline of Evening-landish-European philosophy, but also as an occasion for returning to the Greeks in order to attend to the way in which the question of Being has been articulated throughout the history of Being. The chief task of this chapter, then, is to explore the impact that this double-edged history has upon Heidegger's understanding of Europe. We will approach this task largely, though not exclusively, by returning to *Einführung in die Metaphysik* in order to show how a key aspect of Heidegger's understanding of Europe is its emphasis on the theme of the spiritual destiny of the Evening-land. In drawing on this theme, the aim of this chapter therefore becomes that of highlighting and exploring how the motif of *spirit* is central to Heidegger's text.

In developing my argument, I divide this chapter into several sections. In the first section, I review the main tenets of Heidegger's thought about spirit. In the second section, I will briefly recall our previous discussion regarding the question of Being in preparation for our discussion in the third section on Heidegger's notion of the "world-darkening." In the fourth section, I elaborate on the darkening of the world in the context of Heidegger's question of technology. In the fifth and sixth sections, I turn to another aspect of Heidegger's notion of spirit, namely, the "people" by which I attempt to address the "German question" in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Finally, I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the inner dynamics of spirit—a dynamics which, I suggest, have been reverberating throughout the entirety of the chapter.

ENGAGING WITH THE AVOIDED: BREAKING THE SILENCE ON SPIRIT

Heidegger's interest in the question of spirit extends as far back as his 1919-1920 lecture course *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*. Already on the first page of the manuscript we stumble upon the word "spirit" as Heidegger employs it in his characterisation of phenomenology in terms of '*the* science of origins, the science of the absolute *origin* of spirit in and for itself' (GA 58, 1). In addition, Heidegger would go on to modify the term

"science of origins" (*Ursprungswissenschaft*) into 'science of the spirit-life' (GA 58, 2; 19)[117] via a discussion of Dilthey's *Geistesgeschichte*. Despite this early interest in spirit, however, and with the exception of *Sein und Zeit* in 1927, Heidegger remains remarkably silent up until 1933 concerning the question of spirit.[118]

As Derrida has shown in *De l'esprit*, we find two important references to spirit in *Sein und Zeit*. The latter reference, about which we will not go into detail here, concerns Heidegger's discussion of Hegel's conception of time (SZ, 420-428; DE, 46-47/29). The former reference on which we will focus our attention here, occurs in the context in which Heidegger, after having initially outlined his project regarding the analysis of dasein, remarks that it is important to show what is to be ruled out by this analysis, namely, 'the definite phenomenal domains which can be "given forms" [*ausformbare*]' (SZ, 46), among which one together with the "subject," "soul," "consciousness," and "person" finds the term "spirit."[119] Henceforth, when Heidegger uses the term "spirit" in *Sein und Zeit*, he puts quotation marks around it in order to demonstrate its improper presence in the existential analysis of dasein due to how it has been intertwined with the stratifications of Christian-metaphysical meaning. Of this particular use of spirit 'between quotation marks, thus using it without using it, avoiding it yet not avoiding it' (Sallis 1995: 25) there is certainly something excessive. More specifically, the excessiveness plays out in the manner by which the quotation marks withdraws spirit from its metaphysical determination all the while leaving it readable.

In that spirit proves to be a key term in this chapter, I would like to begin here with a brief review of Heidegger's account of spirit from 1933 to 1935. In doing so, we may consider a few crucial places in Heidegger's thought where the notion of spirit plays an important role. First, in the summer course *Die Grundfrage der Philosophie* Heidegger addresses the 'spiritual-political mission [*Auftrag*]' (GA 36/37, 3) of the German people—a theme on which he had also touched in his Rector's Address of May 1933 (GA 16, 107). In a critical review of the alleged improvement (*veredlen*) and spiritualisation (*vergeistigen*) of the revolution of National-Socialism, Heidegger asks the question concerning exactly which spirit is being spiritualised. Is it the Christian spirit of the

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[117] Later in his 1919-1920 course Heidegger speaks about 'a crisis of spirit [*Krisis des Geistes*] that in no way has been radically and purely overcome,' a crisis concerning the work of scientific philosophy that paves the way for the 'experience of a radical renewal of the *Geisteswissenschaften*' (GA 58, 88).

[118] Cf. Trawny 2004: 93-112.

[119] In the famous *Davoser disputation* between Cassirer and Heidegger in 1929, Heidegger refers to his analysis of dasein, which is not determined by spirit (without quotation marks) but rather by the immanent structures of human corporeality (GA 3, 289-290).

πνεῦμα, the breath (*Hauch*), or the wind (*Wehen*)? Is it the Greek spirit of the θαυμάζειν, the wonder (*Staunen*)? Is it the spirit of technology as enterprise or energy (*Antrieb*)? Or is it the intellectual spirit of the effort and achievement (*Einsatz*) (GA 36/37, 7)?[120]

Furthermore, in a brief discussion from the same 1933 course regarding the ubiquitous motif of spirit that has culminated in his own time and by which spirit has presumably become the talk of the town, Heidegger makes the stark claim that no one really knows what spirit is. In the 1933 course, however, it nevertheless remains unclear what Heidegger himself means by spirit, except that he employs the notion when arguing that spirit remains present, yet in a manner by which it appears before us as enslaved to an enclosed world (*verschlossene Welt*). In his Rector's Address, Heidegger expands further on this negative characterisation of spirit by clarifying the intrinsic relationship between spirit and the question of Being. For, as he remarks, '"spirit" is not empty cleverness, nor the noncommittal play of wit, nor the boundless drift of rational dissection, let alone world reason; spirit is the primordially attuned, knowing resoluteness toward the essence of Being.' (GA 16, 112) Later that same year, in the winter course *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*, Heidegger once again returns to the question of spirit in his consideration of the precarious and unavoidable question of essence pertaining to the human dasein in the world. How we are in the world, argues Heidegger, brings with it the carrying of our destiny (*Schicksal*) in such an essential manner that 'the spirit of the earth is transformed [*verwandeln*].'(GA 36/37, 86)

The final point that I wish to highlight as part of our review of Heidegger's account of spirit concerns the 1934 summer course *Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache*. In this course, Heidegger draws an intimate connection between the notion of spirit and the notion of the people (*Volk*)—a connection that he will further develop in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. According to Trawny, Heidegger's notion of the "people of spirit," a notion that is perhaps not far from Hegel's *Volksgeist*,[121] serves to provide spirit with its sense of heritage (*Erbe*) and dowry (*Mitgift*). As Trawny writes: 'The

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[120] In his 1941-1942 course on Hölderlin's hymn "Andenken," Heidegger complicates the opposition between materiality and immateriality with regard to spirit. As Heidegger puts it, 'Perhaps any conception of spirit [*Geist*] as "spiritual" [*"spirituelle"*] and "pneumatic" is very un-spiritual [*ungeistig*] and therefore particularly vulnerable to the pseudo-essence [*Scheinwesen*] of spirit.' (GA 52, 55) Hence, by determining spirit as immaterial, one still determines spirit as a kind of "materiality," namely, as breath or wind.

[121] Hegel explains: 'The spirit in history is an individual which is both universal [*allgemeiner*] in nature and at the same time determinate, that is, it is the people in general, and the spirit we are concerned with is the spirit of the people [*Volksgeist*]. But the spirits of peoples differ in their own conceptions of themselves, in the relative superficiality or profundity with which they have comprehended and penetrated the nature of spirit […]; the peoples are the concepts which the spirit has formed of itself. Thus it is the conception of the spirit which is realised in history.' (VPW I, 59)

"spirit" is therefore the attitude of the human being towards the "people," as well as that which makes this "people" into what it is in the first place […]. *Spirit is at once an attitude and that toward which the attitude is related*.' (Trawny 2004: 101)

With this review of the main tenets of the spirit motif in Heidegger's thought, it now becomes easier for us to see how Heidegger, in 1935, could link his thought of spirit to the question of Europe. As our first step in shedding some light on this link we may begin by reflecting on the manner by which Heidegger introduces the *spirit* motif in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. In so doing, however, we must once again recall our previous discussion concerning the question of Being so as to open it up to the question of Europe.

OPENING UP THE QUESTION OF BEING

As suggested in Chapter One, the notion of "Europe" in Heidegger's thought does not receive its own philosophical treatment. Despite this, Europe nevertheless remains a relevant notion for Heidegger in that it is intimately bound up with the question of Being. It is therefore not surprising that Heidegger, in attempting within *Einführung in die Metaphysik* to grasp the question that precedes the fundamental question of metaphysics—that is, "why are there beings at all instead of nothing" brings 'the question about Being into connection with the fate [*Schicksal*] of Europe, where the fate of the earth is being decided, while for Europe itself our historical dasein proves to be the centre [*die Mitte*].' (GA 40, 45/44) In what follows, I shall divide this broad claim into two parts. The first part, which I discuss in this section, concerns the connection between the question of Being and Europe; and the second part, which I address in a later section, concerns the question of the people standing at the centre of such a Being-Europe connection.

In approaching the connection between the question of Being and Europe we may begin by noticing that if Europe has anything to do with philosophy it is, according to Heidegger, solely because the 'historical dasein of human beings' needs the question of Being. But not only this, we could also say that this question is crucial for us in that it touches upon 'our ownmost future dasein' (GA 40, 45/44). Furthermore, by raising the question of Being Heidegger wants to explore the essential state of Being—albeit not on

account of some empty discourse of universality so as to set up a principle of thinking,[122] but rather, as suggested in Chapter One, on account of how the question of Being recoils on the questioner. In considering the title of his course from 1935, Heidegger thus argues that *Einführung in die Metaphysik* refers to a leading (*Führung*) into the asking of the fundamental question of Being. Now, on a first glance, this might sound as if Heidegger is subscribing to some sort of individualistic notion of the questioner, envisaging the questioner as the sole power that inquires into the state of Being. This, however, is certainly not the case given that Heidegger, in 1935, places great emphasis on the "dasein of a people." Hence, in the 1953 annotation to *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger clarifies his argument by suggesting that the dasein who questions Being does not ask this question as an isolated ego, insofar as the very question of Being bears witness to this dasein that is *itself* only on the condition of its historical *relation* to Being (GA 40, 31-32/31).

When Heidegger thus emphasises the relationality of the question concerning Being, he points time and again to the question of "how it stands with Being" in order to display the relationship between how 'human beings leap away from all the previous safety of their dasein' (GA 40, 8/6) and what makes the question of Being decisive to an opening up of the history of the Evening-land. As we have seen in Chapter One, to appeal to Being is to seek the grounding for everything that is, or rather, to get to the bottom (*ergründen*) of beings. At the same time, however, Heidegger also notes that precisely because we are questioning in our appeal to Being, 'it remains an open question whether the ground [we are seeking] is a truly […] originary ground [*Ur-grund*]; whether the ground refuses to provide a foundation [*Gründung*], and so is an abyss [*Ab-grund*]; or whether the ground is neither one nor the other, but merely offers the perhaps necessary illusion of a foundation and is thus an unground [*Un-grund*].'' (GA 40, 5/4)[123]

In my view, the point Heidegger makes by speaking of the trembling question before the ground of Being is that the fundamental question of metaphysics—"why are there beings at all instead of nothing?"—is so deeply entrenched in the adverb "instead" that it prevents us, in our very questioning, from 'beginning directly with beings as

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[122] In 1930, for instance, Heidegger asks whether the *question* of essence is not asking about the 'emptiness of the universal [*die Leere des Allgemeinen*], which betrays the breath of any thinking [*den Atem versagt*]?' (GA 9, 177)

[123] As Heidegger would put it years later, the prefix *Ab-* of the *Grund* marks an absence of ground, which is characteristic of 'the age of the world for which the ground fails to come [*ausbleibt*], hangs in the abyss' (GA 5, 270).

unquestionably given' (GA 40, 30/30). This is why Heidegger says that the ground of Being into which we inquire is 'supposed to ground the dominance of beings as overcoming of Nothing.' (GA 40, 22/31) However, for Heidegger, the question of Being as a question about the ground of beings leads to a kind of double bind inasmuch as the ground is that which 'sustains us and unbinds us, half in Being, half not in Being' (GA 40, 31/31). Hence, to reiterate the reformulation of the fundamental question of metaphysics, the adverbial construction "instead of nothing" ties together Heidegger's question of Being with his understanding of nothingness in such a manner that 'the questioning itself loses every secure foothold [*festen Boden*]' (GA 40, 32/31). And because the questioning opens up the very site of the question, 'our dasein, too, as it questions, comes into suspense [*in die Schwebe*], and nevertheless maintains itself, by itself, in this suspense.' (GA 40, 32/31)[124]

These initial remarks on the connection between Europe and the question of Being may help us to begin to rekindle Heidegger's question from *Einführung in die Metaphysik*: "Is "Being" a mere word and its sense a vapour, or is it the spiritual fate of the Evening-land?"' (GA 40, 40/40) In order to venture a response to this question, I will divide my response into three themes that comprise the next three sections: (1) the darkening of the world, (2) the spirit of technology, and (3) the German question.

STAGING THE DRAMA OF SPIRIT: ON THE DARKENING OF THE WORLD

As we have seen, Heidegger's starting point for posing the question of Being in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* is the emptying out of the word "Being." Such an emptying out is precisely what he alludes to when he writes of the open space whereby the sense of Being is divested of any ultimate or fundamental principality. Whilst tracing the empty word of Being from the sense of nothingness that characterises Being *as* other than beings, Heidegger accentuates how the question of Being 'loses its rank at once in the sphere of a human-historical dasein to whom *questioning* as an originary [*als ursprünglichen*: in the previous section Heidegger specifies the *Ur-sprung* as a leaping from the ground] power remains foreign [*fremd bleibt*].' (GA 40, 8/7)[125] Considering the fact that Being is

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[124] According to Gasché, the suspending question of Being demands that 'an individual, or for that matter, a people, depart from oneself—from an understanding oneself in the self-referential terms of, for instance, the natural, the biological, the native, the ethnic—and face the strangeness, and insecurity of the to-come, in order to have a historical-spiritual fate to begin with.' (Gasché 2009: 116)

[125] In a similar manner, Schürmann argues that 'National Socialism raises the collective subject to the rank of the standard sense of Being, conferring upon it the function that subjectivity has for modernity.' (Schürmann 2003: 516)

almost nothing more than a word (*fast nur noch ein Wort*) and its (es)sen(c)se an evanescent vapour, Heidegger argues that dasein 'does not just stand before [*wovor*] this fact as something alien and other [*als einem fremden Anderen*]' (GA 40, 54/53), but rather dasein stands within (*worin wir stehen*) the strange question of Being in such a manner that that with which dasein concern(s) itself remains unthought and without a place (*keinen Ort*).

On this view, the dislocated question of Being becomes situated in connection with the spiritual destiny of Europe as the place where the destiny of the earth is to be decided. Before inquiring further into the essential connection between Being and Europe, we should first step back for a moment and ask to what extent the question of Being intrinsically belongs to what Heidegger identifies as the world history of the earth and to what he assigns another title, namely, the 'darkening of the world [*Weltverdüsterung*]' (GA 40, 48/47).[126] Important to note here is how Heidegger, in explicating this history of world-darkening, draws attention to five essential events: the flight of the gods, the destruction of the earth, the reduction of human beings into a mass, the pre-eminence of the mediocre, and the hatred and mistrust of everything creative and free (GA 40, 48/47; 41/40). With respect to these five events associated with Heidegger's account of the world-darkening, I argue that each one can be understood as a prolegomenon to and preparation for the question of the spirit of Europe.

The main thrust of the rest of this chapter is therefore to shed some light on the issues that are at stake in this world-darkening that itself extends from the oblivion of Being and the resulting abandonment of Being (*Seinsverlassenheit*) to the age of nihilism in which the fall of Being as equivalent to the spiritual decline of the earth has advanced through technology to such degree that the entire world will be enfolded into darkness. Ultimately, all of this work is meant to serve the simple purpose of helping us to attain a better understanding of the interrelatedness of the question of Being and Europe's destiny.

Let us begin with an examination of the world-darkening itself. In saying that the gods have withdrawn with the light of Being, Heidegger calls attention to how the darkness is spreading across the world. Such darkness falling upon the world carries with

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[126] In 1946, for example, Heidegger in *Wozu Dichter?* points to a poetic opening of our age pertaining to an already imminent nightfall (GA 5, 269). Guided by his poet laureate, Hölderlin, with whom a relationship between the Germans and the Greeks is envisaged, Heidegger is able to characterise the needy times (*dürftiger Zeit*) of our age as belonging to the darkening of the land of evening, which has taken place ever since the God trinity of Heracles, Dionysus, and Christ "withdrew" from the world. Yet, as Courtine suggests, Christ, who is the secret brother of Heracles and Dionysus, could be the indication of a coming of the Morning-land. See Courtine 2000: 121-141.

it the risk that the day may turn into a world night where sleep becomes preferable to the task of reflecting on the dissolution, diminution, suppression, and misinterpretation of the question of Being. In an attempt to avert this risk, Heidegger therefore turns his attention to the *darkening* in order to show how this phenomenon concerns the question of Being on which hangs the spiritual destiny of both the Evening-land, Europe, and the earth (GA 40, 34/47; GA 5, 259).[127] In making this point, it is important for us to bear in mind that for Heidegger the earth is not identical to the (historical) world, but rather constitutes a space for the darkening of the world to take place.[128]

The attention Heidegger devotes to the moment of world-darkening helps us to establish the double-edged question of Being. For Heidegger, such world-darkening is at once an opening of what is and an exposure to the 'threat [*Bedrohung*] of Being as such through non-being.' (GA 39, 62) Such danger of Being signifies that perhaps the spiritual decline (*geistige Verfall*) of the earth has advanced so far that 'peoples are in danger of losing their last spiritual strength, the strength [with respect to the destiny of "Being," as Heidegger adds in 1953] that makes it possible even to see the decline' (GA 40, 41/40).

To further clarify the question of the world and what it means when we speak of its darkening, it is important to stress that the world to Heidegger is 'always [a] *spiritual* world' (GA 40, 48/47). Given this spiritualisation of the world, the world-darkening and its concomitant events taking place due to the bereavement of the light of Being indicates a sort of index to what Heidegger refers to as the misinterpretations (*Mißdeutung*) of spirit the degree of which is correlative with the degree of darkening.[129]

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[127] Although such a view appears pessimistic, Heidegger claims that neither pessimism nor optimism are adequate terms in this context insofar as they designate value assessments in relation to beings and among beings and therefore operate in the realm of metaphysics (GA 6.2, 393; 92; GA 40, 41/40). Nevertheless, for Heidegger, the question of the "flight of gods" runs parallel with another question that comes close to the issue of the holy (*das Heilige*) to which "evil" (*das Böse* or *das Grimme*) responds, in such an essential manner that evil becomes a being-historical question bound up with nihilism.

[128] Even if the term "earth" appears rather late in Heidegger's works, we are told in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* from 1935-1936 that the earth is not itself historical, whereas the world remains on the side of history. However, in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger seems not yet to have completely grasped the non-historical site of the earth as that which enables the human dasein to let things be and, moreover, to be bound together with the earth and heaven, mortal and gods. Crucial to Heidegger's understanding of the relation between the earth and the world is that they at the same time move apart from and come near to one another. This double movement is defined in the strife from which an openness of the "there" into which dasein may come to dwell. Thus, according to Haar, the darkening of the world does not point to the rejection of the world in Heidegger, but rather, to the task of the human dasein to live in the world 'a sort of double life with a double thinking' (Haar 1985: 183).

[129] Yet, one might ask, as does Derrida, whether it is possible to distinguish between the darkness of the concept of "spirit" (or "world") and the darkness of spirit (or world) itself? That is, do the misinterpretations of spirit merely indicate a misconception of spirit so that spirit itself remains unaffected by these errors, or does the world-darkening as significant to the disempowerment of spirit become revelatory of a spirit depriving itself of its power? (DE, 92/58-59)

It is on precisely these misinterpretations that Heidegger focuses in his description of the eclipse of the world as that which promotes a 'disempowering of the spirit [*Entmachtung des Geistes*]' (48/47).[130] For not only is the world always spiritual, but the spirit is always world-laden (*Welthaft*), which in turn suggests that the manner by which the world is enfolded into darkness not only affects the world but also the spirit. Despite Heidegger's previously dismissive critique of spirit, I argue that such a character of spirit indeed suggests a surprising moment in Heidegger's writings, as it traces out a decisive but ambiguous notion of spirit. For Heidegger, there exists within spirit a certain duplicity in that spirit is not merely power, but in a certain sense also impotency. Moreover, it is this impotency that makes all the difference for Heidegger's notion of spirit in that it implies a sort of dynamics by which spirit is destined to turn against itself and that the place where this turning becomes manifest is Europe. We will return to this point in the final section of this chapter. For now we will pursue our quest for arriving at a satisfactory interpretation of Heidegger's somewhat strange notion of spirit, which requires some initial reflections on the misinterpretations of spirit and their relatedness to the disempowering of spirit.

Although a thorough explication of the misinterpretations of spirit would require greater time and space than I can afford here, we may nevertheless undertake a more modest task of drawing attention to what I take to be the crux of Heidegger's argument. The four misinterpretations that Heidegger himself lists are as follows: (1) the spirit as intelligence, (2) the spirit as a tool serviceable for goals, (3) the spirit as depicting the realm of culture, and (4) the spirit becoming a matter of showpieces and spectacles, or indeed an alibi of political systems (GA 40, 50-53).[131] Common to all four

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[130] I have kept Fried's and Polt's translation of the German *Entmachtung* as *disempowering*, even though Derrida's *De l'esprit* that will be guiding us in this chapter renders *Entmachtung* as *destitution* in order to underline how spirit is deprived 'of its power or its force (*Macht*), its dynasty' (DE, 92/59), as well as how the loss of power is not "natural." On this point, Oisín Keohane has criticised Derrida (and the Bennington-Bowlby translation) for associating *impotence* (*impouvoir*) with *Entmachtung* (DE, 98/61-62), since the German word, so Keohane claims, 'signifies a loss of power, a deprivation of power' (Keohane 2016: 126), whereas *impouvoir* better translates Heidegger's term *Machtlose*. However, I believe Keohane's observation downplays the word play that Heidegger performs in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* between the prefixes *Ent-machtung* and *Er-mächtigung*, where the prefix *Ent-* (not only signifying a privation) determines the relation of power, so much so that the disempowerment (*Entmachtung*) of the enabling of power (*Er-mächtigung*) designates a sort of intensification, actively and transitively, of power, of *Macht* and *machen*.

[131] Heidegger mentions 'Russian Communism that after an initially purely negative attitude went directly over to such propagandistic tactics.' (GA 40, 53/52; translation modified) At this point, it becomes clear how Heidegger's discourse on Europe and spirit cannot avoid a sort of geopolitics. As we shall see, Heidegger's question of Being as significant to the destiny of Europe entails what Crépon calls a "spiritual geography," which, in the 1930s, concerns a political thought essential to history as the inscription of the

misinterpretations is the manner by which they identify spirit as a function, a capacity, or a power to calculate so as thereby to serve the production of commodities. In this process then, spirit turns into a spectacle, that is, into a representation by which the spirit becomes a figure for such things as religion, politics, science or the fine arts. Interestingly, these misinterpretations prove not to be something external to spirit, but rather exhibit an 'intrinsic belonging' (GA 40, 48/47) of the historical question of Being to the world history of the earth, which includes the world-darkening, disempowerment, and consequently the misinterpretations of spirit.

As we shall expand on in the final section of this chapter, spirit thus serves as a sort of transcategorical condition for its own (mis)interpretations whereby spirit, on the one hand, seems to be called into question by its misinterpretations; yet, on the other hand, spirit is itself that which makes these (mis-)interpretations possible all the while withdrawing from them. In relation to this duplicity, one could perhaps suggest that the question of spirit might very well reflect, to put it in Derrida's terms, 'the apparently absolute and long unquestioned privilege of the *Fragen*' (DE, 24/9).[132] Derrida therefore further suggests that spirit 'is perhaps the name Heidegger gives, beyond any other name, to this unquestioned possibility of the question' (DE, 25/10).

Against the backdrop of the four misinterpretations of spirit outlined above, Heidegger, in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, reiterates the main idea of spirit that he had previously developed in his 1933 Rectoral Address, namely, that 'spirit is originally attuned [*gestimmte*], knowing resolution [*Entschlossenheit*] to the essence of Being' (GA 40, 53/52). Building upon this characterisation of spirit's intimate relationship with the essence of Being, Heidegger in 1935 continues to say that 'Spirit is the empowering of the powers [*Ermächtigung der Mächte*] of beings as such and as a whole. Where spirit rules, beings as such always and in each case come into Being.' (GA 40, 53/52).

As we develop our argument, we will have much more to say about the central aspects of this passage. For the moment, however, we may make a brief remark that will point us further in our investigation of spirit. For, if the world is always spiritual and the spirit is always worldly, then the world-darkening cannot be understood as an event taking place independently of the powers of spirit. Rather, the world-darkening contains within

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sense, that is, meaning and direction, of the new beginning of the Evening-land. Cf. Crépon 2000: 167; Crépon 2007: 121-122.

[132] While I shall not repeat the discussion undertaken in the chapters on Valéry, concerning the dissymmetrical analogy between spirit and value according to which spirit is both a value and the source of all value, I will merely note that a similar structure appears to repeat itself in this context as well.

itself a disempowering of spirit that, in turn, turns out to be a potential outcome of the spiritual powers. As Heidegger therefore argues, the situation of spirit into which Europe becomes 'all the more dire [*verhängnisvoller*] because the disempowering of the spirit comes from Europe itself […] is determined at last [*endgültig*] by its own spiritual situation in the first half of the nineteenth century.' (GA 40, 49/48) The situation to which Heidegger alludes in this context is that which is 'all too readily and swiftly characterized as the "collapse of German idealism."' (GA 40 49/48)[133] Importantly, under this heading of the situation of spirit in Europe, Heidegger argues, lies the dissolution of spiritual powers into spiritlessness. As he writes: 'it was not German idealism that collapsed, but it was the age that was no longer strong enough to stand up to the greatness, breadth, and originality of that spiritual world' (GA 40, 49/48).

What this discussion above reveals is that spirit is fundamentally ambiguous. For Heidegger, spirit is essential to the world to such a degree that the age and the world can no longer stand up to the originality of the spiritual world. As such, the phenomenon of the world-darkening brings into view how spirit is, as Krell says, 'both the power of all power and the helpless victim of the vulgar forces that reduce its power to impotence.' (Krell 2015b: 88) Having now outlined the notion of the world-darkening, we may begin to trace the manner by which Heidegger carries this notion over into his reflections on the disempowering of spirit.

THE SPIRIT OF TECHNOLOGY

My aim thus far has been to show how the disempowering of spirit is intimately bound up with the situation in which Heidegger finds Europe in 1935. Heidegger describes this situation in a key passage from *Einführung in die Metaphysik* where he broadens its scope by making reference to three names. As he notes, '*Europe* lies in the pincers between *Russia* and *America*, which are metaphysically the same, namely in regard to their world-character and their relation to the spirit' (GA 40, 48-49/47-48; my emphasis).[134]

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[133] In an essay on Heidegger from 1960, Gadamer calls attention to Paul Ernst's *Der Zusammenbruch des deutschen Idealismus* (München: Müller 1918), which plays into the philosophy of the day when the slaughter of the Great War came as a shock to the intellectual life of Germany (Gadamer 1976: 213). Precisely the German intellectual life (*deutsche Geistesleben*) is the theme in Husserl's 1917 lecture *Fichtes Menschheitsideal* in which Husserl addresses the question whether fullness (*Fülle*) of the cultural value (*Kulturwerte*) pertaining to the German idealism has been exhausted, to such a degree that it comes to affect 'our spiritual life' and suddenly immerses it into a thick fog (*Nebel*) (Hua XXV, 267-268).

[134] In this very specific usage, the twin notions "America" and "Russia" have made their way, Trawny argues, into the language of Heidegger through Alexis de Tocqueville's *De la démocratie en Amérique* (1835/1840) in which de Tocqueville says that two great nations exist on the earth—the Russians and the Anglo-Americans (Trawny 2004: 101-102n.212). Donatella di Cesare, on the contrary, finds the topos in

Beginning in this way with what seems to be a geopolitical perspective on Europe, Heidegger refines his approach in terms of what Derrida calls a *diagnosis* of the spiritual configuration of Europe whose most distinctive feature is the misinterpretations of spirit. One should note, however, that Derrida here raises doubt about the discourse of diagnosis. As he points out, it is important to remember that the verb διαγιγνώσκειν ("to discern" by learning something thoroughly) plays together with κρίσις in the process of knowledge, in that it is neither 'that of knowledge nor clinical or therapeutic,' (DE, 73/45) but rather refers to all the resources of the spirit.

Putting aside, for the time being, the question of Europe's Being situated in the pincers between Russia and America, let us turn now to an analysis of what Heidegger means in saying that Russia and America are essentially the *same*. Concerning this "sameness," Heidegger emphasises two things. First, from a metaphysical perspective, Russia and America are the same in that they share the same kind of relation to the world and hence to the spirit. Put in another way, America and Russia both assume the same metaphysical perspective insofar as they belong to the history of metaphysics characterised by the forgetfulness of Being. Second, Russia and America are the same because of what they share, namely, the *same*.

Given this second point, I would like, in what follows, to address a claim I take to be central to Heidegger's view of the situation of a spiritual Europe, namely, that the *same* implies the notion of "exchangeable equivalence." Although Heidegger examines this notion in detail in one of his Bremer lectures, I will argue that the same notion is foreshadowed in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. For Heidegger, such a rendering of the same in terms of equivalence is precisely what he understands to be the function of technology. On this view, then, Heidegger finds that that which Russia and America share is the 'same hopeless frenzy of unchained technology and of the rootless [*Bodenlosen*] organization of the average man [*Normalmenschen*].' (GA 40, 40-41/40)[135] As Heidegger makes clear about the technological uprooting of the earth becoming global:

Hermann Keyserling's *Das Spektrum Europas* (1928: 383; 397; di Cesare 2000: 116n.39), whereas Crépon suggests Spengler's last work *Jahre der Entscheidung* from 1933 (Spengler 2014: 45; Crépon 2007: 114) in which it is argued that North America's 'hunt for dollars' subverts European economy, and by levelling its political power to 'economic trends [*wirtschaftliche Tendenzen*]' America has become an equivalent to bolshevism which in turn reflects the Asian power. In this thesis, I, however, follow Derrida's claim that Europe, America, and Russia are proper names, which still just mean "Europe." What is crucial to this claim is that 'geopolitics conducts us back again from the earth and the planet to the world and to the world as a world *of spirit*. Geopolitics is none other than a *Weltpolitik* of spirit' (DE, 73/45-46).

[135] In his 2015 study *Banalité de Heidegger*, Nancy has made a similar observation, arguing that Heidegger's "metaphysical anti-Semitism" can be described in terms of Marx' qualification of "money" as a general equivalent in which 'productive humanity is alienated and flattened down from its own proper

> When the farthest corner of the globe [*Erdballs*] has been conquered technologically and can be exploited economically; when any incident you like, in any play you like, at any time you like, becomes accessible as fast as you like; when you can simultaneously "experience" an assassination attempt against a king in France and a symphony concert in Tokyo; when time is nothing but speed, instantaneity, and simultaneity, and time as history has vanished from all dasein of all peoples […]; yes then, there still looms like a specter over all this uproar the question: what for?—where to?—and what then? (GA 40, 41/40)

Whatever we make of Heidegger's disparaging remarks about the framework of technology (as inseparable from that of science and economy), such as when he observes that the darkening of the world discloses a conquest and exploitation of the globe, it is nevertheless important for us to keep in mind that Heidegger does not intend to dismiss technology as such. This much is made clear from even a quick survey of *Die Frage nach der Technik*, for it is hard to miss here such passages where Heidegger remarks that 'The essence of modern technology rests on enframing [*Ge-stell*]. This enframing pertains to the destiny [*Geschick*] of disclosure [*Entbergung*]. These sentences say something different from the frequently blared prattle that technology is the fate [*Schicksal*] of our age, where fate means: the inevitableness of an unalterable course' (GA 7, 26).

Given these remarks above, Richard Rojcewicz suggests, in his engagement with Heidegger's 1942-1943 lecture course on Parmenides, that Heidegger's discourse of technology is neither capitulating nor oppositional in that 'everything "anti" thinks in the sense of that against which it is "anti".' (GA 54, 77; Rojcewicz 2006: 140-141) If we follow Rojcewicz here, it thus becomes possible for us to see Heidegger's remarks on technology from 1935 in a different light than merely that of anti-technology, that is, if we may consider the metaphysical sameness as a response to the question of technology, which resides in the spiritual configuration of the modern epoch emerging towards the end of the history of Being.

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existence and therefore from its value or sense.' (Nancy 2017: 15) In his account, Nancy introduces a fourth name to the central names of the Evening-land, Americanism, and Bolshevism, namely, that of the Jewish people, who, according to various entries in Heidegger's *Schwarze Hefte*, represent the figure of the very uprooting of the Evening-land. Nancy explains: 'the Jewish people claims for itself a racial principle. Such a principle itself comes from a "domination of life by machination." [GA 95, 56] But the machination that gives rise to such a naturalist principle leads in the direction of a complete "deracialization" (*Entrassung*) of a humanity reduced to the undifferentiated equality of all, and in general of all beings.' (Nancy 2017: 15)

Before broaching this spiritual configuration, let us briefly recall Heidegger's notion of technology. In light of our discussion of Heidegger's take on European nihilism, we may draw attention to two important points. First, the will to power is ultimately a matter of the essence of power, according to which power as *the* power is always already an insatiable will to *more* power (*Übermächtigung der jeweiligen Machstufe*; *Machtsteigerung*) (GA 6.2, 239). Second, the will to power is always already a *will to will* (*Willen zum Willen*) in that the autotelic power of the will is not directed towards a specific goal but aims at nothing other than the objectification (*Vergegenständlichung*), conquest, and exploitation of the earth (GA 6.2, 240; GA 9, 303).

On the basis of this provisional outline of the conditions underlying Heidegger's metaphysical determination of technology that we have been developing thus far, we begin see how the parallelism between America and Russia consists in the participation of both these "countries" in the same metaphysical binding to the question of Being—a question "hopelessly" intertwined with technology as the manifestation of the modern epoch of metaphysics. Indeed, some years later, Heidegger refers directly to this manifestation in his characterisation of Europe as a concept of modernity. As he writes in *Das Ereignis*: 'What is European and planetary is the ending and completion' (GA 71, 95/80). In other words, Heidegger suggests that the parallelism of America and Russia is itself modelled on Europe's ending insofar as it represents the name of the dire situation of the world—a situation permeated by the disempowering of spirit stemming from the spirit of Europe itself (GA 40, 49).

When speaking of technology in this context, Heidegger insists that such technology ought not to be understood instrumentally, but rather essentially. However, as Heidegger famously puts it, the essence of technology is not itself technological (GA 7, 36).[136] Here it is worth emphasising that the essence of technology manifests itself in what Heidegger calls the enframing (*das Ge-stell*) (GA 7, 31). To put it provisionally, the enframing opens up the world as a sort of horizon upon which beings are revealed and understood as disposable (*Bestand*)—an understanding which can be traced in a line back to Descartes' metaphysics according to which beings are reduced to objects for the representation (*Vor-stellen*) of a subject.

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[136] This claim, according to Derrida, joins a traditional discourse on essence, which entails that the essence of technology is protected from any contamination by technology. As Derrida sees it, it is spirit that Heidegger seeks to save from technology by determining its essence elsewhere than within technology. By distinguishing between "Geistigkeit" and "Geistlichkeit," Heidegger doubles spirit, according to Derrida, in an attempt to save spirit from spirit (DE, 26-27; Sallis 1995: 22).

For Heidegger, however, this mode of subjective representation not only results in an objectification of beings but also—and more importantly—it intervenes in the nature of beings by rendering them disposable and thus calculable to technology. As such, the subjective representation of beings as objects carries along with it the reduction of the spiritual character of the world to 'extension [*Ausdehnung*] and number.' (GA 40, 49/48) The question remains, however, in what sense the power of technology as the insatiable will to more power seeks to subdue the spirit.

When Heidegger, in 1935, considers the question of spirit, he finds himself preoccupied with a notion of spirit that is thoroughly imbued with Christian-metaphysical connotations right down to its very core, while at the same time, attempting to resist the metaphysical notion of spirit that has resulted in a reduction of the world and Being to sheer calculability. As Heidegger writes: 'Being as calculable in this way [i.e. becoming thinking in the pure thought of mathematics], Being as set into calculation, makes beings into something that can be ruled in modern, mathematically structured technology, which is *essentially* something different from every previously known use of tools [*Werkzeuggebrauch*].' (GA 40, 202/207)

In light of this discussion, we are now in a position to grasp more clearly Heidegger's understanding of technology in what would seem to be its role as the condition of the world-darkening. Moreover, if we comprehend this darkening as grounded in an understanding of the world that is represented with a specific enframing, it becomes apparent that the 'lofty overabundance and the mastery of energies [*Kräfte*],' (GA 40, 49/48) is not simply to be understood in terms of the problem of how quantitative significations can disclose anything about the world. Rather, such overabundance is instead to be understood as that which is associated with what Janicaud refers to as an 'inversion of *less* within *more*,' that is, a 'scarcity in overinformation.' (Janicaud 1997: 138) Janicaud's description of a paradoxical structure of simultaneous abundance and scarcity is congruous with what Heidegger himself writes in 1935 when he notes that in 'America and Russia, then, this all intensified until it turned into the measureless [*maßlose*] so-on-and-so-forth of the ever-identical [*Immergleichen*] and the indifferent [*Gleichgültigen*], until finally this quantitative temper became a quality of its own [*dieses Quantitative in eine eigene Qualität umschlug*].' (GA 40, 49/48)

Within the framework of technology, the ultimate level of indifference is that associated with the principle of "exchangeable equivalence." Such equivalence implies not only a shift in the reversal of everything into a value of things, that is, an

objectification of beings, but also a reversal in terms of which the determination of beings becomes reversed by its very indeterminacy.[137] In his Bremer lecture on *Das Ge-Stell* (1949), Heidegger provides an account of this indeterminacy entailing the universal (*Universal*) principle of enframing. According to Heidegger, such a principle is characterised by the coordination of uniformity, instantaneity, and simultaneity of everything. Moreover, he also describes this principle in terms of replaceability. As he explains it, 'everything is imposed upon for the constant replaceability of the equivalent by the equivalent. […] A constantly exchangeable equivalence holds equally in everything constant. The equivalence of value in everything constant secures for this its constancy through a replaceability that is orderable and in place.' (GA 79, 44/42)

In his 1942 summer course on Hölderlin's hymn "Der Ister," Heidegger reflects on the ultimate indifference of technology as an immense prioritising of quantity over quality, which has itself become 'a quality, that is, essential in kind, namely as that of measurelessness.' (GA 53, 86)[138] The logic at stake in this priority of quantity, Heidegger argues, is not itself anything quantitative, but rather concerns the *metaphysical allure* to convert (*"Umschlag"*) quantity into quality. As Heidegger writes in 1936, 'it is no longer the representable object of something "quantitative" without limit; instead, it is quantity as quality.' (GA 65, 135/106)[139]

What we have here, then, is an outline of Heidegger's notion of technology whose principle of exchangeable equivalence throws the world into a darkness of endless accumulation of the same. Moreover, we are likewise provided here with a picture of how the world, by means of technology, detaches itself from its own spirituality—or even falls away from itself, as Heidegger puts it in *Sein und Zeit*, in emphasising how the world

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[137] In Janicaud's terms: 'the reduction to the quantitative, a cold rationality cynically accounting for its effects of power, and most of all, a notion of Spirit limited to one superior principle *reversed* by the course of things, whimpering over "mental order" and its lost content.' (Janicaud 1997: 139) What is at stake, then, is not only an efficiency of things whose meaning functions 'whenever and wherever as whatsoever,' but also an inefficiency of a world that, as Schuback argues, does not allow transformation to assert its unsurpassable heterogeneity in the continuous efficiency (as well as efficient continuity). Cf. Schuback 2013: 14-15.

[138] In this context, in 1942, Heidegger identifies this logic of priority with "Americanism" of which "Bolshevism" is only a derivative form (GA 53, 86). Some pages earlier, Heidegger writes: 'We know today that the Anglo-Saxon world of Americanism has resolved to annihilate [*vernichten*] Europe, that is, the homeland [*Heimat*], and that means: the commencement of the Evening-land. Whatever has the character of commencement is indestructible [*unzerstörbar*]. America's entry into this planetary war is not its entry into history; rather, it is already the ultimate American act of American ahistoricality [*Geschichtslosigkeit*] and self-devastation [*Selbstverwüstung*].' (GA 53, 68)

[139] See Nancy 2015a: 34.

unworlds itself (*die Entweltlichung der Welt*) (SZ, 75; 112).[140] Furthermore, in light of Heidegger's problematisation of technology that we have been outlining here, it is important for us to keep in mind that the unworlding of the world and the spiritual world are not mutually exclusive. This is the case precisely in that the latter holds the possibility within itself of becoming uninhabitable through the dissolution of spirit.

If we return to the initial point above that started us down the path of discussing technology, namely, Heidegger's suggestion that Russia and America, from a metaphysical perspective, are the same, it becomes clear that we must approach this point in terms of an "exchangeable equivalence."

Furthermore, we may note that the manner by which Heidegger reflects on Russia and America with respect to their metaphysical sameness may be said to intensify not only the embodiment of the misinterpretations of the spirit, but also the unchained technology and its rootless organisation of the world, which carries on until spirit "itself" is turned into the measureless indifference. Such indifference of spirit serves, as it were, to indicate how dasein begins to slide into a world that, as Heidegger argues, lacks 'that depth from which the essential always comes and returns to human beings, thereby forcing them to superiority and allowing them to act on the basis of rank.' (GA 40, 49/48) The consequence of this lack is, claims Heidegger, that 'all things sank to the same level, to a surface resembling a blind mirror that no longer mirrors, that cast back nothing' (GA 40, 49/48). If this is the case, however, one might suggest that the problem for Europe is that Europe is also submitted to this ultimate level of indifference such that it may no longer identify itself with respect to its superior difference from other regions of the world.[141]

Moreover, as Heidegger proceeds his analysis, it becomes clear that he intends to ponder technology in its most extreme of potentiality. Whereas the first incursion from the world-transforming power of technology represents, for Heidegger, an expansion of quantity to the farthest corner of the globe resulting in its exploitation and conquest, the second gesture of technology turns out to be even more important to Heidegger's thought concerning the spiritual Europe precisely due to the fact that the essence of technology is not itself anything technological. As Heidegger succinctly puts this latter point, 'Modern

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[140] Nancy associates Heidegger's notion of "enframing" with the general equivalence in such a manner by which the singularities of the world are reduced to a principle of exchangeability (Nancy 2007a: 34).

[141] As Dastur argues, the danger of Europe becoming planetary is the uniformity by which Europe opens up its ability to govern, that is, Europe's way of approaching the other or its possibility towards others such that Europe loses its ability in general (Dastur 1993: 195).

machine technology is "spirit" [*Die neuzeitliche Maschinentechnik ist "Geist"*]' (GA 53, 66).[142] Without developing this point at any great length, we may nevertheless note that Heidegger ultimately identifies the essence of technology as "spirit," and in such an essential manner that through such identification we come to see how the dire situation of Europe has to do with a spirit whose essential characteristic is the uprooting of a people that 'conceives its dasein in the historical-spiritual world (GA 40, 8/11; 42/42).

Accordingly, when Heidegger, in his infamous Rector's Address argues that 'the spiritual world of a people is not the superstructure of a culture any more than it is an armoury filled with useful information and value,' but rather constitutes 'the power that most deeply preserves the people's earth- and blood-bound strengths as the power that most deeply arouses and most profoundly shakes the people's existence,' (GA 16, 112) we stumble upon an ambiguity inherent to his insistence on a "people" inhabiting the middle of Europe. On the one hand, the dire situation of Europe reminds the "people of the middle" of the fragile situatedness of Europe, a fragility which has to do with Europe's historical-spiritual dasein and hence with the disempowering of spirit. On the other hand, however, Europe, serving as a sort of privileged access to the spiritual world, experiences how its self-inflicted disempowerment of spirit is at the same time accompanied by an excessive sense of spirit that is no longer to be situated anywhere.

THE GERMAN QUESTION

Up to this point, we have been concerned with uncovering the degree to which Heidegger's discussion in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* is beholden to the question of the world as well as the question of Europe's place within this world and in relation to the metaphysical bond that Heidegger draws between America and Russia.

In order to proceed with our reading of Heidegger's spiritual Europe, we must try to understand what exactly it is that affords Europe, and in particular what Heidegger refers to as the centre of Europe such an extraordinary position in the darkening of the world. As Heidegger writes, 'We lie in the pincers. Our people, as standing in the centre [*Mitte*], suffers the most intense pressure—our people, the people richest in neighbours

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[142] Indeed, when Heidegger puts quotation marks around the term "spirit," it is not with the intent to 'return to a previous state of the world' where we would also return to an authentically spiritual world. Such a 'childish' wish, Heidegger argues, would be just as naïve as to state the overcoming of metaphysics by denying the significance of metaphysics to the history of Being (GA 53, 66). Yet, as we shall see below, Heidegger's recourse to the quotation marks around spirit suggest, according to Derrida, that the spirit returns in order to 'designate something other which resembles it, and of which it is, as it were, the metaphysical ghost [*fantôme*], the spirit of another spirit' (DE, 45/24).

and hence the most endangered people, and for all that, the metaphysical people.' (GA 40, 41/41)[143]

For, Heidegger, this level of danger, exposition, and suffering of the people inhabiting the centre of the centre of Europe, becomes a kind of index of greatness. This is because, as we have seen in the previous section, those countries in-between which Europe lies are said to intensify 'the predominance of a cross-section of the indifferent,' that is, 'the onslaught of that which aggressively destroys all rank and all that is world-spiritual' (GA 40, 49/48-49). What is ultimately at stake in the characterisation of the European centre and, in particular, the "people" who are most exposed to danger, is the question of Being that has become denuded by virtue of its loss of significance in the spiritual history of Europe.[144] This is what I have attempted to show in the previous sections by distinguishing between two aspects of the question of spirit: on the one hand, the spirit as the heritage that represents the manner by which the human dasein relates to the world, and, on the other hand, the spirit understood as determining the historical character of the world. On this background, Heidegger now says:

> Asking about beings as such and as a whole, asking the question of Being, is then one of the essential conditions for awakening the spirit, and thus for an originary world of historical dasein, and thus for subduing the danger of the darkening of the world, and thus for taking over the historical mission [*Übernehmen der geschichtlichen Sendung*] of our people, the people of the centre of the Evening-land [*der abendländischen Mitte*]. (GA 40, 53/52)

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[143] Undoubtedly, these remarks signal toward a highly debatable point in Heidegger's writings. Bambach, for instance, argues that 'to miss the political significance of this attempt at repatriation,' that is, the attempt to repatriate 'the German *Volk* at the origin of Western philosophy' in order to meet, in an autochthonous manner, the rootlessness of American and Russian technological frenzy, 'is to lose the very thread that binds Heidegger's thought and language.' (Bambach 2003: 50-51) However, notwithstanding the fact that central themes from the 1935 lecture course play directly into the hands of Heidegger's critics, we must try to pay attention to the way in which Heidegger himself characterises "Europe," "earth," and "people" in view of a historical-spiritual properness. Thus, in contrast to Bambach's reading, which not only arranges its argument based on conclusions drawn from Baeumler, Jünger, Krieck, Otto, etc., rather than Heidegger "himself," but also fails to consider more carefully the implications of Heidegger's notion of the "earth," Gasché argues that beneath the surface of geopolitics, the German people and their central position in Europe has to do with a sort of geophilosophy, according to which the question of Being as determinative for the spiritual fate of the Evening-land 'can always only be asked on the basis of the inception of the historical-spiritual Dasein of a people, from and in view of this particular people's ownmost future Dasein.' (Gasché 2009: 117) To quote Nancy's succinct observation: 'The obligation that we face today belongs above all to analysis, not because we ought to forget moral judgment (or political or philosophical judgment), but because up to now we have still not gone far enough in *thinking the deep reasons for our condemnations*.' (Nancy 2017: 10-11)

[144] Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe 1990: 20.

How can we understand this historical-spiritual mission of "our people"? And who, exactly, is this people? A preliminary answer to these questions could be the one Gasché provides when he claims that Heidegger ventured a harkening back to the Greeks whose voice of Being, as it were, enables this missioned people to reawaken the spirit. As Gasché writes, 'Greece claims only Europeans, and within Europe […] the people of the middle in particular—the Germans.'[145]

It is significant to note, however, that in all the cases where Heidegger mentions "the people of the centre," "our people," or "the metaphysical people," he does not explicitly associate this "people" with the "Germans,"[146] but this does not indicate that Heidegger's understanding of the European centre carries no significance for the question of the Germans. Yet, in order to see how a relation between the centre of Europe and the Germans might be established, we need to take a closer look at precisely how Heidegger depicts "the people of the centre" in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*.

When Heidegger invokes the various instances of "people" by employing the possessive pronoun "our" in the first person plural, he does so chiefly to indicate the manner in which "our people" assumes the historical-spiritual mission. In the introduction to his French translation of Heidegger's *Die Armut*, Lacoue-Labarthe suggests that Heidegger's employment of the possessive pronoun "our" serves to indicate a sort of "solidary inclusion" on the condition that such an inclusion is essentially "German."[147]

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[145] Gasché 2009: 107. Gasché adds, however, that the thought of Being, even if it is conceived in terms of 'a particular language and a people (as a result of which the universal loses its abstraction and acquires a hold on what is), does not in principle preclude the possibility of other incarnations.' (Gasché 2009: 107)

[146] If one allows oneself to be seduced by the fascination which language has for Heidegger, then one might say that Heidegger does not have to say "the German people" in order to describe the "people," since the German "deutsch" is not a tribal name. As he would have read in *Grimms Deutsches Wörterbuch*, the adjective "deutsch" stems from the Old High German *diutisc*, whose Latin cognate, *theodiscus*, designates that which "belongs to the people." Through a Western Frankish mediation, "deutsch" goes back to the Old High German *diot[a]* whose Gothic *þiuda* and *þiudiskô* cognate what is related to the Greek ἐθνικῶς, thereby emphasising the kinship between "deutsch" and "people," "nation," "tribe," or "land." (GDW, 1043-1051; Duden, 142-143) The point of these remarks, however, is not to belittle the aspect of "nationalism" in Heidegger's thought of "the people." But this nationalism, which matured in the folklore (*Volkslied*), that is, the 'postromantic peasant imagery and hanseatic cities, anti-Napoleonic student councils, medieval guilds, chivalric orders, the Holy Roman Empire,' (Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe 1990: 292), draws a complex picture in which "nationalism" serves as 'nothing but the consequence of a philosophical commitment (if not of philosophical commitment itself), and it aims at nothing other, politically, than submitting politics itself to the sense of this political commitment.' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1986: 158/287)

[147] Lacoue-Labarthe 2004: 8. While Heidegger in August 1933, in referring to Hitler's revolution of National-Socialism, encourages 'the German people' to recover its own essence by reestablishing the dignity (*sich würdig machen*) and greatness of its destiny—a greatness lying in 'its blood, its root, and its corporeal growth [*leiblichen Wachstum*]' (GA 16, 151), in the 1934-1935 Hölderlin course, distances himself from such determination of the people in terms of 'Blut und Boden' (GA 39, 254). Cf. Vetter 2014: 362-363.

But who, then, are the Germans?[148] This question is posed by Lacoue-Labarthe in *Heidegger, la politique du poème* in order to underscore the geo-philosophical point of Heidegger's answer, namely, the "metaphysical people" or, as Lacoue-Labarthe puts it, the "philosophical people par excellence" and the "people of thinkers and poets." (Lacoue-Labarthe 2002: 127/65) Although Lacoue-Labarthe's claim here might strike us as somewhat grandiloquent, the use of such strong language, in my view, serves the purpose of stressing the aspect of Heidegger's geophilosophical model that designates a people that carries with it the idea of philosophy as imposing a spiritual meaning on its geographical designation. Hence, in defining the essence of philosophy, Heidegger writes that philosophy is 'a thoughtful opening of the avenues and vistas of a knowing that establishes measure and rank, a knowing in which and from which a people conceives its dasein in the historical-spiritual world and brings it to fulfilment' (GA 40, 12/11).[149] This geophilosophical model drawn up by Heidegger, I would argue, carries two important implications that prove especially relevant for gaining an understanding of the role of the "German people" in the destiny of the Evening-land. The first implication is that "our people" as the people of the middle of Europe must assume the spiritual mission that stamps the historical destiny of the Evening-land. The second implication, which is implied by the first, is that this "metaphysical people" is determined through its language. Let us consider these two implications each in turn.

First, as Heidegger clarifies in the 1953 annotation to *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (GA 40, 41/40), the destinal stamp on the metaphysical people concerns the question of Being to such an extent that the spiritual destiny of Europe becomes amalgamated with the destiny of Being. Hence, the "Germany" of the people situated in the centre of Europe marks the site where the destiny of Europe asserts itself as the oblivion of Being. In Heidegger's view, then, the oblivion of Being proper to the thinking of Being becomes a task to be assumed exclusively by the "German people" in order to restore the dignified

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[148] According to Wahl's existential perspective, Heidegger's inquiry into "who we are" fails to ponder the proper philosophical category of the individual (Wahl 1956: 57). One sees a connection between Wahl's perspective and one of Dastur's comments to Derrida's reading of Heidegger: the crime of Nazism as a wickedness of the metaphysical spirit of a people not only loses 'the idea that crime is always singular and individual,' but also that the metaphysics of *Geistlichkeit* falls 'back into a mere metaphysics of *Geistigkeit*, that is, into a metaphysical construction that cannot account for the *always* individual deeds' (Dastur 1992: 34). As a ramification of this discussion, one may refer to Lacoue-Labarthe's discussion of Heidegger's surreptitious way of 'restoring a subject (of history) at a point where the thinking of ek-static *Dasein* and finitude […] should have prevented any confusion of *Mitsein* with a notion of community as substance or even, quite simply with an entity' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 115/78) of the people whether Greek or German.

[149] Cf. Crépon 2007: 109.

destiny to a declining Europe as well as to return to the 'spiritual forces' to the Evening-land (GA 40, 41/41; GA 13 117; 301).[150] As Heidegger writes:

> All this implies that this people, as a historical people, must transpose itself—and with it the history of the Evening-land—from the centre of their future happening into the originary realm of the powers of Being. Precisely if the great decision [*Entscheidung*] regarding Europe is not to go down the path of annihilation—precisely then can this decision come about only through the development of new, historically *spiritual* [*geistiger*] forces from the centre. (GA 40, 42/41)

Hence, just as Heidegger paints the picture of a Europe that is coming to an end by virtue of both its technology and its movement of planetarisation, he also sketches out a sort of narrative of the history of Being in which Europe is granted the possibility to rescue itself. Accordingly, to this history of ending there belongs also a history of a new beginning, as when Heidegger asks the question of Being in order to retrieve the 'beginning of our historical dasein, in order to transform it into the other beginning' (GA 40, 42/41). As we saw in Chapter Two, this first beginning is the one of "the Greeks," which, in order to entertain the narrative of the "history of Being" as other than a history of decline, must be connected with the other beginning of "the Germans."

At this point, however, it is important that we proceed carefully in that the narrative of the history of Being at stake in Heidegger seems, paradoxically, to point to itself as an end of the very possibility of a narrative of history. When Heidegger thus speaks of the "end," he has in mind neither the end perceived as something merely negative that puts a stop to something positive, nor the end as something that has been wholly overcome. Instead, the "end" of the history of Being as metaphysics signifies an exhaustion or completion 'in the sense of coming to fulfilment [*Vollendung*]' (GA 40, 64/63)—even if this exhaustion keep on going after its own coming to an end, which is thus an end without end unceasingly surviving itself.[151] Toward the end of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, Heidegger explicitly reflects on the end in terms of the history of Being:

> The philosophy of the Greeks attains dominance in the Evening-land not on the basis of its originary beginning [*ursprünglichen Anfang*] but on the basis of the inceptive end [*anfängliche Ende*], which in Hegel is brought to

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[150] See Lacoue-Labarthe 2004: 22. On this understanding, Lacoue-Labarthe refers to Heidegger's nationalism as spiritual, that is, as a 'national-spiritualism' (Lacoue-Labarthe 2004: 27).

[151] In *Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens* (1964), Heidegger recalls the etymology of the German word "Ende," meaning place (*Ort*). Hence, the end is that place in which the whole of philosophy's history is gathered (*versammelt*) in its uttermost possibility (GA 14, 70-71).

fulfilment in a great and final manner. Where history is genuine, it does not perish merely by ending and expiring [*ver-endet*] like an animal. It perishes only historically. (GA 40, 197/202)

For Heidegger, "our people" have thus already entered the end of the history of Being and continue to exist in it. This in turn indicates that these people thereby stand in the shadow of the oblivion of Being that is itself proper to the thinking of Being. Yet, one might still ask how the narrative of the history of Being is, more specifically, said to be one that "the Germans" must retrieve from the *first beginning* of "Greeks" that is itself coming to an *end* so as to transform this ending into an *other beginning*.[152]

This brings us to the second implication of the "metaphysical people," namely, that they are determined through their language. In order to see why this is the case, let us begin by considering the manner by which Heidegger elevates "the Germans" to a privileged position—a position which they achieve because of the 'special inner relationship [*innere Verwandtschaft*] of the German language with the language of the Greeks and their thinking' (GA 16, 679).[153] In addition to this, we shall also explore how the semantics of spirit, as Derrida has argued, assigns to the German *Geist* an intrinsic relation with the Greek "spirit" in terms of which Heidegger subscribes to a European history of the meaning of spirit, while at the same time, asking about the spirit *of* spirit, gestures towards a sort of transgression of the boundaries of the European representation of the Evening-land.

In order to demonstrate the inner relationship between the German and the Greek, Heidegger directs his attention to the fundamental Greek word for Being, φύσις, as well as the manner by which it has traditionally been translated as "nature." For Heidegger, however, the word "nature" can be employed to challenge the simplistic limitations set up by this traditional translation precisely in that it also unearths an entire history of translation significant to our (ill-conceived) understanding of Being. For, as Heidegger stresses, to render the Greek φύσις with the Latin *natura* is not only a matter of translation, but also 'the first stage in the isolation and alienation of the originary essence of Greek philosophy.' (GA 40, 15/14) Indeed, Heidegger even argues that the Latin translation destroys (*zerstört*) the 'authentic philosophical naming force of the Greek word.' (GA 40,

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[152] See Trawny 2014: 17-30.
[153] While these words are taken from the 1966 interview in *Der Spiegel*, I shall argue that this inner relationship is laid out by Heidegger already in 1935. This relationship between "the Greeks" and "Germany," which was indicated already in Chapter Two, will be laid out in the next section dealing with what Trawny calls the "being-historical landscape" into which these two protagonists play a decisive role.

15/14) That is, as the Latin language cultivates the alienation of the Greek philosophy, Heidegger finds in the history of metaphysics (as a history of the forgetfulness and mistranslation of Being) a transference of alienation via Christianity and the Christian Middle Ages up through modern philosophy (GA 40, 16/14-15).

Having established part of the background of Heidegger's provisional account of the Greco-Latin relationship in place, we may now turn to the theme of the grammar and etymology of the German word "Sein" that Heidegger develops in the second chapter of *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. To put the matter as directly as possible, for Heidegger, the return to the Greek language serves a double purpose. On the one hand, it extirpates the Latin and Roman culture that, by appropriating the Greek language, represents metaphysical decadence. On the other hand, it re-enacts the first beginning of the Greeks so as to underline the inner relationship between Greek language and the German language in order to prepare an-other beginning.[154]

As such, Heidegger's return to the *Greek* language—and Heidegger italicises "Greek"—gives the very development of Western grammar 'its whole meaning.' (GA 40, 61/60) What is perhaps more surprising is that in order to retrieve Greek as the language of philosophy, Heidegger argues that 'only our German language has the emerging deep and creative philosophical character to compare with the Greek.' (GA 31, 61)

THE GERMAN *GEIST*

In contrast to all other languages of the world, the Greek language is, next to the German language with which it stands in intimate relation, 'at once the most powerful and the most spiritual of languages.' (GA 40, 61/60) However, over the course of his attempt to define the spiritual character of language, Heidegger claims that not even the Greek language has a word to name the German *Geist*.[155] In order to see what Heidegger has in mind with "spirit," or rather *Geist*, we can draw some interpretive help from Derrida's 1987 study *De l'esprit*. In this study, Derrida demonstrates that, for Heidegger, the motif

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[154] I note here that Heidegger's attempt to reestablish the relationship between Greek and German can be traced throughout his authorship. For instance, in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* Heidegger discusses the Latin *trans*-lation of ὑποκείμενον to *subiectum* (GA 5, 7-9), and in *Der Satz vom Grund* he devotes the thirteenth session to discuss the implications of the Latin *ratio* as a translation of λόγος (GA 10, 153-169).

[155] Heidegger was certainly not alone in emphasising an intimate relation between the spirit and "we Germans." Let us take only one example. In the preface to *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit* (1809) about which Heidegger lectures in 1936, Schelling calls for this particular spirit—in contrast to a sectarian spirit (*Sektengeist*) that all too often rules over the Germans—'whose perfect configuration [*Ausbildung*] seems to have been destined to the Germans since the beginning of time' (Schelling 1997: 335).

of spirit occupies 'a major and obvious place in this line of thought,' (DE, 16/3) in such a manner that 'it seems to withdraw itself from any destruction or deconstruction, as if it did not belong to a history of ontology' (DE, 18/5). Moreover, Derrida also remarks that, given that the force of naming for Heidegger is crucial to philosophical thinking, German is thus 'the only language, at the end of the day, at the end of the race, to be able to name this maximal or superlative (*geistigste*) excellence which in short it shared, finally, *only up to a certain point* with Greek.' (DE, 113/71)

By emphasising how Heidegger's *Geist* amounts to a warranting of any question by means of its own unquestionability, Derrida suggests the following characterisation of Heidegger's spirit: '*Geist* cannot fail to gather this interlacing insofar as […] it is another name for the One and the *Versammlung*, one of the names of collecting and gathering.' (DE, 24/9) Such account of spirit echoes Derrida's numerous readings of Heidegger's notion of λόγος in terms of the notion of gathering (*Versammlung*)—the latter of which we find, for example, in Heidegger's essay "Logos (Heraklit, Fragment 50)" (GA 7, 225). According to Derrida, Heidegger by issuing forth this notion of gathering indirectly criticises the subjectivist determination of spirit in opposition to that of the material (*Stofflichen*), and alters its use to fit another sense than that of a metaphysical determination of spirit. As Derrida argues, an example of this other sense of spirit can be found in Heidegger's 1952 reading of Trakl concerning the inherent relation between the spirit and the flame (DE, 129/98; GA 12, 55).[156]

My aim here is neither to undertake a detailed analysis of Heidegger's reading of Trakl nor to offer a full account of Derrida's reading of Heidegger's reading. In spite of this, I would nevertheless like to make a brief point regarding these readings. What they both call attention to, I would suggest, is what Derrida points out in his final chapter of *De l'esprit*, namely, the claim of a 'linguistico-historical-triad.' Heidegger, in drawing on the semantics of spirit according to which both the Greek πνεῦμα and the Latin *spiritus* align with spirit the connotation of "breath," ascribes a 'supplement of originary status' (DE, 163-164/99-100) to the German *Geist*.[157] In order to support this view, Heidegger

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[156] As Derrida underscores, while Heidegger made visible his avoidance of the term "spirit" in 1927, he may in 1952 be examining his own prior as well as Trakl's avoidance of the word "spiritual" (*geistig*).

[157] In Derrida's view, however, the status of originality makes sense only insofar as one 'grants a sort of *history of the meaning* of the "thing" *pneuma-spiritus-Geist* which is both European and, by means of *Geist* interpreted in this way, has a bearing beyond or before Western Europe in its usual representation.' (DE, 164/100) I note here that Derrida brings to mind the omission of the Hebrew language wherein one also finds spirit (*ruah*) spoken as breath. For Derrida, this omission opens the path to a deconstruction of Heidegger's notion of the history of Being in which the Platonic-Christian formation has repressed the

does not so much reject the pneumatic tradition of spirit, as he seeks to unearth the "original sense" (*ursprüngliche Bedeutung*) of *Geist* as **gheis-*, meaning "to arouse," "to excite," "to be indignant," (Duden, 262) as well as *Geist* as connoting 'fire' and 'flame.'[158] In that Heidegger has a deep confidence in the words of his language to be able to serve as exemplary vessels of truth and meaning, he thus conceives of the word *Geist* as carrying a hidden truth, which, as Blanchot stresses, a well-conducted interrogation is apparently able to unveil: 'So certain words have a meaning that goes past us, one we manage only slowly to discover' (Blanchot 1949: 114).

Heidegger's insistence that a negative approach to the spirit must be initially assumed in order to prepare the way for approaching spirit in a more positive manner as flame bears within it a radicalisation of spiritual power insofar as it comes to include the potential of its own incineration and along with this of the scorching of the whole world.[159] In the next section, I return to Heidegger's *Einführung in die Metaphysik* in order to discuss this possibility of self-incineration inherent to the power of spirit in terms of Derrida's account of the logic of autoimmunity.

Hebraic origin of Christianity itself, so that a return of the repressed will make the very formation of this history tremble (Dastur 1996: 1-13; 1992: 25-41; 2010: 43-57; 2011: 273-298; 2016: 191-229).

[158] In *Die Armut* (1945), Heidegger draws on the Greek πνεῦμα and the Latin *spiritus*, in arguing that 'spirit is the effective power of enlightenment and wisdom, what the Greeks call σοφία.' (A, 6) Through modern metaphysics and Descartes, spirit is rendered as self-consciousness, subject, reason, and finally as the will that wills itself, thus forgetting the pneumatic tradition. In contrast to such a view of spirit, Heidegger turns to Hölderlin for whom *Geist* is something hidden that takes place by withdrawing in Being: 'We experience "the spirit" in the openness of this relationship of beyng to the human essence—it is that which sways [*Waltende*] from out of Beyng and presumably for Beyng.' (A, 7)

[159] This potential of (self-)destruction inherent to spirit is, for Heidegger, bound up with the question of evil. Heidegger notes: 'Evil is always the evil of a spirit. Evil, and its malignity, is not the sensible, the material. No more is it of a simply "spiritual" nature. Evil is spiritual' (GA 12, 56/179; DE, 167-168/102). Hence, when Derrida in *De l'esprit* refers to Heidegger's 'literally Schellingian' formulations, owing to the 1936 course on Schelling's essay on the essence of human freedom, such reference is meant to draw attention to the manner by which Heidegger seeks to withdraw the thinking of evil from a Christian-metaphysical determination towards a being-historical sense. Whilst privileging the German *Geist* over the Greco-Latin and Platonic-Christian axis of πνεῦμα and *spiritus*, seeing that Heidegger hears in the tradition of *Geist* an ancient echo of the *spirit in-flame*, Derrida demonstrates how Heidegger gathers and forecloses the historical triad of *Geist-* πνεῦμα-*spiritus* and asks: 'what justifies the closure of this triangle "historically"? Does it not remain open from its origin and by its very structure onto what Greek and then Latin had to translate by πνεῦμα and *spiritus*, that is, the Hebrew *ruah*?' (DE, 165/100) What the issue of the Hebraic *ruah* brings into view, Derrida suggests, is a whole tradition of Jewish thought in which one finds 'an inexhaustible thinking about *fire*' (DE, 165/101). As Derrida further argues, the very theologico-philosophical tradition in which Heidegger continues to interpret the relationship between *Geist* and *Seele*, a distinction found in Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (2:14) between πνεῦμα and ψυχή, which is based on the Hebraic distinction between *ruah* and *néphéch*, brings into focus how the origin of evil can be understood as the discordance between spirit and soul. For a discussion, see Dastur 2010: 55-56; Krell 2015: 102-104.

As we have noted above, Heidegger, within *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, puts forward a two-fold account of spirit. First, he claims that spirit is the empowering power of beings of the world, and in such an essential manner that everything of the world is held together by spirit. Second, he notes that spirit contains within itself a disempowering of its own power, which the world-darkening and the four misinterpretations of spirit bring into focus. Moreover, such a disempowering renders the situation of Europe all the more dire precisely in that Europe is the historical place where the self-disempowerment of spirit plays itself out.

My aim in this section will be to trace out how Heidegger's duplicitous characteristics of spirit can be fruitfully described by appealing to Derrida's notion of "autoimmunity." This notion, which Derrida formulates in his later writings and which belongs to a variety of what Michael Naas calls 'deconstructo-nyms' (Naas 2008: 135) (including, for instance, the *pharmakon*, *aporia*, and *double bind*), retains a singularity, which is difficult to translate from one context to another.[160] Nevertheless, the singularity of Derrida's deconstructo-nyms is not immune to a certain generality and I believe it possible to employ Derrida's notion of autoimmunity in order to describe the logic of Heidegger's spirit.

To recall a point that we have already outlined above, Heidegger, in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* and by a recourse to his Rector's Address, proposes that the proper way to conceive of spirit is as 'the empowering of the powers [*Ermächtigung der Mächte*] of beings as such and as a whole.' (GA 40, 53/52) As such, for Heidegger spirit thus becomes something of a mission (either *Auftrag* or *Sendung*) for "our people" to subdue the dangers of the world-darkening. Such world-darkening, however, harbours within itself a disempowering of the spiritual empowering of power, that is, a *Vergeistigung* as de-spiritualisation, which means that the spirit (of technology) is itself a threat to this spiritual mission and to the protection of Europe against the situation in which it finds itself.[161]

Furthermore, if Europe is not to go down the path of annihilation, a path that can only be eschewed insofar as Europe assumes "the great decision," it must develop 'new,

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[160] Derrida himself employs the term "autoimmunity" in various contexts. What these contexts share, as far as I can see, is a presupposed "immunity." While the biological process of immunisation seeks to protect the body by producing antibodies against antigens, the process of autoimmunisation consists of an organism 'protecting itself against its self-protection by destroying its own immune system.' (FK, 72-73n.27) On this account, Derrida develops what he calls a general logic of autoimmunisation.

[161] As Derrida's French, which is difficult to translate, reads: 'La destitution de l'esprit est ainsi une destitution *de soi*, une *démission*.' (DE, 81/63; emphasis added)

historically *spiritual* [*geistiger*] forces from the centre.' (GA 40, 42/41) Yet, since the relation to spirit is itself essentially European to such an extent that the external threats to Europe from Russia and America are in fact internal, Europe's task of inventing "new, historically *spiritual* forces from the centre" comes to be haunted 'by none other than what it itself has given birth to' (Gasché 2009: 118).

On this view, one might suggest that the 'historical mission of our people, the people of the centre of the Evening-land,' (GA 40, 53/52) is a spiritual task that spirit must undertake against itself. It is in relation to such a task that Heidegger, ten years later in *Die Armut*, quotes the following line from Hölderlin, 'for us everything is concentrated upon the spiritual [*Es koncentrirt sich bei uns alles auf's Geistige*]' (A, 5).[162] Yet, if the ambiguous spiritual forces emerge from the centre upon which everything is concentrated, one could thereby venture to suggest that the centre of Europe, in its very Germanic heart, has turned into something eccentrically psychotic due to the internal movement of disempowering proper to spirit itself.[163] Insofar as the darkening of the world, which resembles a sort of black hole whose absolute gravity conceals its own light and swallows up everything from within, is not something foreign to the spirit—or, to be more precise, is that within the spirit which is foreign to itself— we may therefore say that the disempowering of spirit is in fact nothing other than spirit's own self-disempowering.

It is with respect to this internal movement of the spirit turning against itself, that Derrida argues, in his commentary on Heidegger's discourse on the disempowering (*Entmachtung*)[164] of spirit, that if '*Entmachtung* dooms spirit to impotence or powerlessness, if it deprives it of its strength and the nerve of its authority,' it is because 'spirit *is* a force and *is not* a force' and, moreover, 'that it has and has not power.' (DE,

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[162] When Heidegger quotes Hölderlin's saying, the terms "Germany" and "German" have more or less disappeared from his philosophical language, now arguing that when Hölderlin speaks of history he always has the Evening-land in mind. Yet, as Lacoue-Labarthe argues, the 'schema of historiality' (1998: 164) remains the same. In this context, it is interesting that Heidegger, despite his suspicion of Latin, employs a word of Latin origin, namely, "koncentrirt," so as to designate the relation (which is the centre) of Being to human beings. Later in *Die Armut*, Heidegger stresses that 'the concentration is enowned [*ereignet sich*] as the gathering upon the relation to Beyng to our essence, a relationship that is the centre, the midpoint, that is everywhere as the midpoint of a circle whose periphery is nowhere [*nirgends*].' (A, 7)

[163] In discussing the German distress, Lacoue-Labarthe thus speaks of a 'threat of psychosis' (1986: 72)

[164] While I will not delve into the matter here, Derrida's invocation of the term "destitution" seems to tie the question of politics in *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, which Heidegger wants to *avoid* (itself a gesture of destitution) by reemphasising the πόλις as the 'ground and place of human dasein itself' (GA 40, 161/162).

98-99/61-62) In this fashion, Derrida therefore recasts Heidegger's logic of spirit in terms of a general autoimmunity:

> Heidegger says that destitution is a movement *proper* to spirit, proceeding from within it. But this inside must also enclose the spectral duplicity, an immanent outside or an intestine exteriority, a sort of evil genius which slips into spirit's monologue to haunt it […]. All of that, which accepts lie and destruction, is evil, the foreigner: foreign to spirit *in* spirit […]. The destitution of spirit is thus a *self*-destitution, a resignation. But it must be that an other than spirit, still itself however, affects and divided it. (DE, 99-102/61-63)

There is far too much at play in this passage for us to adequately address here. But why, one might ask, include such a long quotation from Derrida? In response, I can simply say that I have quoted this text concerning Derrida's reading of Heidegger because it is here, I would suggest, that we finally begin to understand how self-disempowerment of spirit can be described in terms of autoimmunity.

Hence, by way of closing this chapter we might say that if the spirit follows the general logic of autoimmunity, as Derrida describes it, then the movement of this logic displays a *double horizon* or *double apprehension*. On the one hand, in wanting to save itself from its own disempowerment, spirit is, in Heidegger's view, the very saving power of the world. On the other hand, however, spirit encloses a "spectral duplicity," an "intestine exteriority" that creeps up on it from within and incessantly haunts Heidegger's attempt to let the spirit salvage itself from its own disempowerment. On this latter point, Derrida follows closely Heidegger's argument in *Einführung in die Metaphysik* regarding how the disempowerment of spirit comes from within spirit and thus resembles the autoimmune logic according to which spirit divides or indemnifies itself in a movement that is both immunising and autoimmunising. In this respect, the logic of the autoimmune process can be described in terms of a movement that, in an almost suicidal manner, attempts to destroy itself through its own mechanisms of protection, that is, by immunising itself, as it were, against its "own" immunity. In other words, the internal splitting becomes the paradoxical mode of spirit that keeps unravelling the consistency of its "own" interiority, and thereby reveals a foreign outside or *extimacy* of the inside in

the form of a non-dialectisable contradiction that simultaneously figures and disfigures the spirit from within.[165]

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[165] Elsewhere, Derrida describes the logic of autoimmunity as 'an internal contradiction' consisting of 'an internal-external, nondialectizable antinomy that risks paralyzing.' (R, 35)

PART TWO

VALÉRY'S EUROPE

Chapter Four

The Archive of Europe

Valéry is a symbol of Europe and of its delicate twilight
(Borges, *Valéry as Symbol*)

This chapter is the first of three that, when taken together, serve to explore and elucidate the question of Europe as it is developed by the French thinker and poet Paul Valéry. This question, moreover, is intimately bound up with yet another question central to the intellectual discussion of Valéry's time, namely, the question of spirit. Each of these three chapters will comprise a specific, though not exclusive, manner of approaching the matter. While this opening chapter aims to provide a general introduction to Valéry's preoccupation with the question of Europe by affording particular attention to the experience of the Great War as this experience proves significant to Europe's self-understanding, the subsequent chapters will focus both on the radical disorder to which the experience of war exposes Europe and on Valéry's conception of Europe as a spiritual matter. By the conclusion of the sixth chapter, it should become clear how the question of spirit constitutes a key part of Valéry's general understanding of Europe.

Before getting started, however, let me stress that I intend here neither to present an introduction to Valéry's thought in general nor to offer an exegesis of particular texts, but rather I focus in a systematic fashion on a limited number of issues in Valéry's thinking. This approach enables us to pick up on three crucial points related to the theme of Europe, namely, crisis, disorder, and spirit. Moreover, each of these points serves as the respective theme for each of the three chapters to follow. On this note, let us proceed with our general introduction to Valéry's early thoughts on Europe.

The Memory of Europe

Valéry was among those in Europe for whom the Great War in 1914 furnished an experience of profound despair—an experience that would remain in effect long after the end of the war in 1918. Reflecting on the fact that Europe felt an extraordinary shudder running through its marrow due to the war, Valéry, upon the heels of the armistice, sketches out the following account of the state of Europe:

> She [Europe] felt in every nucleus of her mind [*noyaux pensants*] that she was
> no longer the same [in French: *ne se reconnaissait plus*—that she could no

longer recognise herself], that she was no longer herself [in French: *cessait de se ressembler*—that she had ceased to resemble herself], that she was about to lose consciousness, a consciousness acquired through centuries of bearable calamities, by thousands of men of the first rank, from innumerable geographical, ethnic, and historical coincidences. So—as though in desperate defense [*défense désespérée*] of her own being and her physiological recourse—all her memory confusedly returned [*revenue*]. (HP, 24/989)[166]

This passage appears in the first of two letters from 1919 that were published together under the title *La crise de l'esprit*, and it is within this collected work that Valéry portrays the crisis afflicting Europe in terms of a "crisis of spirit."[167] The passage not only recounts the fragile condition of Europe's self-understanding allegorised as a woman who has lost her ability to orient and to identify herself in the world, but it also amplifies the very structure of a *defense mechanism* in and of Europe's own being. While remaining sensitive to the risk of stretching the notion of defense mechanism too far in our reading, I would nevertheless like to suggest a particular manner of understanding how this notion functions in terms of a form of memory where Europe becomes haunted by itself. As Valéry points out, such European memory, when it returns, only does so confusedly. As such, the work of remembrance might be compared to a kind of (medical) anamnesis, which in this comparison would mean that the crisis of Europe might also be read as the history of an illness. This anamnestic remembrance breaking into the defense mechanism of Europe must be analysed in the attempt to reach the internal tremors of its being.

Given this discussion above, I would argue that one fruitful manner of reading Valéry's writings on the European spirit and its crisis, would therefore be to trace out how Valéry perceives the memory of Europe as a question concerning whether memory, in preserving Europe's ancestral heritage, also reveals the finitude related to such heritage. Before proceeding in the task of drawing out the aspects of this memory, let me begin with an inquiry into the "whence" of Valéry's thinking.

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[166] Valéry uses the French adjective *désespérée* to describe the divided consciousness of Europe and, as such, to intensify the split that is put in motion by the crisis of spirit—a crisis whose phase, as will become evident, remains hard to grasp. Even though a hope might remain we should bear in mind that for Valéry hope (*ésperance*) is only a sign of 'mistrust [*méfiance*] of the clear foresight of its spirit' (HP, 26), wherefore it is precisely *as* a lack of hope (*desperatio*) that the inability of Europe to constitute herself as a whole comes into view. See Löwith 1971: 84.

[167] By request of *The Athenaeum* editor, John Middleton Murry, who in 1917 had introduced a hitherto unknown Paul Valéry to an English audience ("Paul Valéry's *La Jeune Parque*," *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 August 1917), Valéry's two letters were published first in English in two parts: "The Spiritual Crisis" (11 April) and "The Intellectual Crisis" (2 May) and then subsequently published under the title "La crise de l'esprit" in *La nouvelle revue française*.

In reading the two letters on the crisis of spirit we begin to see that Valéry's foremost preoccupation therein is with the Great War. Not only this, but through his writing Valéry engages with the phenomenon of the Great War on a variety of levels by which he develops several insights that themselves contribute to the continuing debate concerning the accentuated consciousness of Europe's crisis and decline that accompanies the havoc of war.[168] Such reflections on war, however, were not new for Valéry, for already in an essay from 1897, he has observed that 'war itself must no longer break out, end, or be carried on at the mere whim of events or passions,' since it will be 'made rationally' (HP, 53-54). In 1915, Valéry reprints this essay, entitled *Une conquête méthodique*, in order to illustrate 'a kind of general theorem,' namely, that '"the conqueror is always stronger than the conquered."' (HP, 54) He stresses that this theorem is, in fact, a 'tautology' insofar as it expresses that '"there is no such thing as equal arms,"' and that the very principle of battle is to '*plan and bring about inequality*.' (HP, 54)

My aim for what follows is not to offer a detailed discussion of the entirety of Valéry's 1897/1915 essay, but rather to try to highlight one aspect of it, namely, Valéry's understanding of how Germany's success in both techno-scientifically organising and mobilising the military proves to be a success of *method* characteristic of the mode in which everything is classified and correctly defined (HP, 52; 56).[169] As will be made clearer in Chapter Five, the generalisation characteristic of the "German method" largely has to do with the gradual disappearance of the inequality that once existed between the regions of the world and that had once served as the basis for the predominance of Europe (HP, 35). Up to this point in our discussion the issues we have introduced remain quite abstract and, consequently, they are in need of further development. Let us therefore leap forward into 1931 where Valéry, in reconsidering the development of his thought from *La crise de l'esprit* and onwards, reflects on "the result" of the Great War and concludes that it 'was what it was bound to be: it but accentuated and hastened the decadence of Europe.' (HP, 19) In other words, what the experience of the Great War made visible was

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[168] On Valéry's view on the "crisis" and "decline" of the European civilisation at war with itself, see Koselleck and Widmer 1980: 229.

[169] Regarding this German success, Valéry states that the military build-up of German technology is one according to which everything is 'reduced to groups of abstractions that can enter into every kind of calculation; those great strips of land, really complex entities swarming with many different individuals, where customs seem so impenetrable to analysis, become objects of thought, manageable quantities, marked weights, all of which can be compared, to show which will be heavier or lighter in the scales of war.' (HP, 55)

not only the continuity of the horrors of war, but also a radical discontinuity of the way in which war in general is understood.

Although the Great War factors largely into Valéry's work in that he, as many other inter-world-war thinkers, finds it impossible to avert the intrusion of contemporary events into his intellectual work, my primary concern here will not be to make a contribution to the study of the Great War or to some of the key texts that would be seminal in dealing with such a complex phenomenon.[170] Moreover, even if there are many themes and tendencies to be found in Valéry's work that overlap with those of other contemporary thinkers—themes such as spirit, crisis, decline, war, peace, modernity, loss of illusions, or technology, to mention only a few—I shall touch on such interconnections only tangentially.[171] In order to approach and to open up Valéry's texts, let us proceed indirectly by way of another reader of Valéry, namely, Walter Benjamin.

In an essay from 1931 commemorating Valéry's sixtieth birthday, Benjamin writes of what he calls an "approach" (*nahen*) to the world that he finds within Valéry's work— an approach characterised by its sensitivity towards the abominations of the Great War (Benjamin 1991: 390). Interestingly, Benjamin begins and ends his essay by recounting an anecdote about how Valéry had once wanted to become a naval officer, after which he displays how this youthful dream of the 'wide horizon where the sailors go' (CW 1, 322) can still be discerned in the writings that Valéry would eventually come to author (Benjamin 1991: 386). The manner by which Benjamin concludes his essay, however, serves as a radical displacement of Valéry's naval dream in that the view (*Blick*) that Benjamin assumes on the 'approaching world [*kommende Welt*] is no longer that of the officer, but simply that of the experienced [*wetterkundigen*: weather-wise] sailor who feels the approach of the great storm' (Benjamin 1991: 390). For Benjamin, what this means is that Valéry's approach to the world has ceased to be concerned with how to conquer a point of view from which one achieves an outlook on a specifiable horizon—a conquering task that is precisely what Europe, by figuring 'at the head of the list' (HP, 32) of world regions, had carried out for centuries. Years after his youthful naval dream, then, Valéry's approach would instead be concerned and oriented towards what one could

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[170] Spengler 1972; Husserl (Hua VI); Freud (FGW 10); Simmel 1999; Scheler 1917.

[171] To analyse individual phenomena of the interwar period would require a study in itself. As Lützeler argues in his extensive study on the Europe of that period, the attempt to analyse any fixed referent to determine the unity of terms such as "Europe" and "Europeans," as well as "crisis," "decline," and "spirit, risks running into great difficulties because such terms cannot by themselves account for any discursive continuity or unity, inasmuch as they underwent profound transformations as the image of Europe advanced into a 'theme in vogue [*Modethema*]' (Lützeler 1992: 344; 298).

perhaps most readily call an "infinite horizon." What we see here is how the maritime setting of Valéry's thought plays a crucial role in this latter phrase, which we largely borrow from Nietzsche's *Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft* (KSA 3, § 125), and brings to light the significant transformation that has occurred in our general orientation within the world. The displacement of the naval dream thus happens at the very place where the defined horizon borders on the exposition of its becoming indeterminable.

Hence, by tracing how Benjamin's German word "nahen" imposes on us a coming nearer the world, we are thereby provided with insight into Valéry's approach to the world. Such coming nearer, moreover, indicates that at some point we must have been set at a distance from the world. Put tersely, the approach under consideration here signifies a coming nearer to the world that at the same time retains a distance from it. What this means, then, is that the approaching proximity does not define itself in opposition to a distant world; rather, the approach to the world essentially belongs together with the distance of what remains distant in this approach. In this respect, Valéry's engagement with the world in the year of 1919 serves primarily to account for the way in which he and his European contemporaries, in the aftermath of the Great War, found themselves exposed to a distant world. That is to say, rather than this approach affirming a proximity to the world, it seems to disclose a distance that may be beyond measure insofar as there no longer remains any standards for the horizon. As such, any attempt to measure the distance to the world is deferred in an infinite indeterminacy or undecidability.

Indeed, in my view, what Valéry's approach-to-world opens up is a nearness that is no longer simply given. Or, to put it another way, the approach forces us to acknowledge that the world exposes to us an estrangement from the question of approaching Europe "today," that is to say, from the question of Europe's attenuated position in the world (HP, 17-19). It is important, however, to be precise when we talk about this no-longer-given nearness of the world, for what Valéry's approach to the world opens up is not set by virtue of any *given end*, but rather by the withdrawal of anything given—whether as a substance, result, product, or property.[172] Such a withdrawal is radical in nature precisely in that it is a withdrawal to the point where there is nothing more "to be" withdrawn, that is, nothing but the nothing of ends transposing the very approach to the world into an approach of the groundlessness or aimlessness of world. To put it in Valéry's terms, 'from the ever tighter organization of the world, where measurable things more and more

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[172] Cf. Nancy 2007a: 68-69.

dominate the scene, where the vagueness of *vague things* is more and more obvious' (HP, 106), the growth, or, quite simply, the transformation of the world into a resource for technological power, is undermining the very foundations of *the* world.

In following Valéry's approach, we will come to see how the Great War does not merely represent a limited breaking point of the twentieth century. This is particularly the case if by the notion of breaking point we mean knowing on what conditions such a break is possible. Rather, the issue at stake for Valéry is something far more significant, that is, that the Great War has become an event determinative for the entire history of the world and, by extension, of Europe's position therein. As Valéry points out in 1922, 'everything essential in the world has been affected by the war.' (HP, 307) This is because, as far as I understand Valéry, what is at stake in the experience of the Great War (and perhaps war in general), is the very matter of thinking. Although it may appear that the task of reflecting on war in terms of explaining and responding to such an event is a straightforward exercise, as if war had the power to ascribe to itself its own sense that we could thereby simply assimilate, for Valéry there nevertheless exists to the contrary a certain recalcitrance to assimilation evinced by the thought of war. Indeed, the experience of war amounts to a kind of response to what seems inevitable, namely, that in organising death war also changes our thought of death. As I will try to show in what follows, the originality of Valéry's approach lies in his indications of how the experience of war binds Europe to a sense of estrangement to the world through an altered relation to death.

BEING NOT AT ONE WITH WAR: ON UNDOING DEATH

There is surely nothing surprising about the relationship between thinking and death. Indeed, as Dastur suggests, thinking itself is 'intimately bound at its very birth to the event of a singular death' (Dastur 1996: 20). Such an envisaging of the homology between thinking and death—a homology which is described pre-eminently by Socrates in *Phaedo* (81a) in terms of the care taken with death (μελέτη θανάτου)—seems, however, to undergo a transformation as a result of the experience of the Great War. More specifically, it would appear that the Great War is responsible for putting the very principle of homology into question. In what follows, I propose to show that Valéry's experience of the Great War prepares the way for his understanding of an altered relationship between thought and death. As a preface to my argument, I would like to make a brief digression by considering the startling insights that can be gleaned from the contemporary German

thinker Sigmund Freud and his reconsideration of the effects of war upon our relationship to death.

In his principal writing on war and death entitled *Zeitgemäßes über Krieg und Tod*, which was written in 1915 only one year after the outbreak of the Great War and long before the worst of the atrocities from the conflict would occur, Freud comes to the realisation that 'death is no longer to be denied [*verleugnen*]; we are compelled to believe in it. The human beings really die and no longer one by one, but in large numbers, often ten thousand in one day. It is no longer an accident [*Zufall*].' (FGW 10, 344)[173] On this view, even if death is said to be 'the necessary outcome [*Ausgang*] from all life' (FGW 10, 341)[174]—or, as Prince Henry replies to Falstaff 'thou owest God a death' from the moment you are born—the experience of war still imposes itself upon our lives as an unsuturable wound that alters our very attitude toward death by calling into question our relation to mortality. As Freud notes, while we, in times of peace, adhere to our customary relation to death, that is, to the 'unmistakable tendency to set aside death, to eliminate it from life,' (FGW 10, 341), in times of war we must 'sweep away this conventional treatment of death.' (FGW 10, 344)

The experience of war therefore intensifies the experience of death, and to such an extent that the relation every one of us has to death can no longer be denied.[175] Furthermore, it is not only that the all-pervasiveness of death cannot be denied in war, but also that war no longer allows us recourse in any "reassuring" understanding of death as either a transition, or as the paying of a debt to a God who "giveth and taketh away."

Returning to Valéry, we might say that the question of death that arises in wartime and that diverts us from our "customary" understanding of death is instigated by an "obsolescence of mortality." As Valéry sees it, such obsolescence of death is a consequence of 'modern technology' as 'the way of power and precision' (HP, 90-91) whereby the mortal beings are transformed into what Günther Anders, in a comment on the eradication of difference between singular deaths, has called '*"killable" entities* [*"tötbare" Wesen*].' (Anders 1980: 405) This transformation of our relation to mortality

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[173] See Freud's other text on war from 1933 entitled *Warum Krieg?* (FGW 16, 13-27)

[174] Shakespeare, *Prince Henry IV*, Part One, V.I.

[175] Freud observes how the Great War not only exposes the deposits of civilisation but also forces us to take ourselves to be the 'heroes who cannot believe in their own death.' (FGW 10, 354) In wartime, Freud says, civilisation runs the risk of turning the stranger into the enemy so as to distinguish between the enemies whose death we disregard and the death of friends and family whom we mourn. For this reason war reissues the fiction of "primeval man" and his contradictory conception of death as both to be feared and to be denied. (FGW 10, 345) See Crépon 2013a: 6.

is, I think, what Valéry is pointing to when he writes how the experience of war does not expose death as an occurrence that happens only to anonymous others—indeed, perhaps death is no longer even something, as Aristotle seems to think, that happens only to the "noblest" (καλλίστοις) in battle (EN, 1115a30-31), but rather it would seem that the experience of war has made the relation to death "as such" impossible for everyone.

In order to discover how Valéry was able to discern this radical alteration of death that emerged as a consequence of the Great War, we must take a closer look at the technological aspect of war as well as the bellicose madness that, as Hans-Georg Gadamer stresses, brought with it the estrangement of Europe in a world affected by the threshold (*Schwelle*) of a technology specialising in material slaughter (*Materialschlacht*). Hence, in the aftermath of the Great War the unconditional belief in Europe's progress (*Fortschrittsoptimismus*) had become unbelievable, especially in light of what Gadamer has pointed to as the 'suicidal nationalism of this war.' (Gadamer 1985: 181)

A crucial component of Valéry's account of the advent of the Great War is his description of the war in terms of 'a new era' during which 'a certain order sets in' (HP, 14). This order, as Valéry identifies it, is one of modern technology, and its power is what makes it possible for its administrators, i.e. human beings, to rule the world with precision and dominance. Paradoxically, however, it is at the very peak of modern technology where the abundance of its "great virtues" from which humankind was supposed to "profit" that the same technology renders the human being impotent. In 1935, Valéry portrays this contradiction of technological power, according to which we might have thought ourselves to be in control of technology, but where technology has rather made us into its accessory, as being fundamentally ambiguous: 'we are blind and impotent, yet armed with knowledge and power, in a world we have organized and equipped, and whose inextricable complexity we now dread.' (HP, 91)

We have then, on the one hand, the means of power to dominate the world and to create material wealth, that is, 'an apparatus for exploiting the resources of the whole planet' (HP, 34), and, on the other hand, the awareness of how this new order of technological power is being 'adapted to appalling ends' (HP, 24). That is to say, the fundamental ambiguity of technological power lies in the human attempt to gain control over—and here I quote from Freud's 1930 essay *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*—'the forces of nature to such an extent that with their help the human being would have no difficulty in exterminating one another to the last man [*einander bis auf der letzten Mann auszurotten*].' (FGW 14, 270)

Once we begin to think of war in terms of this ambiguous power we begin to see the manner by which such a power has significantly altered our relation to death. Not only does this power *carry the risk* of exterminating each and every human being, but it is actually *in the process* of doing so by turning each and every human being into a killable entity. With respect to our altered relation to death, Crépon contends that, while Europe drew itself and the rest of the world into the Great War, the disillusionment that followed the Great War and permeated the transition from war to peace, 'was and still is nothing more than the complement of the unequal apportionment of force and power.' (Crépon 2013a: 70)

Recognising that the Europe of the Great War finds its sense in the world by means of technological power paves the way for another array of questions that reveals how peace no longer represents the end of war as such. In his recollection of the sense of uncertainty dominant in the early postwar years unfolded in his lecture from 1922, Valéry draws attention to the fact that the end of war still harbours anxiety:

> THE STORM is over, and yet we are still uneasy…anxious…as though it were just now going to break. Nearly all human affairs are still in a state of terrible uncertainty. We ponder on what is gone, we are almost ruined by what has been ruined; we do not know what is to come, and have some reason to fear it. (HP, 307/1000)

For the moment, we need not dwell any further on the importance of "uncertainty" at present, particularly in that this notion will return later in this chapter. Instead, we may focus in on what I would argue is a crucial theme in Valéry's passage: the transition not from war to peace, but rather from peace to war—a transition that itself continues to trouble us. In light of this troublesome inversion of the relationship between war and peace, Valéry raises the essential question: '…And what is peace?' (HP, 29), which he attempts to answer with his own provisional definition. As he remarks, '*Peace is perhaps that state of things in which the natural hostility between men is manifested in creation, rather than destruction as in war*. Peace is a time of creative rivalry and the battle of production; but am I not tired of producing?…Have I not exhausted my desire for radical experiment?' (HP, 29-30)[176]

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[176] Agamben suggests that there can only be an image of true peace 'there where all signs were fulfilled and exhausted.' (Agamben 1995: 81) Accordingly, the kind of peace that follows from a conflict among men is 'only a convention instituting the signs and conditions of mutual, precarious recognition […], which comes from war and will end in war.' (81-82) When Valéry argues that he is tired of producing, it seems to be

For Valéry, with all peace lingers some sense of war.[177] The underlying reason for this is due to the fact that the world of peace is ultimately no different from the world of war, that is to say, the time of peace belongs to the same production of technological power that produced war.[178] While there was, nevertheless, a kind of balance of power before 1913 in that an inequality still prevailed between the regions of the world regarding the scientific instruments of war and peace, Valéry observes how that inequality begins to disappear after 1918. As such, the newly attained peace following the end of war comes to attest to an unstable relationship between war and peace (HP, 19; 35; 90).

It is important to note that the Great War cannot be contained within spatiotemporal notations such as "18 July 1914" or "11 November 1918"—as if the history of the war could be designated strictly in terms of the calendar. Such restrictive categories are not possible given that the Great War renders the previously established geopolitical, economic, cultural, and national boundaries permeable. As we have already suggested, this unstable relation of peace and war imposes on Europe an incessant threat of death and thereby an instability that remains averse to any restoration of balance and that exposes Europe to "the fragility of life." Moreover, with regard to the unstable relation of peace and war, this exposure entails that the way in which the threat of war is constituted already hints at the ambiguity of technological power. Such ambiguity lies precisely in that this power may, on the one hand, be employed to protect human beings from the threat of war, while it may also, on the other hand, be employed as lethal machinery that turns our previous understanding of the human being as one who undergoes singular death into nothing but a killable entity. As we now begin to see, an awareness of the ambiguity of technological power therefore helps us to approach more carefully the difficult question of the memory of Europe's mortality that prevails in the experience of war.

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because the image of peace has been exhausted to the extent that he can no longer recognise himself in this peaceful image subsumed as it is under the overarching power of production and technology.

[177] Valéry's reflections on war and peace appear to have a close affinity to at least one leitmotif from the Kantian discourse on eternal peace, which retains a trace of "natural hostility" manifested in the imminent threat of the outbreak of war. In this regard, it would therefore be interesting—although I do not have the space to do it here—to read closely those passages from *Zum ewigen Frieden* (1795) in which Kant states that the 'state of peace among men living side by side is not the natural state (*status naturalis*), which, rather, is a state of war. That is, even if it is not always an outbreak of hostilities, but at least an unceasing threat of war.' (KW 9, BA 18)

[178] Cf. Crépon 2013a: 64-70.

As the pivotal point for his discussion of Europe in *La crise de l'esprit*, Valéry begins by elaborating on his approach to the world, which is ultimately rooted in the perturbations of our relation to death because it proceeds from the site of war. In establishing a kind of memorandum on Europe, Valéry therefore leads off in the following manner: 'WE LATER civilizations…we too now know that we are mortal.' (HP, 23)[179] Valéry's placing of this memorandum at the very beginning of his letters seems to bring a kind of substitutability into the self-understanding of Europe by putting into play the adverb "too" in order to display how this exposure to mortality has bereft Europe of a unique and unsubstitutable sense of death that it could make claim to as its own.

As is illustrated by the ellipsis within the memorandum, the substitutability of death forces Valéry to exhale, or, rather, to cut off his breath, before he comments on the anxiety associated with becoming a part of those 'whole worlds that had vanished [*disparus*]' or of those 'empires sunk without a trace, gone down with all their men and all their machines into the unexplorable depths of the centuries, with their gods and their laws' (HP, 23). As the reference to vanishing worlds, gods, and laws indicates—and as Valéry himself was more than keenly aware of—Europe is haunted by exactly the same prospect of obliteration, that is, by the always-impending disappearance of its traces. Moreover, Valéry reinforces this sense of obliteration that is gapingly opening itself in the memory of Europe by calling forth historical names of empires long disappeared: 'Elam, Nineveh, Babylon were but beautiful vague names, and the total ruin of those worlds had as little significance for *us* as their very existence.' (HP, 23) Furthermore, a few lines before this quotation, we read the following: 'Through the obscure depths of history [*l'épaisseur de l'histoire*] *we* could make out the phantoms of great ships laden with riches and intellect [*d'esprit*]; *we* could not count *them*. But the disasters [*naufrages*] that had sent *them* down were, after all, none of *our* affair.' (HP, 23; emphasis added)

In these statements we hear an explicit recognition of past civilisations that do not belong to themselves insofar as their names depend upon a 'collective memory of a community'[180] always already at risk of forgetting their existence, and as such we are provided an insight into the fragility that lies at the very origin of history. In what follows, I shall address these issues by tracing the fragile and enigmatic conditions of history,

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[179] In Valéry's French, the text says 'Nous autres, civilisations,' (Œ I, 988) literally meaning 'we other civilisations.'

[180] For an excellent analysis of the vulnerability of collective memory, see Crépon 2013b: 1-18.

especially as exemplified in the disappearance of ancient names, and by turning once more to Valéry's memorandum on Europe's mortality and its ostensible concern for the relation to death that has been altered by the Great War.

HISTORICAL NAMES

As we have already noted above, the claim that "civilisation" is mortal is surely not unique to the European civilisation. Indeed, ancient empires, such as Elam, Nineveh, and Babylon attest to an entire lineage of vanishing civilisations. For this reason, the lesson of mortality cannot be said to be constitutive only of the European civilisation. Furthermore, for Valéry, the memorandum on Europe's mortality is announced at a time in the twentieth century when Europe is at war with itself, and it is precisely through this conflict of war that the mortality of Europe is experienced by means of a radical transformation of the European attitude towards death, that is, by means of the experience of a wounded self-understanding from which Europe does not (yet) appear to have recovered. What is "new" about this transformed relation to mortality is how the European civilisation, as Nancy suggests, no longer knows 'how it is different from previous civilizations' (Nancy 2015a: 56).

Hence, by his narrative regarding historical names that have disappeared into the nothingness of history, Valéry is showing us how the very sense of this history with the Great War has shifted in such a remarkable fashion that we are now witnessing for the first time, Valéry claims, how history has become something extraordinary. Before inquiring into this extraordinary sense of history, however, we first need to situate the "reversals of history" that have made it possible. In doing so, I draw largely on Schürmann's riveting account of the Inca culture in Cuzco, the puma-shaped city that was destroyed by the Spanish conquistadors in the sixteenth century.[181] According to Schürmann, the principle of this ancient civilisation is internally coherent in that it serves as both the foundation, reason, and authority for itself. However, as he underlines, such principle is essentially finite in that the Incas 'have their genealogy and their necrology. They are epochal. They establish themselves without a blueprint, and collapse without warning.' (Schürmann 1990: 25) What this means, by extension, is that the principle of civilisation only becomes an issue for thinking in the moment when it has lost its authority, which is to say in the moment of crisis when the supreme referent of the epoch

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[181] Cf. Schürmann 1990: 26-29.

realises how it has lost its foundation. Equipped now with these insights, let us return to Valéry.

In his later work *Le bilan de l'intelligence* (1935), Valéry notes how history used to be safeguarded by the *continuity* that crossed over the nothingness of history and thus made the development of past events intelligible to our '*historical perspective*' (HP, 135/1062). In modern times, however, such historical continuity has been interrupted by what up to that point had been the most emblematic of interruptions, namely the Great War. In the Great War Valéry finds the turning point of his age and a new condition. As he writes, 'Interruption, incoherence, surprise are the ordinary conditions of our life.' (HP, 130/1058)

In light of this situation in which history has been brought face to face with its own brokenness, one might ask if we nevertheless still have recourse to any standard of measurement by which we can readily scan the lines of history so as to be able to understand such history through the very division of its various periods. Perhaps. In Valéry's context, however, such a task of historical measurement would surely take on a strangely singular intensity in that no measure other than our 'helplessness is a measure of the change that has taken place.' (HP, 131) As Valéry turns our attention to the broken phantasm of continuity, the interruption of history could in fact be seen in light of a *caesura* that marks the interminable moment in which the fracture of history opens.

From this discussion we see the extent to which Valéry resists measuring history according to periodisation. Moreover, such resistance is perhaps not unlike what Derrida has suggested in his deconstructive encounter with the modern historicist's compulsion to periodise the time of history in terms of an order of linear succession whereby the distinction 'between the before and the after [is *maintained*], to limit the risks of reversibility or repletion, transformation or permutation' (PSY II, 88). Reading Valéry in this manner, however, does not mean that his notion of history need be understood as ahistorical. To the contrary, Valéry's account may be seen in terms of keeping open that which happens, as Derrida would have it, 'precisely without any foundation or decision coming along to make it certain' (BS I, 442/333). In our view, then, what Valéry's understanding of the Great War exposes is how the presupposition of a solid limit, which, if nothing else, would hold the events of war and peace clearly separated, ultimately falters.

Given that for Valéry the relationship between war and peace is ultimately an unstable one, we may therefore characterise the past of the Great War in terms of a history

taking place. What this means, furthermore, is that the understanding of this war as past already involves the opening of a history in which the past only takes place as not yet achieved and therefore as still uncertain. As such, the event of the Great War provides us with neither an understanding of history as premised on continuity, succession, or transition, nor an account of clearly demarcated interruption insofar as such an account would likewise presuppose history as built upon a solid foundation. In the aftermath of the Great War, then, history leaves intact neither the future as something to be anticipated or calculated from out of a present, nor the past as the basis on which such anticipation or calculation can be constituted. As Valéry succinctly puts it: 'We no longer look on the past [*le passé*] as a son looks on his father, from whom he may learn something' (HP, 131/1059).

From the quotation cited immediately above, we see how Valéry's argument, rather than venerating the past as history's paternal authority, instead exposes how the function of the past in the present has been broken. At this extreme point, where the condition of our being implies that we can no longer orient ourselves on the basis of some foundational authority of the past, we begin to understand how, in Valéry's account of history, the gaze of the son upon his father appears to have wrested itself from any ultimate authority. In other words, such a gaze appears to have orphaned itself though the very act of displacing the father who has long been endemic to history.[182]

Furthermore, with his reflections Valéry also describes the change of history not in the manner of how a new regime replaces an old, destitute one—as if history were a process of continuity—but rather in terms of discontinuity such as in how the Phoenix wondrously returns to life from the ashes of its own death. As Valéry notes, then, when our present epoch appears 'without precedent and without example' (HP, 131/1059; modified translation) an understanding of it requires that we must rethink the very nature of history and presence.

Despite the brevity of the remarks above, they may nevertheless be helpful in shedding light on the complexity of Valéry's challenge to us both to think Europe today and to think the enigmatic conditions of history. As we have already mentioned, Valéry goes so far as to say that the total ruin of whole worlds has had little significance for us

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[182] In "La pharmacie de Platon," Derrida examines the notion of *logos* in terms of the relationship between the son and the father. Surprisingly, perhaps, Derrida suggests that the father is not exactly the *logos* but rather its origin: 'The *logos* is a son, then, a son who would be destroyed without the *presence* and the present *attendance* of his father. His father who answers. His father who speaks for him and answers for him.' (D, 86/82; translation modified)

today, and in this manner he touches upon the problematic issue of a "collective memory" and its risk of forgetfulness. Valéry's approach to history does not lie in recollecting the past, as would be the case in a historicist's account of the causal formation of historical events, in that such undertaking would be 'comparable to that of constructing the future […]. The prophet is in the same boat as the historian.' (HP, 27) Hence, as Janicaud says, 'let us not try to predict it; the future will only contradict us […]. Perhaps it will help us to remember that the world changes and makes fun of us.' (Janicaud 1997: 134) With this discussion in mind, let us now turn to the manner by which Valéry conceives of the future and the past.

AN ABYSS OF HISTORY

Some thirteen years after his two letters on the crisis of spirit, Valéry makes some of the key assumptions in his approach to history more explicit. According to Valéry, the true events in history that constitute our knowledge of the past are not mere *historical facts*. Instead, these events belong to an enigmatic history over the course of which 'predictions that are too precise' have only exposed the failure of history's ability to manoeuvre 'against the unexpected,' which further means that history is an area in which we find very 'little repose, prosperity, continuity, or security' (HP, 127).[183] In order to exemplify his view on this matter, Valéry refers to the year 1715. Although this year had borne witness to an infinite series of infinitesimally accidents, none of these was included in "history proper," and moreover, to preserve the happenings of the year would require an infinite number of words.[184] To appropriate history as that which remains essentially inappropriable, 'we must,' Valéry says, 'therefore choose' (HP, 121). History, as determined by the appropriator, thus features both as a selection of accidents and as a rewriting of these accidents into causalities and necessities.

Indeed, as Valéry points out in an essay from 1925, the power to choose is the specialty of the European spirit, that is, 'to take in everything and transform it into our own substance, for this has made us what we are.' (HP, 325) What we must choose, however, is not simply to accept the occurrence of this or that historical accident, but

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[183] Three years later Valéry notes how we are 'entering a phase of its [the human race] history in which all predictions becomes—by the sheer fact of being a prediction—a risk of error, a suspect product of our minds.' (HP, 133)

[184] In her remarkable study *Between Past and Future* (1968), Arendt says that events belonging to history might be certain and even constant—but not necessary. Historical facts, then, are 'but the other side of the disturbing contingency of all factual reality. Since everything that has actually happened in the realm of human affairs could just as well have been otherwise' (ibid. 235).

rather to "decide" on their "importance." Moreover, in making such a decision we keep the chosen accidents from drowning in the infinitude of other accidental facts that are thereby deemed less important to the historical archive of Europe. Furthermore, in thus organising the past events of history we are, as Valéry says, conditioned by 'our own forms of thought and attention, things *essentially of the present'* (HP, 123)—that is, by our own finitude—to such an extent that a "living time" is always introduced into the history of the past. While Valéry thus underlines the difficulty of conceiving of history by looking either backward to the past or forward to the future, he is aware of the way in which the life of present time is not a pure presence but rather is 'like an interval between equidistant suppositions, one assuming the past and the other presuming a future.' (HP, 124)

Valéry's purpose, therefore, in lingering on the interval between the past and the future is not to 'deduce from knowledge of the past some foreknowledge of the future.' (HP, 125) Rather, his intention is to point out how the interval of the present discloses a double bind. This double bind can be described as follows: on the one hand, almost nothing from the past will help us to orientate ourselves in this present, let alone help us to imagine its future; yet, on the other hand, despite the historical disorientation that we experience from within the present there remains a future without horizon. It is precisely because of this double bind of inheriting a past in terms of which only an unimaginable future remains, that Valéry says we are everyday 'at the mercy of some *invention'* (HP, 136; my emphasis). Hence, the question of history allocates the contradictory injunction both to receive an old, exhausted subject of Europe *as such* and yet, at the same time, to reinvent it. Such a paradox becomes the case precisely because, as Derrida on his part points out, history 'is a testimony to our finitude.' (FWT, 5) Moreover, in describing historical testimony with respect to the finitude of heritage, Derrida writes, 'Only a finite being inherits, and his finitude *obliges* him. It obliges him to receive what is larger and older and more powerful and more durable than he. But the same finitude obliges one to choose, to prefer, to sacrifice, to exclude, to let go and leave behind.' (FWT, 5)

In returning to Valéry's discussion of how ancient civilisations have passed almost unnoticed in the history of his day, we now see that something other is at stake in this description than a deprecatory gaze on historical events. In my view, Valéry's aim here is to emphasise the mortality of the European civilisation that has hitherto believed itself to be providing a determined purpose and idea of history but which after the Great War finds nothing to which it can attach itself. Valery writes as follows:

It was not enough for our generation to learn from its own experience how the most beautiful things and the most ancient, the most formidable and the best ordered, can perish *by accident*; in the realm of thought, feeling, and common sense, we witnessed extraordinary phenomena: paradox suddenly become fact, and obvious fact brutally belied. (HP, 24)

As a means of perhaps condensing the varied thoughts from the quote above into one single idea, Valéry makes the simple rhetorical move of adding 'France, England, and Russia' to the previous line of beautiful historical names and thus emphasises how 'we see now that the abyss of history is deep enough to hold us all.' (HP, 23) To put it in another way, what these beautiful names attest to is that paradox has become fact, that both historical emerging and perishing remain accidental, and that the accident must therefore be acknowledged as the strange law by which history surprises itself by its own happening.[185] Hence, if there is a paradox that suddenly becomes fact, as Valéry argues, this dynamic would be nothing less than the paradoxical movement of necessity or of fact opening onto its own abyss of contingency.

It is therefore not a coincidence that Valéry, in articulating the indifference of Europe's memory with respect to her beautiful singular names, recounts the future of Europe in the past tense. Yet, even if the future might belong to the past, as suggested by the memorandum on Europe's mortality, what we have seen with respect to Valéry's understanding of history is that the past nevertheless also belongs to the invention of the future. Or, to put it another way, in becoming part of the abyss of history the teleological order of history no longer serves as the direction or ground of history. Even more precisely, for Valéry there is no foundation beneath history and the historical events and the names of history make out an abyssal abundance, which implies that there is *no one* abyss.[186]

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[185] With reference to Malabou's study on the ontological-existential structure of the accident, one might say that to perish by accident also requires the event of perishing that suddenly and unpredictably upsets the very order of that which perishes. Cf. Malabou 2012: 41; 30.

[186] According to Derrida, such an abundance of abysses inversely means that the 'abyss, if there is an abyss, is that there is more than one ground [*sol*], more than one solid, and more than one single threshold [*plus d'un seul seuil*]' (BS 1, 443/334). This whole scene of the threshold of history could be read together with Valéry's Hamlet: 'Standing, now, on an immense sort of terrace of Elsinore that stretches from Basel to Cologne, bordered by the sands of Nieuport, the marshes of the Somme, the limestone of Champagne, the granites of Alsace…our Hamlet of Europe is watching millions of ghosts. But he is an intellectual Hamlet, meditating on the life and death of truths; for ghosts, he has all the subjects of our controversies […]. Every skull he picks up is an illustrious skull. Hamlet hardly knows what to make of so many skulls. But suppose he forgets them! Will he still be himself?' (HP, 28-29) These skulls, for Valéry, constitute a sort of spectral lineage of Europe's history of which Hegel and Marx, as we will see in the course of the next two chapters, will play an important role in Valéry's understanding of Europe.

Part of Valéry's aim in alluding to history as an abyss that holds sway over all civilisations is to draw attention to the significance that such an all-encompassing hold has in awakening awareness to the fact that a 'civilization has the same fragility as a life.' (HP, 23) Furthermore, Valéry emphasises how such awareness within European civilisation in the aftermath of the Great War attains a life for itself by incorporating the consciousness of its own mortality into its self-understanding. If it is indeed correct to say that Europe has been affected by the experience of war to such an extent and in such an essential manner that death becomes transformed into mere annihilation and the dead into mere killable entities, it therefore follows that Europe can neither be said to properly die nor to recover from its crisis. Rather, it would appear that the relation Europe has to death has become one not only in which death is deferred interminably, but also in which the opposition of death to life has been dismantled. Such deferral and dismantling of the oppositional logic is significant to the way in which Valéry makes us reconsider life and death in terms of memory and the archive. For, as we shall see in the pages that follow, it is precisely through this deferring dismantling that a certain life 'more obscure and more profound than death' (HP, 30) comes into view.

However, this dismantling of the opposition between life and death does not serve to render Europe a witness of its own immortality. Rather, it serves the function of making clear how the task of thinking about death (and the internal relationship between the two: thinking and death) introduces the strange thought of *surviving* one's own disappearance that is central to the idea of the "spectral existence" of Europe.[187]

But what, exactly, is implied by this abyss of history that exposes Europe to its own mortality? One way of describing this abyssal opening is in terms of a "reversal of history," whereby it becomes possible to see how the order of a civilisation is questioned precisely in terms of its ruins. True, as Valéry suggests, we 'were aware that the visible earth is made of ashes, and that ashes signify something [*la terre apparente est faite de cendres, que la cendre signifie quelque chose*]' (HP, 23/988). Yet, how are we to think such signification of ashes when ashes are in fact signified by not *having* a place of their

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[187] As this spectrality indicates, it is a question of a haunting of Europe, not merely by some apparition from the "outside," seeing as 'Europe had it within her to conquer, rule, and organize the rest of the world to European ends' (HP, 226) but rather from its own "insides." In *Spectres de Marx*, Derrida recognises within 'a certain dramaturgy of modern Europe' the modality of haunting which 'would mark the very existence of Europe. It would open the space and the relation to self of what is called by this name.' (SM, 23/3) Accordingly, Europe *is* herself the spectre whose haunted identity becomes the unsolid threshold on which we stand.

own in that, due to them being scattered, they are, as Derrida notes in one of his last seminars, 'both everywhere and nowhere' (BS II, 169/243)? Moreover, what happens to this earth that, Valéry tells us, is made of nothing but ashes—ashes that are without dwelling place and without a home? Indeed, from this discussion, we see how the Derridean thought that "there are ashes there" (*il y a là cendre*) (FC, 3) comes strikingly close to Valéry's own reflections. It is interesting, however, that Valéry's name, save for (as far as I know) one crucial reference to Valéry in *De l'esprit* (DE, 98n.1/122n.2), is absent from Derrida's writing on cinders. Such an absence, though, far from being a sign that Derrida was not inspired by Valéry, is more likely indicative of the fact that the proximity between the two thinkers is almost too close to notice. In what follows, we will nevertheless attempt to take notice of that which has remained unnoticed.

The employment of the past tense in Valéry's statement that "we *were* aware," offers us a way by which to understand how the signifiable appeal to ashes transposes itself into a fragile experience of how entire worlds have been incinerated in and by history. Moreover, if ashes are still recognised to signify something, such "signification" could be interpreted (precisely because of the experience of global incineration) as an eradication of meaning. That is to say, the ashes of previous worlds upon the earth signify the visibility of their disappearance and therewith also the meaning that used to prevail within these worlds.

This line of thought thereby brings us back to the issue raised earlier concerning the ashes of vanishing civilisations as well as to what Valéry sees as the irrecoverable wound of Europe experiencing itself as pervious to the same destiny of disappearance without difference. Interestingly, Valéry provides an example of the indifference that arises from the disappearing of difference when, in the first letter of *La crise de l'esprit*, he writes the following:

> The physicists tell us that if the eye could survive in an oven fired to the point of incandescence, it would see…nothing. There would be no unequal intensities of light left to mark off points in space. That formidable contained energy would produce invisibility, indistinct equality. Now, equality of that kind is nothing else than a perfect state of *disorder*. (HP, 27)

In the next chapter I will unfold this passage in far greater detail in my discussion of disorder as "general equality," but for now we may make a brief observation about Valéry's claim. As I see it, the remark about the incandescence that fires up the memory

of Europe as it smoulders away, offers us a way of understanding how our attitude towards death appears to have been altered with the experience of global incineration.[188] For, if, following the all-consuming burning crematory of the Great War (which becomes all the more clearer, if we ever were to admit of a clarity of any such thing, with the *Holocaust* of the Second World War) there is no point of distinction left and nothing remains but an indistinct equality according to which everything is equal to itself and thus to nothing (or almost nothing), then the single and unique death of the European civilisation is worth exactly as much or as little as any other dead civilisation. In short, one could argue, the civilisation of Europe dies the same death as any other civilisations— an improper death, then, insofar as it belongs properly to no one.

It is precisely because of this account of death that Valéry, writing at the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, reiterates his memorandum that 'civilizations are as mortal as any living creature' (HP, 209). But while this thought of Europe's mortality might have seemed somewhat strange beforehand, Valéry now realises how 'it is no longer strange to think that our own civilization can vanish, with its methods, its works of art, its philosophy, and its monuments, as so many other civilizations have vanished since the beginning' (HP, 209).

Vanishing, however, need not necessarily mean total disappearance. As Derrida has aptly pointed out, as soon as there are ashes, there is also the possibility of preserving them in an archive—whether in a cremation urn or in a memorial urn. Yet, as we have already suggested above, despite any effort to gather and to collect the ashes there also remains the possibility that these same ashes will become dispersed. Such an ambiguity regarding collection and dispersion points to yet another phenomenon, namely the ashes of ashes or the incineration of cinders—a phenomenon that signals the disappearance of disappearance the witnessing of which, echoing Celan, no one may bear witness: '*Niemand/zeugt für den/ Zeugen*' (CW2, 72). Although it is not my intention to trace out in detail Derrida's intricate but rewarding account of the relation between ashes and witnessing,[189] I will nevertheless follow Derrida in attempting to reflect on ashes in terms of their finitude, that is, on the idea that not everything can be saved by history (let alone saved from history). Accordingly, what speaks in history, I would argue, is not merely an

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[188] In a similar manner, Lévinas calls attention to a nocturnal space (*l'espace nocturne*) in which the points of orientation do 'not refer the ones to each other, as in illumined space, there is no perspective, the points are not situated. It is a swarming of points [*grouillement de points*].' (Lévinas 1963: 95-96)

[189] For an excellent account to which this account is deeply indebted, see Naas 2014: 125-141.

insufficiency or a privation of saving its events, but a demand that comes before and exceeds history by beginning with the selection and de-selection of history's infinitesimal advent of accidents to which Valéry has already drawn our attention. Moreover, it is precisely such a process of selection and de-selection that opens up history to an original violence that carries with it the threat of absolute incineration understood as the disappearance of disappearance.

In light of the terms developed above, we may note that it is precisely with respect to the issue of forgetting that Valéry considers the memorandum on Europe to serve as an effective reminder of Europe that its impending death does not belong to itself but in fact already belongs to a collective memory of a community. Indeed, this is a community always already in danger of losing the designation "European" in memory itself—or, more precisely, of losing itself in the selection or the archive in which its memory was supposed to be preserved in the first place. Memory, as understood in this manner, then, is not at all independent in its desire to preserve and organise itself; rather, such memory has to be supported by (destructible) *things*. As Valéry remarks:

> In the first place, it [i.e. the European civilisation] is composed of *things*, material objects—books, pictures, instruments, etc.—having the probable life-span, the fragility, and the precariousness of *things*. But this is not enough—any more than an ingot of gold, an acre of good land, or a machine can be capital unless there are men *who need them* and *know how to use them*. (HP, 200)

Two points must be made about this passage. First, we should note that, for Valéry, in order for something to retain its memory, this retaining must take place within a medium that will secure the legibility of such memory for the future. What this suggests is that the memory of Europe need to remain riveted to a site of technology that preserves its memory by repeating it in the form of an archive. It is important, however, to point out here that, as Derrida emphasises in *Mal d'archive* (1995) with a view to Freud's work, if there is no archive without repetition then one must also acknowledge that repetition remains inseparable from a certain death drive (MA, 26/12). The reason for this inseparability of archivalisation from a death drive, which is also what gives the archive its singularity, is that without such a death drive that threatens to turn the totality of material objects into ashes there would be no desire to save such material objects in the first place. Accordingly, what we find in the archivalisation of Europe's memory—if one dare transpose the autoimmune structure of the archive in Derrida to Valéry's

memorandum—is nothing other than that which 'exposes to destruction […], introducing, *a priori*, forgetfulness and the archiviolithic into the heart of the monument.' (MA, 27/12)[190] In summary, then, there cannot be an inerasable trace in the archive because the very structure of the archive depends upon the essential possibility of erasability pertaining to whatever it chooses to save for memory (TA, 23-26).[191] In this sense, the infinity of traces haunts the selection of traces that are appropriated in the attempt to organise an archive with the consequence that the finitude of the archive is thereby revealed.[192]

In other words, the disappearance of whole worlds leaving no traces of their previous presence—or better put, leaving within history traces so as to disappear within them—becomes all the more urgent for Valéry inasmuch as we, in a paradoxical manner, become the witnesses of the "historical reversal" of our own epoch. This historical reversal concerns how the European civilisation has established itself, ruled, and is now faltering to such an extent that that which disappears in this faltering may never again come to be, precisely in that its inheritors—"we Europeans"—are incapable of inheriting it. Hence, if Europe "today" discovers itself to be in an anxious situation—remembering that Valéry inaugurates his letters on the crisis of Europe with a memory of mortality (and *a fortiori* of a mortal memory)—then "we Europeans" must inherit a Europe that, in Patočka's words, 'has stopped believing in itself' (Patočka 2002:151).

In order to develop this intricate relationship between heritage, history, traces, and archives in greater depth, I turn now to the memory of Europe that, according to Valéry,

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[190] Thus, even if Valéry says that there is 'an element of suicide in the feverish and superficial life of the civilized world,' (HP, 201) this is not to say that the archivalisation of her memory is only a threat to Europe. There is in Europe's memory a structure of autoimmunity that, to put it in Naas' terms, is 'a threat insofar as it compromises the immune system that protects the organism from external aggression, but as in the case of immuno-depressants, a chance for an organism to open itself up to and accept something that is not properly its own […], to the other.' (Naas 2008: 131)

[191] While thinking and death, since Socrates' care for the soul in life is sought to overcome life in the name of a life beyond life, can be said to have changed with the experience of war, one might say that a care for the archive comes to be of utmost importance in that it will only remain provisionally and only for a time after the lifetime of Europe. On this view, Derrida regards the question of the archive as a question of survival understood as that which both preserves and destroys the archive, while to protect the survival of one archive necessarily means to destroys other archives: 'To assure survival, one must kill. That's the archive, archive fever' (TA, 36; quoted in Naas 2015: 137).

[192] Crépon argues that the relation between the "politics of memory" and the past is never simply "rational" since the grounds of its construction, restoration, and instrumentalisation holds something fortuitous and anarchical about them. Like Valéry, the power of politics of memory cannot lie in the past as such, in that selection (and thus knowledge) of past events 'only makes up an infinitesimal part of the past' (Crépon 2013b: 14). Here Crépon refers to Halbwach's *La mémoire collective* in which it is argued that 'the memory is in very large measure a reconstruction of the past achieved with data borrowed from the present, and reconstruction prepared, furthermore, by reconstructions of earlier periods wherein past images had already been altered' (Halbwachs 1968: 57/69; 12/31).

has been 'wasted, neglected, and debased by us all' (HP, 201). Accordingly, if there is no one to attest to the traces of Europe, the memory of Europe—*and hence its future*—encounters its limit; for if there is no one to testify to the trace, even if it is only a trace of disappearance, then the archive of memory becomes so fragile that Europe runs the risk of becoming unable to survive its crisis.

THE CRISIS OF EUROPE AS A "CRISIS OF CRISIS"

The preceding discussion of Valéry's Europe has been guided by the experience of the Great War serving as the basis for the memorandum on mortality that has imbued Europe with its sense of crisis. The question that therefore remains is what the crisis of Europe means to Valéry. In this section, we will address this question by discussing two main topics: (1) Valéry's interest in crisis; and (2) the move in Valéry's text towards the moment for which the word "crisis" of Europe, as Derrida remarks in *L'autre cap*, 'is perhaps no longer appropriate' (AC, 34/31). These two topics indicate in broad outline Valéry's effort to substantiate his claim that if the current crisis of Europe is the most critical one hitherto, then the decisiveness of this crisis disturbs our very ability to define the crisis as such—in other words, it is a *crisis of crisis*.

Valéry considers the European situation in 1919 to be one in which the military crisis has been averted, but nevertheless one in which despite such an aversion (or perhaps for that very reason) another crisis continues to live on. This other crisis, whose force that is as grave as it is invisible, may linger for a long time before its ubiquitous presence begins to draw out the shape of Europe's "destiny." As Valéry writes, 'The military crisis may be over. The economic crisis is still with us. But the intellectual crisis, being more subtle and, by its nature, assuming the most deceptive appearances (since it takes place in the very realm of dissimulation)…this crisis will hardly allow us to grasp its true extent, its *phase*.' (HP, 25/990)

Valéry's preoccupation in 1919 is therefore to make sense of this more subtle phenomenon of crisis by making it appear right before his eyes in all of its strangeness. Even on a superficial level, argues Valéry, we may observe crisis in all spheres of activity (HP, 91). However, to associate crisis with a mere quantitative extension would surely miss Valéry's point, namely, that because something "more" or something "less" lies hidden in the phenomenon of crisis it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to see such crisis simply as a phenomenon. Thus, Valéry writes, one 'wanders from one point of view

to another, from crisis to crisis, from a crisis in one's *faculties*, to a crisis in *value*, to a *class* crisis.' (HP, 75)

To be sure, since the Great War the word *crisis* has held a privileged position within the self-understanding of Europe. Moreover, crisis even appear to be at the heart of the European diagnosis of itself. In this respect, by invoking both crisis and diagnosis, we implicitly refer to a medical register that brings the signs or symptoms of one's own time into a binary account—a situation akin to how a doctor at the critical turning point in the course of a disease judges or decides whether the patient is going to survive or die.[193] Indeed, crisis is, at first glance, of a nature that is "genuinely" European and features prominently in European literature.

For example, Reinhart Koselleck argues that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the term "crisis" becomes the 'structural signature of modernity.'[194] By this he basically means that crisis represents the emergence of a "new" time-consciousness that defines the procedural determination of historical time. In setting "crisis" in the context of a conceptual history, Koselleck makes a clear statement that modernity is 'an age of crisis [*ein Zeitalter der Krise*]' (Koselleck 1982: 648),[195] an age that comes to experience itself in need of time. Hence, the age of crisis is an age that experiences or discovers the negativity of time, that is, the negativity of the sense of time and history according to which the very meaning of time, history, and direction appear radically uncertain.[196]

In returning once again to Valéry and his categories, we can therefore ask the question of whether Europe, as Valéry's patient, is going to survive or die from its crisis. As an initial step towards answering this question, let us briefly consider the notion of crisis more generally.

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[193] In *Fundamenta Medicinæ* (1695), Hoffmann introduces the chapter "De crisi" as follows: 'The change in nature for better or worse is called a crisis; the change is a sudden one, either to death or to recovery [*Crisis dicitur mutatio naturæ in melius vel deterius, sive est subita aliqua vel ad morten, vel ad sanitatem mutatio*]' (Hoffmann 1695: 169). Cf. HWP 4, 1235-1242.

[194] Koselleck 1982: 627. In the last half of the eighteenth century a certain displacement of crisis took place, whereby another mode of experience came to the fore and with which the epochal inflection of the term gave rise to the related term "diagnosis." This term that also stems from Greek (διαγιγνώσκειν) includes the sense of "knowing" what "to discern." Cf. HWP 2, 162-163.

[195] Cf. Koselleck 1977: 291.

[196] Yet, the negativity of temporality becomes a question of the negativity of becoming in that the negativity is neither a lack of time nor a transition to another time, or better, the negativity cannot be conceived in terms of becoming *something*. Thus, the negativity of becoming itself becomes powerless with respect to a representation of the transition from past to future, and just as 'cities collapse and grow desolate where there is an earthquake,' Nietzsche says, the becoming of time 'caves in and grows weak and fearful when the *concept-quake* [*Begriffsbeben*] caused by science robs man of the foundation of all his rest and security' (KSA 1, 330). Cf. Schuback 2005: 107.

Consider first the term "crisis." Crisis is a word of Greek origin (noun κρίσις) and is derived from the verb κρίνειν. Moreover, it traces its etymological lineage from the Proto-Indo-European root *krei-, meaning "to separate," "to sieve," "to distinguish," "to decide," or "to judge" (LSJ, 996-997). As is well known, these meanings are all found within disciplines such as politics, medicine, and theology, where they describe the decisive moment in the course of a conflict, trial, disease, or judgment when the result under question could go in two directions. This vectorial force of crisis creates a residual uncertainty in any situation precisely because the very decision to be made between alternatives is possible only at a certain impossible moment that is at the same time both suspended and threatening (AC, 35/31-32).[197] Yet, even if the word crisis involves the injunction to depart from it in terms of a decision or a judgment, the suspension of decision nevertheless seems to prevail in the moment of crisis.

As I will try to make evident in what follows, the crisis at stake in Valéry's writings takes the form of an ungraspable sense of something escaping or exceeding the firm grip of resolution and decision. At the risk of repeating what has already been established, let us return to Valéry's notion of crisis and the role that it plays in his understanding of Europe and spirit. Before doing so, let us briefly recall Valéry's preliminary approach to the question concerning what a crisis is. In his 1925 essay *Sur la crise de l'intelligence* we find the following key passage:

> A crisis is the passage from one particular mode of functioning to another; a passage made perceptible by signs or symptoms. During a crisis, time seems to change its nature, duration no longer gives the same impression as in the normal state of things. Instead of measuring permanence it measures change. Every crisis involves the intervention of new "causes" that disturb the existing equilibrium, whether mobile or immobile. (HP, 72)

The issue at stake for Valéry is not to settle the crisis of Europe in terms of history, politics, economy, or even philosophy, but rather to refer it to what he, in 1934, calls the 'general crisis [*crise générale*]' (IPE, 95).[198] In this sense, the crisis of the "crisis of

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[197] Cf. Garnier-Pagès 1848: 298-299.
[198] In the afterword to the second edition of *Das Kapital* (1873), Marx too refers to a "general crisis"—but of capitalism that 'is once again approaching, although as yet it is only in its preliminary stages' (MEW 23, 28). What Marx points to is how the unity of discrete objects makes itself felt in the phenomenon of crisis (e.g. the antithesis between commodities and their value-form, money, is raised to the level of absolute contradiction (MEW 23, 152). On this view, crisis is not only the point of dispersion but also the point of unity—even when experienced as disintegrated (MEW 23, 127-128).

Europe" is the critical moment in which the very configuration of Europe suddenly changes and thereby changes our understanding of crisis itself.

Thus, although a conceptual-historical framework from within which a notion of crisis can be worked out may serve an informative function for our question, such a framework will not suffice to make comprehensible the conditions on which Valéry develops his account of crisis. What is required, instead, is that we carefully consider the crucial significance that Valéry places on the difficulty of a critical solution to *the* crisis, which may take place but whose very taking place renders it especially difficult to grasp. According to Valéry, then, we need to explore why the crisis of Europe is not merely some transient episode whose starting and end points may be localised.

Hence, even if Valéry may to some extent still be enlisted among the vocal spokesperson of an already *traditional discourse of modernity*,[199] as Derrida suggests, it is important to note that, on Valéry's account, the use of this old discourse is made in the name of a "discourse about the crisis of Europe," which already takes part in an entirely different sense that ends up suspending the very homogeneity of the word Europe.

If this is the case, then our analysis suggests that the discourse of crisis, which I have been developing here with more than a little help from Derrida, brings into our discussion on Europe a confrontation with the limits of modernity. Moreover, our analysis also suggests that such limits are perhaps no longer as indivisible, secure, and absolute as one might initially have conjectured. The insights we have articulated here certainly carry an important implication for our evaluation of Valéry's crisis, but in addition they also address the very condition of speaking or evaluating this old discourse of "the crisis of Europe." For, what comes into crisis is, as it were, not only the intellectual or self-critical imperative of spirit, but also the very language of crisis and that of κρίνειν. In short, what comes into crisis is "the crisis of Europe" related to diagnosis as a way in which Europe comes to an experience of itself.

Still—and this is precisely what comes into view with the word crisis—we may nevertheless ask whether the language of crisis and of κρίνειν as well as the account of critique that is conveyed by a recourse to the very criterion of critique does not itself belong to an act of critique. One might argue, however, that the discourse on crisis is

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[199] Cf. AC, 31-32/28. The trouble with this discourse is, in Derrida's view, that by determining crisis 'one tames it, domesticates it, neutralizes it—in short, one *economizes* it. One appropriates the Thing, the unthinkable becomes the unknown to be known, one begins to give it form, one begins to inform, master, calculate, program. One cancels out a future.' (NEG, 71)

more than a mere act of critique, for, as Derrida notes, the way of European philosophy has always been to live by 'questioning itself about its own resources, its own possibility, in the *critical* instance of judging or deciding [*krinein*] on its own meaning, like its survival, and of evaluating itself, of posing itself the question of its right and legitimacy.' (WAP, 101) In this respect, there is perhaps more to Valéry's discussion of the crisis of Europe than a recourse to a criterion of critique insofar as within this very recourse there seems to be a withdrawal of critique from critique—indeed, 'the very condition of critique is withdrawn by critique' (Sallis 2005: 8)—that does not leave behind pure absence but, rather, a trace inscribed in the critique turning into crisis.

Furthermore, belief in the self-critical aspect of philosophy as well as its evaluation of crisis that has repeated itself by preserving its onto-encyclopaedic authority is precisely what should be understood as being ushered into vacillation. And with such vacillation is also called into question 'the very concept of "crisis" insofar as it belongs to a logic of opposition and decidability.' (WAP, 101-102) Would it thus be possible, then, if we were to remain with Valéry, to think of crisis *as* a thought of the unthinkable? Would there be a thought of crisis, that is, do we have a discourse that can measure up to the crisis at stake, and that we would be able to follow when everything—not only the discourse of crisis but also the discourse of the crisis of crisis—is being broken apart? Ultimately, then, even if there remains an old discourse of crisis, there nevertheless seems to be no recovery in sight from the crisis of this same discourse.[200]

We seem then to come face to face with the question whether crisis is still an appropriate term to describe what takes place in Valéry's Europe. Indeed, Derrida concedes that *this* crisis is so much in crisis that it has become 'the abyssal "crisis," the crisis of crisis: there is no more philosophy of crisis,' wherefore the very concept of crisis appears to have 'deserted the philosophical vocabulary after Valéry and Husserl. (NEG, 70)[201] It is therefore not without paradox that one can speak self-referentially of *the* crisis that is itself in crisis. This is made clear, I would argue, in the manner by which Derrida asks us to consider the statement "the crisis of crisis." In this phrase we see that the words "crisis" and "crisis" in their two occurrences here are not merely to be thought of as homonyms in that '"crisis" does not have the same meaning twice' (WAP, 102). Rather,

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[200] See Janicaud 1997: 131.
[201] Derrida goes on to say that some even find this crisis to be the worst, namely, that there is not even a crisis of the present world. Hence, there is no crisis, not because there are no threats, but because the identification of the crisis and its conditions prove to be impossible in light of the vacillations exposed to and by the tribunal of reason.

the doubling of the word marks how the very concept of crisis is becoming exhausted. If we return to Valéry's discussion of the crisis of Europe, we could therefore say that this exhaustion associated with the crisis of crisis even spills over into the discourse one might carry out regarding Europe.

As I will show in the next chapter, Valéry is aware that the task of describing this crisis of Europe both as a crisis of spirit and as a crisis of crisis requires of us that we delve deeper into 'what made that disorder in the mind of Europe [*ce désordre de notre Europe mentale*].' (HP, 27/997) To this theme we may now turn.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISORDER AS A GENERAL EQUALITY

Hell must be like that, a place where everything that's said, everything that's expressed,
comes forth equalized with everything else, homogenized, like a drunkard's puke.
(Robert Antelme, *The Human Race*, 135)

THE IMAGE OF EUROPE AS A DISORDER OF THE REAL

If the aim of Chapter Four was to provide an overview of Valéry's understanding of Europe in the aftermath of the Great War, after which he became more and more an expositor of the exhausted discourse of crisis, the aim of this chapter is to consider this exhaustion and, more particularly, to show its impact on Europe and the world on account of what Valéry himself sees as a *disorder*. In order to meet this aim, however, we will have to establish Valéry's understanding of disorder. As Valéry sees it, what makes it difficult to understand the phenomenon of disorder is that any reflection on disorder seeks to create an image *of* disorder, even if this image is itself engendered by the disorder. In a rephrasing of Valéry's well-known line 'the image of chaos is chaos' (HP, 89), we may formulate our current problem by saying that the *image of disorder is disorder*.

As far as an image of the disorder is concerned, it appears that the representation of the disorder, which is built into 'our daily life, in our manners, in our pleasures, even in our knowledge' (HP, 89), is established on the basis of what Schürmann calls 'aprioric imagination of order' (Schürmann 2003: 327). That is, the legislating position of imagination that seeks to posit an orderly image *of* disorder. In other words, the genitive of the "image *of* disorder" takes *possession* of the disorder. Yet, if Valéry insists on a more crucial connection between image and disorder, it is because in trying to portray the indeterminacy of disorder the determinative aspect of the image withdraws, whereby the disorder comes to dismantle the possessive genitive function of the aprioric imagination. To put it in Schürmann's terms, the disorder 'disabuses us of the *eidos*' (Schürmann 2003: 327).

As will become clear in the following sections, if a disorder has built itself into the mind of Europe, as Valéry argues, it is because the image of Europe has hitherto been supported by the supreme position of Europe in the world. However, now that this position has been shaken, the difference between "Europe itself" and the "image of Europe" comes to the fore not as a clear cut opposition between the "real" and the "unreal"

Europe, but rather as a manifestation of how Europe in showing itself *as* an image also shows itself as different from itself—or, to put it in Valéry's terms, it shows '*the real* as a kind of disorder' (HP, 102). This is indeed a remarkable claim and one that clearly shows how the image of Europe exposes itself to a rupture of its own self-imposed legislating phantasm whereby the unreality of that which drives such "hegemonic dream" becomes manifest (cf. Schürmann 2003: 328).

In this sense, the image of Europe is already differentiated in itself so that the Europe that seems to be saturated with an image of its own hegemony in the world now appears as broken in two by a disorder of images that cannot be resolved into unity.[202] For Valéry, such a broken image of Europe brings into view how Europe comes to see itself wither away (cf. HP, 331) in one of two ways: either Europe will disappear entirely and become a name on the list of past civilisations or its spirit will be carried on and transformed into its 'formidable creation' (HP, 323) named America.[203]

After these preliminary remarks on the question of disorder, let us approach in more detail how Europe is brought into proximity with this disorder.

THE RESULT

Toward the end of his second letter on *La crise de l'esprit* Valéry directs our attention to the *result* of his endeavours to explicate the disorder that changes how the whole scene of Europe and the world appears to us and to which the "crisis of Europe" has become an index. As Valéry summarises the result, 'the inequality that once existed between the regions of the world as regards the mechanical arts, the applied sciences, the scientific instruments of war or peace—an inequality on which Europe's predominance was based—is tending gradually to disappear.' (HP, 35) The disappearance of inequality that we note in this passage will be crucial for Valéry's attempt to explicate what he considers

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[202] Schuback describes such issue in terms of an antinomy: 'there is no image of the image […] and every image is an image of imagining' (Schuback 2014: 71).

[203] In the 1938 essay *L'Amerique, projection de l'esprit européen*, Valéry develops his notion of America as a kind of hope to which his thought turns when "Europe" becomes too obscure and anxious. Valéry divides his thinking of the "New Continent" into 'two Americas' to which 'Europe has sent her message, the communicable creations of her spirit'. In this message Valéry extracts those 'products having universal value' from the European spirit, whereas 'whatever was too conventional or too historical in content was left behind in the Old World.' (HP, 330-331) This is not to say that the best has 'crossed the ocean' but that 'those things most capable of living in a climate remote from their home have crossed the ocean and taken root in a soil that was to a large extent virgin.' (HP, 331) Although Valéry appreciates "America" as the future place for the "European spirit" to live on, he also stresses that "Europe" 'will be punished for her politics […]. Europe aspires visibly to being governed by an American Commission. Her whole policy is leading to this.' (HP, 227)

to be the 'perfect state of *disorder*' (HP, 27), namely, a general equality the full meaning of which will become clearer as we proceed.

Two points are worth initially emphasising, as they together constitute what we might think of as the fulcrum of Valéry's broader attention to the disorder of Europe. The first point concerns Valéry's understanding of *result* and may be posed as a question: Is the result of Valéry's endeavours to reflect on disorder to be understood as the conclusion of his thought, as if this thought were to achieve its goal and hence to put an end to thinking and disorder alike? Or is it the act of thinking that is itself exposed to disorder in such a way that the very end of disorder must be deferred?

The second point concerns the interrelation according to which there is no science without technical instruments—that is, an interrelation of techno-science to which we shall return later—and which is of major importance with regards to Valéry's understanding of the result. For not only is science a privilege attributed to Europe, for Valéry, science as inextricably bound up with technology is also a means of power that carries the risk of turning this privilege against Europe itself.

In linking together these two points of concern, we may take up a third point with respect to two considerations: on the one hand, the experience of the gradual disappearance of European hegemony, and, on the other hand, the experience of another hegemony arising from out of this damaged hegemony. We may speak of this other hegemony, a bit anachronistically, as one of *globalisation*.[204] It should be noted immediately, however, that the world becoming global, whereby Europe, in turn, is caught up in this process of globalisation, is not merely given with the rise of a geopolitical development. Rather, as Janicaud puts it, globalisation has to do with a transformation of the world, which may be deeply constitutive of the explosive mutations of technology (Janicaud 1997: 132).

In order to gain a clearer view of what the disorder from *La crise de l'esprit* is about and where Valéry is headed with it, it may be helpful at this point to step back for a moment from the textual details and instead to take a look at how Valéry comes to the "result" of a disorder that pushes Europe to its limits. To begin with, I shall do this by attending to the way in which Valéry regards the name of Europe as a particular way of looking towards the Occident based on a horizon of universality that allows Europe to hold its position in "the world." In light of this discussion, we shall then proceed to what

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[204] In her reading of Husserl's 1935 Vienna lecture, Ströker shows how the term "globalisation" can hardly be categorised a foreign word any longer (Ströker 2000: 137).

I hold is a general equality in terms of which Europe fails to retain its unequally privileged—even if artificial—position in a global world, and which in turn engenders another inequality by means of which the world becomes unable to make sense of itself as anything other than this globalising movement of general equality.

Part of my task in what follows is therefore to look at how the disorder, which, as we have already seen in the previous sections has to do with Europe losing its sense of direction in the world, plays out in those decisive Valéry texts from the period of 1919-1939. My argument will be that if disorder has to do with a loss of sense both *in* and *of* the world, it is because all differences in and of the world have been levelled out by being placed in a relation of indifference engendered by the global spreading of techno-science and general equality (HP, 77).

Hence, when Valéry speaks of the crisis or decline of Europe as a way of losing its sense of direction *in* and *of* the world, he holds out for something more radical than merely lamenting the loss of European domination in the world. Instead, I would suggest that what Valéry is pointing to is that Europe in its success of becoming worldwide and thus of extending itself everywhere also brings Europe to an experience of no longer being anywhere in particular, which renders any return to some unique spirit of Europe impossible.

In order to unravel in full this line of thought, we will have to consider Valéry's understanding of the name of "Europe" as a spiritual name for a geographical designation as we work to discover in what sense Europe has lost its sense of direction.[205]

"EURYOPA:" LOOKING TOWARDS THE OCCIDENT

After having recalled that "Europe" is nothing but a peninsula of the Asian continent, but before broaching a sort of Hegelian *geo-spiritual* designation of the Mediterranean basin as the most temperate region of the globe, Valéry in *The European* (1922) undertakes a

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[205] In contrast to Husserl, for example, for whom the thought of Europe remains wedded to a certain logic of opposition with respect to which he distinguishes between a geographical-cartographical notion of Europe and a spiritual Europe, thereby risking to fortify the proper name of "Europe" as a conceptual name (*Begriffsnamen*), Valéry views Europe in a two-fold sense as, on the one hand, *what it is in reality*, that is, a little peninsula on the Asian continent, and, on the other hand, *what it seems to be*, that is, the privileged position of the globe (HP, 31). However, this imaging of Europe seems to bring into view how the appearance and being of Europe in fact amount to "the same" on the condition that Europe differs in itself. Accordingly, an image of Europe comes to reverse the scheme of being and appearing by replacing its being for that of the replacement in such a manner that Europe presents itself only in and as the dissimulation of itself.

reappraisal of the name "Europe" whereby he attempts to show how Europe 'looks naturally toward the Occident.' (HP, 312)

It is worth noting at the outset that the origin of the name "Europe" appears to be so ancient that it has never been present in such a manner that it could be unequivocally represented in the current sense of the word. To my knowledge, there are two sources undergirding the name of Europe—neither of which is entirely without question. On the one hand, there is the assumption that the name of Europe is of Semitic origin and derives from the root עֶרֶב (the noun *'rb* is most often vocalised as *ereb*), which is rendered into Greek as ἔρεβος and alludes to the terms "evening," "darkening," "obscurity," or the "setting of the sun." On the other hand, Europe might be of Greek origin whereby the Greek name Εὐρώπη not only refers to the myth of the Phoenician princess abducted by Zeus, but also to the Greek noun *Euryopa*, meaning the "wide-eyed," a "looking far into the distance," etc.[206] Setting aside the question concerning the ultimate veracity of these etymologies, we may nevertheless point out that Valéry's notion of Europe as that which looks "naturally" towards the Occident is clearly reminiscent of both the Semitic and the Greek connotations—especially given that the "Occident," taken here to be another name for the "setting of the sun," becomes that into which Europe is looking, that is, into its very own obscurity.

With its gaze toward the Occident, Europe figures as the headland of the Asian continent from where Europe advances, as Nancy puts it, 'towards the remaining world, and from which the conquest, the invasion [*Einfall*], or the world-making of the world has emerged (Nancy 1996: 11; cf. HP, 32).[207] In the sections that follow, I shall examine more closely the manner by which Europe has operated as a conquering force that has in turn been responsible for forming the world. Suffice it here to say that, in Valéry's view, the phenomena of "discovery" and "conquest" are significant to an understanding of Europe that has *specialised* itself in the *universal* (HP, 98; 186-187; 318; 436).

It is important to note, however, that the manner by which Europe makes itself worldwide is nevertheless duplicitous in the sense that behind the process of conquering the world there is, as Waldenfels has shown, a philosophical Eurocentrism that fights with

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[206] Cf. Erdmann 2007: 298-302; von Geisau 1967: 446-448.
[207] This process of becoming worldwide of the world is what Nancy calls "mondialisation," which is not to be confused with "globalisation" as a techno-economic-scientific phenomenon consisting in, on the one hand, an accumulation of *richness*, and, on the other hand, heaping up what bears the name of *poverty*. Cf. Nancy 2007a: 14; 20n.

spiritual weapons (*Waffen des Geistes*).[208] According to this '"spiritual" Eurocentrism,' Europe represents itself and its uncontested superiority by continually re-appropriating itself in a process whereby it begins with its universal horizon and passes through its otherness so as ultimately to be able to organise the world with fundamental concern for its own ends.[209] Yet, in keeping with its own universalisation by which it expands itself into the world and launches itself into the universe, Europe also exposes itself to its very own dis-identification due precisely to such a movement of general equalisation.

This is indeed a remarkable twist given that the expansion of Europe into the world, whereby it at the same time exits itself, comes to imply that there is no escape from the world. In other words, the same power Europe possesses to dominate and to form the world inverts into an experience of powerlessness. To put it bluntly, in seeing itself as the forming power of the world, Europe also testifies to what one might call the *pharmacology of power*—a phrase which designates a powerlessness to control one's own power. The result of this is that Europe's ability to form a world becomes, ultimately, a un-worlding.[210]

In Nancy's terms, Europe 'goes out and further than itself all the way to the end of the world and, at the same time it sees *itself* as another, an other than itself in that it is not the *orient*. Europe [as the Occident] is not the birth of a world, but rather is the completely occupied world, that is, the world completely made conform, and which comes back to itself as its end.' (Nancy 1996a: 15) What this means is that ever since Europe has become

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[208] According to Waldenfels, this kind of Eurocentrism contains an element of egocentrism in that it appropriates and reduces the "other" to a part of "its" own sphere. Moreover, it contains an element of logocentrism whose centring on *logos* (whether language, reason, or ground) reduces the alien to the common. Thus understood, what is proper and alien or other are merely parts of a whole, which is determined by Eurocentrism and its monopoly of *logos* that is itself depending on the thematisation of an appropriation of the world. See Waldenfels 2007: 14-15.

[209] Waldenfels writes: 'Whoever wants to be equal [*gleichtun*] to him [the European] must be Europeanised, whereas the European does not see any reason to assimilate himself to other cultures.' (Waldenfels 1997: 80) This definition of "Europeanisation" in many ways resembles Joachim Ritter's description of the same from 1956 as 'the process in which non-European [*außereuropäische*] peoples detach themselves from their rooted [*bodenständigen*] forms of life (1) and take on the European forms of social production, education, and state institutions, (2) and spontaneously and actively appropriate it.' (Ritter 2003: 324) However, while Waldenfels demonstrates how everything is *not* told with the story about Europe becoming worldwide thus seeking to dismantle the hierarchy of "Europe first world," a more conservative-minded thinker such as Ritter embraces the 'hideous word "Europeanisation",' arguing that modern science, technology, and life forms, which have their 'legitimate place all over the earth' (Ritter 2003: 336), obtain their origin in Europe. Even though Ritter acknowledges an ambiguity pertaining to the expansion of the European civilisation, he sees in the end of the 'old world history,' a movement in which the 'interior universality' of Europe unfolds itself in an 'exterior reality' so that 'the Europeanisation is not the negation of European substance, but rather belongs to the history of its realisation.' (Ritter 2003: 338) This conservative point of view, is exactly what I have attempted to challenge in the course of this study.

[210] Cf. Nancy 2007a: 34.

worldwide, as it were, there is no longer anything strange, foreign, or other to this (Occidentalising) movement of the world.[211] In other words, the world becomes a world for all in that it covers over the differences between ownness and otherness, yet in such a manner that it thereby overlooks the difference, otherness, and foreignness that it contains within itself.

In my view, this digressive route by which we reach the changed scene of Europe and its relation to the world is significant for Valéry's understanding of a Europe that looks naturally towards the Occident in that it already foreshadows how Europe *exhausts itself* by way of *becoming itself*. As Valéry sees it, there is at the heart of the Occident that Europe is becoming a double bind at play. On the one hand, the process of becoming the Occident leads to the dismantling of the very opposition of Occident and Orient in that it rejects everything outside of itself. On the other hand, however, an Occident without an Orient not only disorients the sense of the world understood here as both the direction and meaning of orientation, but it also renders this sense an *absent sense* in that it marks the loss of a previously present sense while at the same time making present its originary absence. This is to say that Europe's process of becoming itself as a kind of auto-occidentalisation is simultaneously a gesture of exhaustion insofar as this looking towards the Occident is like 'the day that sees itself waning' (Nancy 1996a: 15).

In what follows we shall try to trace out this double movement that is characterised by the effort of Europe to form the world according to its universal significance so as to render the world worldwide—an effort which is, at the same time, expressed in the manner by which the entire world exhausts itself.

THE UNIVERSAL HORIZON

Central to the idea of Europe is what Valéry in *La liberté de l'esprit* identifies as a vision of "universality." In short, by having the universal in view Europe becomes the horizon of the entire world. Bearing in mind the meaning of horizon (ὁρίζων) as a boundary that determines our sense of orientation, we may thus elucidate two simultaneous movements that are disclosed through the process of the "successful" organisation of the world in accordance with European ends. First, the movement by which one region of the world hides its own particularity by ascending beyond itself with a view to universality. And second, the movement by which this universal organisation of the world marks the

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[211] Cf. Stiegler 2011a: 238n.50.

essential change of orientation from a "limited world" within which the horizon of Europe and its limited territory could be clearly demarcated to a world from which we can no longer clearly distinguish the unlimited expansion of 'a world that is every day more highly equipped' (HP, 17; 313). Taken together, these two movements bring into view how the world launches itself into the space of the universe, with the result that, as Nancy points out, this same world is exhausted by the 'value of the universal in itself, which makes valuable the very figure of Europe' (Nancy 1996a: 17).[212]

According to Valéry, this radical transformation of both Europe and the world carries the consequence that 'there is no more duration, continuity, or recognizable causality in this universe of multiple relations and contacts.' (HP, 16) This is, to be sure, what Valéry recognises as the "crisis of spirit," a crisis that should not, he claims, be reduced to those particular crises in science insofar as each of these borrow their horizon, as it were, from an 'ancient ideal of explaining the universe as a unified whole.' (HP, 109) However, the crisis of spirit is that this ancient ideal of unification is breaking apart. In Valéry's terms, 'the universe is breaking up, losing all hope of a single design.' (HP, 109)[213]

Although, the becoming worldwide of Europe as a surging forth on the background of a universal horizon is surely not yet apparent, I hope nevertheless to show that Valéry makes his own contribution to this problem that helps us to recognise how the characteristic of the world as universal horizon relies upon a particular European history. The problem, in other words, is that this particular region ascending beyond itself in order to cover the rest of the world appears in such a fashion that its universal discourse of science, reason, knowledge, and technology not only conceals the particularity of its heritage, but also strips from Europe its very singularity. To address this issue in more detail, let us begin by recounting Valéry's story of this loss:

> Other parts of the world have had admirable civilizations, poets of the first order, builders, and even scientists. But no part of the world has possessed this singular *physical* property: the most intense power of radiation combined with an equally intense power of assimilation. Everything came to Europe, and everything came from it. Or almost everything. (HP, 31)

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[212] As Gasché explains: 'In becoming worldwide, extending as far as the world goes, and stopping only at the limits of the universe itself, the world linked to the universal—hence the world *of* the universal—has become entirely suspended from the universal' (Gasché 1997: 146).

[213] For a contemporary discussion of this issue, see Nancy and Barrau 2015b: 50.

It is in this manner that Valéry begins to describe the predominant order according to which the world has hitherto been understood. He notes: 'Small though it be, Europe has for centuries figured at the head of the list. In spite of her limited extent […] she dominates the picture.' (HP, 32) After the Great War, however this ordered disorder is beginning to become disorderly.

In order to develop in greater detail this radical transformation whereby a European hegemony moves in the direction of its own disappearance, that is, in the direction of an "absolute" hegemony of a global world without otherness, we may dwell a bit longer on Valéry's account of Europe's loss of singularity by which 'the illusion of a European culture has been lost' (HP, 26).

"Loss of Illusions"

By focusing on the superiority of Europe, Valéry draws attention to the manner by which Europe has created itself in the image of a Leibnizian design. As he remarks, 'Europe once was the best of all possible worlds [*le meilleur des mondes possibles*]' (Œ I, 513).[214] By 1919, however, when the Great War had come to an end only to reveal that the distinction between war and peace was breaking down, Valéry could no longer maintain what he now discerns as the artificial superiority of Europe.

As we go through Valéry's texts, this question regarding the destiny of European ascendency seems to be answered by the startling announcement that in this post-Great-War-world 'the illusion of a European culture has been lost, and knowledge has been proved impotent to save anything whatsoever' (HP, 26). It is striking that, in Valéry's view, the crisis of Europe discloses how the values on which European hegemony were based—progress, reason, knowledge, science, and so forth—are not in the first place true, but rather illusory. Valéry speaks about this disillusionment of European values as follows:

> [S]cience is mortally wounded in its moral ambitions and, as it were, put to shame by the cruelty of its applications; idealism is barely surviving […]; realism is hopeless, beaten, routed by its own crimes and errors […]; faiths are confused in their aim […] even the skeptics lose their doubts, recover, and lose them again (HP, 26).

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[214] In this context, we should remember ourselves that Leibniz was one of Valéry's principal "skulls" to whom he referred because of his dream of a universal peace for which Europe was the most fitting name. For a discussion, see Löwith 1971: 98-102.

What is vital to Valéry's disillusionment in 1919 is therefore not merely the illusory nature of European values, but also how the illusion of these values exposes Europe to a radical experience of loss.

As we have seen in our exposition of Valéry's dictum concerning the mortality of "the European civilisation" expressed in *La crise de l'esprit*, there is a certain element of substitutability pertaining to this European civilisation whose name is at risk either of being forgotten or of becoming merely a "historical name" among others. This risk suggests two things: first, that the superior name of Europe could lose its power of ascendancy and take on a mere sentimental value as a consequence of this loss; and second, that in addition to the loss mentioned here it is possible that there could also occur a "loss of loss." This latter point becomes evident by Valéry's gesture of disillusionment, which draws out not so much the loss of once possessed values but rather a decomposition of the very composition of the civilisation supposed to have lost its values. To put it differently, while it is precisely the loss of values that puts "we moderns" into a sentimental relation to "our" lost object in such a way that a desire to return to what is lost emerges and thereby reinforces the space of this phantasm, we can conceive of the lost loss not as a return to what was lost, but rather as a moment in which the loss opens itself up as nothing but an empty space "preceding" that which fills it. In this sense, then, the lost loss remains a loss but in such a manner that it comes to disintegrate the very space of the phantasm of *something once present* being lost.

If the disillusionment of European values can thus justifiably be seen as a 'decomposition of old naivetes' (Sloterdijk 1987: 122),[215] as Sloterdijk has argued, then the loss of illusions—as a decomposition of Europe's composition—itself emerges from, and in this sense belongs to, a more burning lesson from the upheavals of the Great War. As Janicaud writes about Valéry: 'He identified a complete *loss of faith* in the values that had permitted the accumulation of so much knowledge, virtue, goods, and treasures in our old and venerable European nations.' (Janicaud 1997: 132)

We will return to consider the ramifications of this loss of faith at a later point, but for now we may set it aside in order to focus on what is ultimately the significance of the

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[215] This is not the place to rehearse the entirety of Sloterdijk's fascinating and provocative analysis of the Great War, in which he writes: 'Since this war the diffuse schizoid climate around the major European powers has not become any less intense. Since then, those who have spoken of cultural crisis, etc., have had the mental disposition of postwar shock unquestionably in mind that knows that the naivete of yesterday will never exist again.' (Sloterdijk 1987: 385) What matters to us here is that a decomposition of old naivetes, or indeed of dogmatism, has taken place, which has brought us to our so-called crisis.

belief in European progress conceived in terms of the best of all possible worlds—a belief in which, as Stefan Zweig notes in his important testimony to the "old Europe," we tend to believe more than we believe in the Bible.[216] Yet, there is something uncanny at work in paradise, an uncanniness revealed in how the essence of progress (as unable to substantiate itself) comes to harbour within itself a complicity of the most contradictory principles that, as we have seen, points in the direction of Europe's hidden disorder. It is to this dynamic that we must now turn our attention.

THE LIMIT OF MODERNITY

Valéry addresses the disorder of Europe explicitly in stating that it is 'characteristic of a *modern* epoch.' (HP, 27) While we might intend to read Valéry's statement as implying that the loss of European values is significant to a modern experience of loss, wherefore Europe, to put it in Nancy's words, 'is obliged by this loss to invent itself or to lose itself in its own future' (Nancy 2005: 128), it seems to me that what Valéry is also implying with respect to "Europe in 1914" is that we have 'perhaps reached the limit of modernism [*à la limite de ce modernism*] in this sense' (HP, 28/992).

Valéry describes this limit of modernity as the 'free coexistence, in all its cultivated minds [*les esprit cultivés*], of the most dissimilar [*dissemblables*] ideas, the most contradictory principles of life and learning [*connaissance*].' (HP, 27/992) Yet, what happens when (if ever) this limit is arrived at? Despite its decisiveness, there seems to be an irresolvable uncertainty about what Valéry means by the limit of modernity as alluded to both by his employment of "perhaps" and by the hesitancy of the text to designate the essence of modernity, as it were. This uncertainty is only reinforced by the fact that the limit described here appears to be a part of modernity itself such that it becomes difficult to discern the delimiting from the delimited. If we are, however, to avoid what Düttmann calls the 'infinite regression from the determined to the determined,' (Düttmann 1996: 34) it becomes imperative for us to try to delimit the limit of modernity from the modernity it delimits.

At first glance, it would appear that the limit is the boundary between the modern epoch and its sequel as if these were two monolithically separated epochs. To the contrary, however, the very crisis we are trying to understand here calls into question

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whether such an order of epochality can still be maintained.[217] Considering this difficulty, it may be said that the limit differs from a mere boundary in the sense that it interrupts (and links) rather than demarcates that which it delimits. As such, the limit does not designate the end-point of a succession of epochs, which, when applied back to our discussion above, entails that the limit of modernity thus becomes a relation of modernity to itself that cannot maintain itself as relation. In other words, the *without-relation* of the limit reveals how modernity is *not one with itself* (Düttmann) as well as how it remains unable to stabilise itself—even at the limit, but rather how it carries with it a continual de-limitation of the limit.

Given Valéry's remark concerning the limit of modernity that we *perhaps* have reached, we might therefore say that this limit is never presently reached but rather signals a desire toward the reclining threshold of modernity beyond which nothing comes to the fore. At this point, then, another limit arises. For, even if we *know* that there is a limit of modernity, suggesting that there is something beyond it, and even if we have perhaps reached this limit, there is still no knowledge of that which could possibly lie beyond it. The question of non-knowledge as a question of the limit of knowledge and its transgression is, according to Nancy, the very experience of modern thought or even, inseparably entwined, the thought of the experience of modernity.[218]

With these considerations in mind, we may profit from Valéry's questioning of modernity and thus rephrase our problem. Aware of the vagueness of the notion of modernity, Valéry calls attention to "we moderns" in order to 'designate a certain way of life' (HP, 27). Modernity, in this sense, ponders the loss of both foundations and points of orientation, and therefore modernity becomes a term to describe the *re-turn* to a lost ground for orientations (whether God, nature, reason, science, culture, or spirit). Without going into too detailed a discussion, we may benefit from an engagement with Max Weber's allusion to modernity as a *disenchantment of the world*. There is much to be said for viewing Valéry's sense of his "modernity" in a Weberian light, though this study is not quite the venue for such a task.[219]

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[217] As we have seen in Chapter One, introducing Heidegger's Europe, the issue of epochality concerns how one comes to see an epoch *as* epoch, that is, how conflictual truths are suspend such that one epoch comes into view as an idea that puts an end to questioning and thereby posits an order of the epoch. Cf. Schürmann 2003: 556.

[218] Cf. Nancy 2003: 36-37.

[219] Weber's famous definition of *Die Entzauberung der Welt* is taken from his 1917 lecture *Wissenschaft als Beruf*: 'The destiny of our age is characterised by rationalisation and intellectualisation, and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world.' (Weber 2002: 510)

Within our narrow consideration of Valéry's notion of modernity (and its limit), we may note that Valéry and Weber share an understanding of modernity with respect to the idea that "modern science" and its re-instalment of a teleology of progress imposes itself upon the world in such a manner that results in the scientific process of disenchantment. However, this process of disenchantment in turn comes to imply a kind of re-enchantment of the world precisely in that this (still too effective) process provides the world (that itself lacks any given ground) with a "being given" of its measurability.[220] This dimension of modernity as perceived in the sentiment of loss, that is, of having lost one's naiveté, affirms a sort of sentimental relation to that which is no longer given. It is for this reason that Valéry says that '*we moderns* could return without too greatly disturbing the harmony of those times' (HP, 27).

Taking the passage with which we began this section in its strongest sense, we might now say that the European loss of illusion, on account of which the sense of knowledge reveals itself to be powerless (*l'impuissance*), is rendered incapable of maintaining its value of sovereignty. As such, the disillusionment of Europe discloses a powerlessness internal to the very structure of power in the experience of its own exhaustion.

It is important for us to be precise here in that the point of exhaustion serves as the entryway into an understanding of the crisis of Europe as a movement by which Europe has exhausted itself in an end that it encounters as a consequence of looking towards the Occident with a universal view of the world. This sense of exhaustion therefore opens up a world in an "infinite horizon," by which, as Valéry describes it, everything becomes open, yet open in such a manner that it is 'stripped of any future' (HP, 229). Put differently, the future as conceived within a horizon of expectation is exposed to an exhaustion or an inability to identify what is proper to it, thus emptying it of any pre-given sense. In this respect, the sense of exhaustion is also an exhaustion of sense.

Indeed, if we return to the initial point that started us on the path of Valéry's claim— that Europe in 1914 had perhaps reached the limit of modernity—we now know that we must cast this dynamic in terms of a "lost loss." That is, we must cast it as an experience of exhaustion that exposes not only the so-called "modern epoch" as a groundlessness of the world, but also the essential ambiguity of science. This ambiguity becomes evident

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[220] Lingering in the 'virtual space and time of the "perhaps,"' it would seem too strong to be *in the process*, as Derrida notes, 'for the very *presence* of such a process would be reassuring and still too effective' (PA, 93/75).

when Valéry, at the outbreak of the Great War, observes how science, knowledge, reason, and technology attest to a reversal of death into mere killing:

> So many horrors could not have been possible without so many virtues. Doubtless, much science was needed to kill so many, to waste so much property, annihilate so many cities in so short a time; but *moral qualities* in like number were also needed. Are Knowledge and Duty, then, suspect? (HP, 24)

In order to come to grips with this questioning of knowledge and duty as suspicious, it is worth noting that Europe, in shifting from an experience of modernity to an experience of itself as the very limit of such modernity, is responding to a world that is becoming globalised and to which the experience of groundlessness becomes its present-day grounding. This shift exposes us not only to a loss of orientation but also to an event of the contemporary world that manifests itself as an openness of non-given senses of the world.

THE AMBIGUITY OF SCIENCE

In addition to the suspicion of both duty and knowledge, Valéry also argues that science has been mortally wounded by the Great War both in its moral ambition and in its power (*puissance*) of knowledge, that is, its very ability of knowing (the *pouvoir* of *savoir*) has turned out to be a powerlessness (*impuissance*) and an inability (*impouvoir*). Stiegler has pointed to this duplicitous dimension of science as the ability to know by referring to the so-called *pharmacology of knowledge*. As Stiegler puts it: 'this pharmacology is irreducible, which means that there is no knowledge incapable of leading to the opposite of what was aimed at when it was conceived' (Stiegler 2015a: 198).[221] Accordingly, this condition of pharmacology discloses that knowledge is a power that is, at the same time, non-power. For Valéry, the pharmacology of knowledge is intimately related to power in the sense that power is able to do anything—even, as Blanchot would say, 'to do away with itself as power (the explosion of the nucleus itself being one of the extremes of

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[221] Based on a reading of Derrida's *pharmakon*, implying both a remedy and a poison, the double relation between the conditions of spirit's growth and the self-reflection of spirit is what Stiegler calls the "pharmacological principle." Cf. Stiegler 2013a: 10; Stiegler 2015a: 155. What is particularly striking about Derrida's notion of *pharmakon* is how the distinction between the remedy and the poison cannot be mastered by virtue of a binary opposition (*either* poison *or* remedy) wherefore it slips out of any programmatic understanding (D, 118-126).

nihilism)' (Blanchot 1993: 208).[222] As such, Valéry's attempt to reflect on the shaping of modern science as a dimension that qualifies and honours the European spirit accentuates, at the same time, a double bind of science that may also carry with it an undermining effect on that same spirit.

Nevertheless, Valéry also asserts that 'modern science was born of this education in the grand style,' (HP, 34) and, as Valéry's explanation of this birth will show, the honour of Europe, that is, science, has its "spiritual birthplace" in ancient Greece. Indeed, Valéry, in a key claim from the 1922 lecture already mentioned in the above in which he regards Europe as the creator of science, makes this connection via what is undoubtedly a Eurocentric statement: 'There have been arts in all countries, there have been true sciences only in Europe.' (HP, 320) The same holds true for another passage in which Valéry states that during its accelerating expansion 'Europe founded science, which has transformed life and vastly increased the power of those who possess it. But by its very nature science is essentially transmissible; it is necessarily reducible to universal methods and formulas. The means it affords to some, all can acquire.' (HP, 17)

In thinking about what Valéry is up to here, we must bear in mind that the success of modern science and the concomitant objectivisation of the world, which we witness through the European transmission and export of science, technology, and knowledge has the consequence that the inequality that once existed between the regions of the world has begun to vanish.

Hence, as we have already discussed above, science for Valéry names the phenomenon in terms of which Europe has organised the world according to its own ends, so that whatever happens to Europe no longer appears to be limited to one region but encompasses the entire world. In the light of the Great War, Valéry gives an example of the ramifications of this scientific and technological transformation of Europe: 'Now, *local* European politics, dominating *general* European policy […] has led rival Europeans to export the methods and the machines that made Europe supreme in the world' (HP, 17). What we have not yet fully investigated, however, is why Valéry considers this development of science to be radically ambiguous.

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[222] 'Such an act,' Blanchot continues, 'will in no way make us accomplish the decisive step, the step that would deliver us over—in a sense without ourselves—to the surprise of impossibility by allowing us to belong to *this non-power that is not simply the negation of power*. For thought, the limit-experience represents something *like* a new origin.' (Blanchot 1993: 208-209) From this perspective, the pharmacology of knowledge lies, on the one hand, beyond the logic of power and powerlessness, but, on the other hand, it is working from within knowledge so as to render the distinction between power and powerlessness inoperative.

After stating that modern science is born of the European spirit, Valéry adds that 'once born, once tested and proved by its practical applications, our science became a means of power, a means of physical dominations, a creator of material wealth, an apparatus for exploiting the resources of the whole planet—ceasing to be an "end in itself" and an artistic activity.' (HP, 34) In these altogether remarkable claims, Valéry identifies an exploitative-calculative mentality within the dominance of technology and its process of connecting the world, a mentality that dates back to before the Great War and that emerges out of the continuity of science itself. With that said, let us now look more closely at this development of science and the point at which such a development becomes ambiguous.

As I suggested in the section above on the result of Valéry's endeavour to reflect on Europe's disorder, there are two implications to be drawn with respect to the application, instrumentality, or apparatus of science that are responsible for science becoming a means of power. Moreover, these two implications are particularly relevant for gaining an understanding of the disappearance of inequality. The first implication is that modern science and technology are intimately intertwined. This interrelation is characterised by the way in which modern science has come to work in the service of the technology that would eventually dominate the planet.[223] The issue of "techno-science" is, according to Valéry, inextricably bound up with the globalisation of the world insofar as the world as a globe is susceptible to exploitation due to 'the general spread of technology' (HP, 36). For this reason, techno-science is not merely a means of power, but rather it is a way both of disclosing the world as a globe and of transforming it according to the *spirit of technology*. To this point we shall return in later sections.

What Valéry calls the *general energising of the world* means that even if this modern science, which is born of the education in grand style, is indeed what teaches us how to utilise the resources of the world, it is technology that provides science with the idea that these resources are usable and exploitable in the first place. That is to say that techno-science as a means of power imposes on the world an attitude for exploiting the resources of the entire planet in such a manner that the world comes to be conceived as a

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[223] In Chapter Three, we have seen how the essence of technology metaphysically concerns a triumphant mode of being that lies at the ground of modern science, which is its *method*. Method, in this sense, concerns not so much the apparatus of science as it concerns its objectivity, whereby the world on a background of calculation and measure is defined in advance. As de Beistegui puts it, the 'victory of method originated in Europe' as an 'essentially European phenomenon, albeit one that, today, has reached the most remote corners of the earth, and a paradigm that has come to dominate the planet as a whole.' (Beistegui 2005: 103)

reserve of 'formidable contained energy.' This, then, in turn produces the 'indistinct equality' that Valéry regards as the perfect state of disorder (HP, 27; 13).

The second implication to be drawn from Valéry's reflection on science is perhaps most succinctly stated in the following passage from *La crise de l'esprit*:

> Knowledge, which was a consumer value, became an exchange value. The utility of knowledge made knowledge a *commodity*, no longer desired by a few distinguished amateurs but by Everybody. This commodity, then, was to be turned out in more and more manageable or consumable forms; it was to be distributed to a more and more numerous clientele; it was to become an article of commerce, an article, in short, that can be imitated and produced almost everywhere. (HP, 34-35)

As things stand with this passage, Valéry would appear to be drawing upon Marx, another one of his principal European skulls, and on Marx's analysis of commodity in *Das Kapital* (1867).[224] My purpose in what follows, however, is not to rehearse Marx's analysis, but rather to sketch out what is at stake in Valéry's manner of reflecting on the value and economy of spirit.

COMMODIFYING THE WORLD

In a later section we will return to the specific question regarding Valéry's sense of spirit, but for now we may instead focus on another point, namely, that the world in which knowledge has become a commodity desired by everybody and nobody reveals itself to be a "world market" whose value has been reduced to the accumulation and exchange of capital. Knowledge, in Valéry's view, is no longer appreciated as an "end in itself," in that the commerce of knowledge functions strictly on the condition that it carries value for someone or something other than itself. Considering the world as a market, Valéry even ventures to claim that '*Civilization is a kind of capital* that may go on accumulating for centuries' (HP, 191). As I hope to show in this and in later sections, the capital, "capitalism," or indeed the heading of this civilisation, emerges on the background of a certain manner of evaluation, namely, evaluation based upon the assumption of a *general equivalence*.[225]

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[224] In a letter to André Gide, on May 1918, Valéry expresses with enthusiasm how fruitful it has been to read Marx's *Das Kapital* and many of its 'brilliant analyses.' In fact, it came to his mind how it was possible to 'translate his [Marx's] language into mine. The object does not matter, and ultimately it is the same!' (C, 472-473)

[225] Nancy even refers to the principle of general equivalence as 'the law of our civilization' (Nancy 2015a: 32).

One could cite numerous quotations from Valéry's work to support such a Marxian line of thought, but common to all of them is the shared idea that the commodification of knowledge entails that knowledge assumes manageable and consumable forms by which it can thereby be distributed to greater and greater numbers of clientele.

Since the notion of "commodity" is a central one to Valéry, it is worth considering Marx's analysis of commodity fetishism in general.[226] In the first volume of *Das Kapital* Marx defines a commodity as a useful object—a definition that reflects the manner Valéry regards the utility of knowledge as that which turns knowledge into a commodity. Marx sums up the dynamic of commodification in the following concise manner:

> The product becomes a commodity [*Ware*]. The commodity becomes exchange value [*Tauschwert*]. The exchange value of the commodity acquires an existence of its own alongside the commodity; i.e. the commodity in the form in which it (1) is exchangeable with all other commodities; it (2) has hence become a commodity in general, and its natural specificity is extinguished; and (3) the measure of its exchangeability, that is, the given relation within which it is equivalent [*gleichgesetzt*] to other commodities, has been determined—this commodity is the commodity as money (MEW 42, 98).

According to Marx, a necessary condition for the production of commodity and its utility value is the market that serves as the platform upon which the commodity as a 'material bearer' (MEW 23, 50) is produced for exchange. For Valéry, however, the value of knowledge is not depleted by the commodification of knowledge in that such knowledge must become an article of commerce and be put into a circulation with all other commodities in order to acquire its value as a commodity. On this view, exchange value realises itself as a consumer value, meaning that in order to enter into a 'quantitative relation, the proportion, in which use values [*Gebrauchswerte*] of one kind exchange for use values of another kind' (MEW 23, 50) there must be a 'third thing [*einem Dritten*]' (MEW 23, 51) between the exchange values. Moreover, this third thing is precisely that which these exchange values have in common, or, rather, what makes them comparable on equal terms, even as it remains distinct from such values. That is to say that the third thing is conceived as the very "value of value," which in turn must be 'considered entirely independent of its quantitative aspect.' (MEW 23, 64)

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[226] As we will be seen in the section on the spiritual economy, the fetish character of commodity owes to an obsessive cultivation of a specific commodity, e.g., gold, which through social custom (MEW 23, 50-51) is promoted as the general equivalent of all commodities whereby the 'social relations between producers appear as relations between commodities, more generally: between things.' (Quante 2005: 164)

At this point, I will not retrace Marx's various steps through either the 1857 *Grundrisse* or the 1867 *Kapital*, but instead I will merely focus on his attempt to define the "value of value." According to Marx, any "value" is calculable in virtue of its exchange currency—the current form of which is *money*. For this reason, Marx says, 'Just as exchange value, in the form of money, takes its place as the *general commodity* alongside all particular commodities, so does exchange value as money therefore at the same time take its place as *particular commodity*, in the form of money' (MEW 42, 84). This value allows for the exchange between commodities and thereby exceeds the utility value of each commodity. The form of money, in other words, is defined as a general form of value, that is, the mediation, the third thing, or simply the *general equivalence* (*allgemeines Äquivalent*) that facilitates the evaluation of any commodity on the basis of a single standard that itself levels out any differences occurring with respect to the accumulation of value (MEW 42, 153; 759; MEW 23, 101).

Hence, if everything could be put into an economic circulation of values whereby each of these values could be replaced or exchanged by another in terms of the general equivalence of capital, then the world would be both captured in an infinite expansion while at the same time enclosed within itself due precisely to the "general equality" by means of which all the differences within the world have disappeared.

With these considerations, we are brought back to our point of departure, namely, to the *result*, according to which the inequality that once existed between the regions of the world and on which the superior power of Europe was based, is disappearing. Seen in light of this discourse on disappearance, what Valéry wants to show is that in a world where the commodity of knowledge is completely globalised and world-relations are reduced to the single dimension of exchange value, Europe no longer occupies a privileged positioned within its corner of the world and with its European problems. Instead, the disappearance of inequality between regions and nations of the world leads to another mode of inequality, the nature of which we may now discuss in what follows.

THE "WORLD" OF EUROPE

Because Valéry, already in 1919, directly challenged the prevailing image of a Europe in domination of the world, it may serve us well to delve into Valéry's geo-philosophical reflections on Europe. To do so, it is important for us to investigate more closely the discourse of disappearance that has been a recurrent theme throughout our reading of Valéry. As noted at the outset of this chapter, the Great War confronted Europe with its

mortality and finitude to such an extent that it has come to associate its own being with the constant threat of being transformed into nothing but an insignificant and killable entity in the same fashion as other civilisations have disappeared and no longer matter to "us." Accordingly, the inveterate tendency to advance a universal discourse about the reason, progress, and civilisation of Europe (and here it is not Europe as one civilisation among others so much as it is the European tendency, as it were, to speak *in the name of civilisation* as such, that is given primary emphasis) has been called into question by the phenomenon of disappearance. The question remains, however, as to what the relationship between that which Valéry calls the disappearance of inequality and the interconnection of 'every part of the globe' (HP, 9), may tell us about this new European situation as well as its relation to the world.

As Valéry describes it, the situation on the earth '*may be defined by a formula showing the inequalities between the inhabited regions of its* [the earth projected as a planisphere] *surfaces*.' (HP, 32) In this fashion the world and its parts can be defined on the basis of an inherent principle of inequality between the regions, wherefore the gradual disappearance of this inequality throws Europe into a crisis of indeterminacy. Nevertheless, with the increasing equality of globalisation, even the crisis of Europe becomes a general crisis inasmuch as it makes the singularities of the world indifferent to one another. As indicated above, the result of this process is a tying together of everything into one worldly sphere on account of which everything is thereby assigned value with respect to a general equality.

One can summarise Valéry's main point in the following manner: the image of a global world has achieved complete success in its effort of mapping out the world. According to Valéry, we therefore discover how the function of "discovery" and "conquest" is a way to appropriate the world that ends up expropriating Europe in its singularity. Although Valéry never employs the expression "globalisation," the import of this term (which in our discussion is to be conceived as a morphological model projected onto the world) cannot be underestimated in describing Valéry's effort to think the world in its global figure.

In other words, the image of the world in which Europe finds itself dominant is not merely a place of inhabitation; rather, it represents the very manner by which the world comes to be inhabited through an image of the world as a globe. This tendency of the modern age toward mapping out the world is, according to Arendt, characterised by three events: the discovery of America, the invention of the telescope, and the Reformation.

Moreover, it is in virtue of these that man has taken 'full possession of his mortal dwelling place and gathered the infinite horizons, which were temptingly and forbiddingly open to all previous ages, into a globe whose majestic outlines and detailed surface he knows as he knows the lines in the palm of his hand' (Arendt 1958: 250).

The implications of mapping out the world as well as of gathering the infinite horizons that are closed in and of themselves in the global figure of the world, are too numerous for me to consider *in extenso*. Instead, let me briefly recall that Valéry turns to the manner by which the global world comes to signify a process in which the amount of the accessible space on earth—a space which is made evident both from the expansive discoveries *on* the earth and from the observation *of* the earth *sub specie universi*—undergoes a kind of double movement. This double movement constitutes both a movement and a countermovement by which the forming of the world expresses an expansion of the phenomenon of "world" into a worldwide movement of globalisation at the same time that it contracts the world into a sphere.[227]

"THE AGE OF A FINITE WORLD"

Even though a key passage from 1927 confirms that, for Valéry, it is intrinsic to Europe 'to conquer, rule, and organize the rest of the world to European ends' (HP, 226), it is my intention in this chapter to call attention to what I take to be the pertinent question that Valéry addresses to us regarding the matter of the world. This question is not only one related to describing how Europe's power to conquer, map out, and exploit the resources of the earth tends to decline to a level, as Nietzsche says, of 'miserable European provincialism [*Kleinstaaterei*]' (KSA 6, 141). But rather, it turns out that Valéry's critical question concerns how Europe no longer possesses the power with which it had the "success" of dominating the world through assimilation, that is, through the process of Europeanising the world.

Let it be clear from the outset that Valéry's claim is not (or at least not exclusively) that the inequality of power on which the predominance of Europe was founded and which is now tending to disappear owes to a change in geopolitics. In fact, in 1927 Valéry notes that 'Europe had clearly distinguished herself from all the other parts of the world. Not by her politics but in spite of and contrary to her politics, she had developed to the

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[227] Arendt describes this process as an alienation significant to the modern world, which she determines as a 'twofold flight from the earth into the universe and from the world into the self' (Arendt 1958: 6).

utmost her freedom of spirit' (HP, 227).[228] Without going into the complexities of what Valéry means by freedom, it is important to note that for Valéry, freedom is a freedom of spirit as '*a response*' (HP, 207).

To what, then, is the freedom of spirit a response? Insofar as freedom is at the root of the question of spirit, we must acknowledge that freedom like spirit is an ambiguous notion. As Valéry points out, such freedom articulates, on the one hand, 'that we can do whatever we wish,' and, on the other hand, 'that we can do what we do not wish' (HP, 206). Thus, as we will come to see in the following sections, in the same manner that spirit encounters itself in a struggle with itself, freedom likewise responds to the phenomenon of unfreedom through the realisation that spirit is free to make itself unfree. That is to say that the freedom with which Europe is able to Europeanise the world is at the same time what (potentially) makes Europe and the world unfree. This is, I believe, what Valéry ultimately means when he refers to 'the disappearance of free land' (HP, 141):[229]

> Every habitable part of the earth, in our time, has been discovered, surveyed, and divided up among nations. The era of unoccupied lands, open territories, places that belong to no one, hence the era of free expansion, has ended. There is no rock that does not bear a flag; there are no more blanks on the map; no region out of the reach of customs officials and the laws (HP, 14-15).

This remark, which surely invites a discussion with postcolonial studies, relates to a comment we touched upon earlier, namely, that the world is conceived in terms of mapping. Accordingly, the very freedom that Europe employs so as to organise the world

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[228] For a discussion of Valéry's caution towards politics and its mutual exclusiveness of the freedom of spirit, seeing that political freedom is the sure way to slavery (HP, 206). See Löwith 1971: 103-104. In spite of Valéry's often scornful view on politics, Derrida has made some fascinating remarks about 'a sort of quasi-Cartesian politics' in Valéry, which unfortunately I cannot pursue any further here. See BS I, 262/194; 262-275/194-205. According to Stiegler, there is a moment to be found in Valéry when the question of spirit becomes a question of politics, that is, when the '*general weakness* of the spirit' becomes a matter of '*political weakness* insofar as it has renounced being a *politics of the spirit* or even a *political economy* of the spirit.' Stiegler goes on to argue that spirit and world politics cannot in fact be separated: 'Philosophy, in particular, is *essentially* a political discourse. And politics, as a modality of the process of individuation, is *essentially* a *care* taken of spirit, of its culture, that is, of a cult of a difference that one must know how to make and maintain, that can be forgotten, and that, when it is forgotten, leads to the worst.' (Stiegler 2011b: 101-102)

[229] However, freedom not only ends in unfreedom; it already has the experience of unfreedom in itself in such a way that freedom is a *response* to unfreedom. In *La liberté de l'esprit*, Valéry argues that freedom qualifies itself by overcoming unfreedom. This is not to be understood as though the freedom of Europe is able to assimilate the otherness of world to itself. On the contrary, even if the era of places that belong to no one has come to an end, the place from which Europe responds to that which is foreign, inassimilable, and other to Europe, does not belong to Europe, but is exterritorial to the very mapping out of the world. Cf. Waldenfels 1997: 143-144.

in its image at the same time exposes Europe to the unfreedom of being entrapped in its own limitless expansion across the globe.[230]

Hence, Valéry points to a problematic double movement, when he says that we bear witness to a loss of singularity of both Europe and the world through 'the exploitation of the globe, and the general spread of technology, all of which presage a *deminutio capitis* for Europe' (HP, 36). What is at stake in Valéry's way of reflecting on this double movement is how the virtues of science, reason, technology, etc. that were initially intended to protect Europe had suddenly become shady and undermining of Europe's singularity in the ascendance of these same virtues beyond their particular point of departure. Thus, Valéry's assessment of the (European) history of the world is nothing less than a becoming attentive to the contradictory becoming of Europe, that is, to the paradox that, as Derrida points out, 'globalization is Europeanization' (FWT, 178).[231]

In thinking about Valéry's thoughts on Europe, we must keep in mind the context of his analysis of a post-war world in transformation. As I hope to show below, there is in this context a transformation of the sense of world—a sense of the world marked by a general uncertainty about its sense. Of the many senses of the world, the sense that interests us here is whether the transformation at stake in Valéry involves a reversal of the very sense of sense. How are we to understand such a reversal of sense at play in experiencing the sense of world in terms of an explored and overexploited globe? This is, I believe, one of the important questions that Valéry's thought on the Post-Great-War world exhibits—a thought that Janicaud, in turn, has turned into a question:

> It is a strange condition wherein what is new happens at the very heart of the too-familiar, where the mirage of an *other world* (in the religious but also a

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[230] As Valéry remarks, in the coming-together of an extensively Europeanised world we see '…nothing! Nothing…and yet an infinitely potential nothing.' (HP, 27) What comes into view, then, is how the age of a finite world comes to disclose a kind of "bad infinite," to put it in Hegelian terms, according to which the values of European civilisation appear to be instrumentalised in such a way that they reproduce their own power in all of their indeterminacy through a spreading of this indeterminacy unto the ends of the world.

[231] This paradox is not to be resolved by resisting Eurocentrism through anti-Eurocentrism, whether this unfolds as a globalisation or a provincialisation, because, as Visker notes, the provincialism of Europe already distinguishes itself in that it 'leads *as such* to uprootedness' (Visker 1999: 146) rather than providing its *cure*. Thus, when Iris Marion Young argues that Derrida's appeal to Europe 'from the point of view of the rest of the world' may look 'more like a re-centering of Europe' (Young 2005: 153) than a de-centring, she is aiming at a provincialisation of Europe in terms of which Europe would be able to bring its own particularity up for discussion. However, Visker suggests that even if Europe is brought 'to, abandon its own exclusivity, and the wish to see itself through the eyes of others,' this exclusive wish is 'still the *insignum* par excellence which distinguished and raised European cultures above all others' (Visker 1999: 147). Instead of entering into a discussion of the alternative between a re-centring and a de-centring of Europe, however, what we have been trying to discuss and investigate in our reading of Valéry is rather how Europe must orient itself—if possible—in a world that has become entirely *acentric*.

cosmo-geographic sense) has less and less credibility (the "conquest" of space is already retro), and wherein, in the abandonment of transcendence and grandiose designs, in the idleness of spirit coupled with an affair with the body, at the heart of these pell-mell experiences out-proliferating one another, we find What? (Janicaud 1997: 134)

Despite its dense nature, this passage nevertheless provides us with a good sense of where we have been and where we are going in our reading of Valéry. Notable in this passage is the illusion both of a world and of another world beyond. In this respect, I agree with Janicaud's two Nietzschean intuitions underlying his forceful reading of Valéry. The first intuition can be summarised by one of Nietzsche's headings: *How the "true world" finally became a fable*. What is crucial about this discovery is that to disclose the fiction of the "true world" by dismantling the binary logic at work within the distinction between a true and an apparent world is not the same thing as stating the truth of an apparent world. Rather, as Nietzsche writes: 'The true world—we have abolished. What world has remained? The apparent one perhaps? … But no! *With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one* [*die scheinbare*]!' (KSA 6, 81)[232]

If we were to linger just a little longer on Nietzsche and thus approach Janicaud's second Nietzschean intuition, we may argue that Valéry is confronted with the most extreme form of nihilism—a nihilism that proclaims any credit or faith in another world (that is, the faith that Nietzsche in 1887 defined as a holding-to-be-true) is 'necessarily false *because there simply is no true world*' (KSA 12, 354; 351). Extreme nihilism, in contrast to an imperfect nihilism that posits "new values" in the place of exhausted ones, is the *interpretation* of values that come to nothing. Such coming to nothing plays out not in the sense that 'nothing is of *value*,' (Blanchot 2010: 145) but rather in the sense that, as Janicaud underscores, 'the *new* as such […] risks losing all meaning.' (Janicaud 1997: 138)

Hence, if the essence of the highest values are devaluated—whereby Nietzsche understands not the inflation of values but the implosion of accumulated values due to which the binding force of values becomes untied—the Nietzschean determination of the *will to power* that Janicaud appreciates as the "philosophical" core of Valéry's thought thus becomes the 'fundamental characteristic of globalization' (Janicaud 1997: 135).[233]

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[232] However, to think fiction, as Lacoue-Labarthe argues, 'is not to oppose appearance to reality, since appearance is nothing other than the product of reality. It is precisely to think without recourse to this opposition, *outside* of this opposition, it is to think the world as fable' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1993: 16).

[233] While Heidegger argues that Nietzsche's attempt to overcome nihilism in terms of the principle of "will to power" in view of which all previous values are revaluated, makes him the last metaphysician (GA 6.2,

In other words, the globalisation that seeks to impose on the world its value of universality is at the same time an exhaustion of the very signification of values insofar as the regime of signification is bound up with the general equalisation of everything. This entails that if we want to grasp the meaning of globalisation (or, rather, of Europeanisation), we run up against what Nietzsche calls the "death of God," which, in Valéry's view, is understood as the exhaustion of the meaning and the supreme values representing the order of the world that is associated with Europe becoming worldwide and that he calls the '*age of the finite world*' (HP, 15).

Yet, as we shall see in the next section, the "age of the finite world" understood as the exhaustion of those values on which the universality and power of globalisation is based might also lead out of nihilism all the while the general equality that has come to characterise the finite world confers upon it an "infinite horizon." With this opening to the infinite, we are finally brought to Janicaud's second Nietzschean intuition in his reading of Valéry.

GENERAL EQUALITY

In what follows, I shall address a claim that I take to be central to Valéry's view of the disappearing global inequality and, in particular, to his notion of a "finite world." The claim is that with the disappearance of inequality on account of which the singularity of the world and its regions (including also that of Europe) is assimilated through a universal horizon Europe and the rest of the world are being transformed into a *general equality*.

How are we to understand this disappearance of the inequality that once existed between the regions of the world and on which the predominance of Europe was based (even if artificially so) into a general equality? This shift from inequality towards an increasing equality entails that Europe has entered into kinship with an *indifference* that would appear to be looming in the background of the globalisation associated with the singularity of the world. As we shall come to see in due course, for Valéry the inequality on account of which the world and its parts appear to have been founded must surrender to the accelerating speed by which the world and space has been conquered by the broadening equalisation. As a result, Valéry's argumentation is pushed toward another

22-29; GA 67, 200; 206), the Nietzschean determination in Valéry's thought points us in another direction. Moreover, while Janicaud rightfully points out that the will to power as the spiritual power of transformation is neither pure thought nor principle but 'apprehended in its immanence' (Janicaud 1997: 135), I believe that there is an opening of transcendence in this immanence insofar as the only measure provide by this global world is, in Nancy's words, 'the measure of the incommensurable' (Nancy 2013: 21).

kind of inequality in terms of which the distinctions of the world are rendered indifferent to one another by an *indistinct equality*.

In that this issue is so crucial, let us attend to the details of Valéry's *result* one last time as this helps to bring into greater relief his basic *theorem*. The main thrust of this theorem is that the inequality on which the power of Europe has been entrenched since long ago turns out to be bound up with change in the opposite direction. In anticipation of a more detailed discussion later in this chapter, let me at this point sketch out the central features of this double bind.

As I have indicated above by Janicaud's Nietzschean intuitions, for Valéry, the will to power is the essence of power insofar as it designates the absolute essence of a will that wills itself as nothing but will.[234] This power is ultimately what Valéry defines as a *power of transformation*, which, as the essence of the will to power, is the fundamental trait of reality. Whilst power is often thought to be the result of force, Valéry, in light of his definition of spirit as a power of transformation (HP, 94; 106), insists that power is essentially *spiritual*. Yet, as we have seen, although spirit 'creates both order and disorder, for its business is to provoke change' (HP, 100), we have also come to understand that 'wherever spirit is at stake, everything is at stake' in that 'everything is disorder and any reaction against disorder is of the same nature, for disorder is, further, the condition of its own fecundity' (IP, 59-60).

With this last quotation, we begin to see how Valéry's theorem operates in terms of a "reactionary logic." According to Valéry, the very exploitative-calculative mentality of the transforming power called spirit brings about a disorder of Europe that causes fear (HP, 95). As Valéry explains it, what is feared is spirit itself insofar as the transformative power of spirit affects the very nature of spirit to such an extent that every transformation engendered by the spirit also befalls itself. In other words, the spirit incessantly haunts itself in that it becomes affected by the threat of its own transformative power, such that the fear *for* spirit becomes at the same time a fear *of* itself. Accordingly, Valéry's thought of spirit as a power of transformation both *is* and *is* not a power.[235] This is what we have called the "pharmacology of power," but it might be better named the "autoimmunity of spirit" seeing as the power *of* spirit is structured by a duplicitous relation to itself. This

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[234] See Janicaud 1997: 135.
[235] As argued in Chapter Three, if spirit were power itself, it would not lose power; yet, if spirit were not power, the disempowering of spirit, as Derrida suggests, would not be something *of* spirit (DE, 98-100/62).

duplicity brings into view how the change to which Europe is bound extends from the reaction of Europe against its own transformative power in such fashion that an interior exteriority, or an *extimacy*, haunts the spirit from within its own double—in Valéry's terms, the spirit *of* spirit. We shall return to a more meticulous examination of the notion of spirit in Valéry in the next chapter, but for now we shall remain with our initial question regarding equality and inequality.

Strikingly, at the point where Europe no longer has to prove the superiority of its position amongst others—keeping in mind that, in Valéry's view, no other part of the world has ever had the same assimilatory power as Europe—its "success" of becoming worldwide turns out to be fatal in the sense it carries with it a levelling of Europe's distinction from other civilisations. Thus, not only has the world been Europeanised by a universal distension of science and technology, but Europe has in fact reemphasised the value of inequality by equalising the distinctions of the world—a process whereby the inequality based on European hegemony has been substituted for and reinforced by an inequality of global hegemony.

Indeed, the indistinct equality that Valéry poses to us as implied in the order of the world constitutes the core of Europe's disorder (HP, 27). Valéry's way of formulating this double bind, that is, the appearance of one hegemony of inequality out of the disappearance of another, is captured nicely in the following: 'So the artificial imbalance of power on which European predominance has been based for three hundred years is tending rapidly to vanish. And another imbalance based on crude statistical characteristics tends to reappear.' (HP, 17) What Valéry here calls "another imbalance" is the effort to annul the inequality between the regions of the world through emphasising that the designation of balance comes into view as a general equality. The equality mentioned here is characterised by a levelling out of the differences of the world into a general equality that prevents such differences from coming into their own as *other than others*. What this ultimately means, then, is that the "relation" between Europe and the rest of the world likewise becomes levelled out. More precisely, the singularity of the world and its regions is already a part of an infinite exchangeability whereby the interconnectedness of the world places everything of the world in a process of exchange based upon the principle of general equality.

The task is therefore to shed further light on what Marx describes, in drawing on Shakespeare's definition of money as the 'equation of the unequal [*Gleichsetzen des*

Ungleichartigen],'[236] or, more specifically, the 'exchangeability [*Austauschbarkeit*] of all products, activities, and relations with a third, *objective entity* [*sachliches*] which can be re-exchanged for everything *without distinction* [*ohne Unterschied*]' (MEW 42, 96). The term *exchangeability*, however, is ambiguous: On the one hand, it implies that, by levelling out the differences of the world, we find ourselves closer to articulating the extreme nihilism according to which each part of the world is essentially exchangeable with every other part.[237] On the other hand, it refers to a discourse of inequality that is used in a "negative" fashion only because one presupposes an order as exhibiting the standard for evaluating and, thereby, for levelling out the distinctions of the world. Yet, as we have seen throughout our discussion, Valéry himself emphasises the importance of thinking about the disorder outside of the restrictions of the binary opposition of order and disorder (a move that itself belongs to order), all the while encouraging us to relinquish our pre-conceived ideas of these terms. We must try to imagine, therefore, that the dis-order is neither a contradiction with nor an annihilation of order, but rather that which surprises and exhausts the order or horizon of expectation.[238]

A TASK OF DIFFERENCES

By focusing on Valéry's double bind, we can perhaps now grasp the *result* of the changed scene of Europe and world. As we have shown above, Valéry in *La crise de l'esprit* observes the increasing disappearance of the inequality that helped to make Europe a unique destination and not just any old part of the world. Yet, as we have also seen, absorbing everything into a global figure involves the comportment towards a de-territorialised world, which on the one hand, undoes any ordered sense of the world but which, on the other hand, may expose thought to an opening that is not at the disposal of any order.

Since much has already been said about Valéry's conception of Europe and the world, let me focus here only on the movement that Valéry calls the becoming-one-of-world. As Valéry remarks, 'So, the classification of the habitable regions of the world is *becoming one* in which gross material size, mere statistics and figures […] finally and

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[236] Cf. Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*, Act 4, Scene 3.
[237] Heidegger describes the process as follows: 'Today, to be is to be replaceable [*Sein ist heute Ersetzbarsein*]. The very idea of a "repair" has already become an "anti-economical" thought. To every item of consumption [*Seienden des Verbrauchs*] there essentially belongs the fact that it *has already* been consumed and thus calls for replacement.' (GA 15, 369)
[238] Cf. Waldenfels 2015: 205-206.

alone determine the rating of the various sections of the globe.' (HP, 35; my emphasis) What this example shows, is how Europe ends up becoming an exemplary absence of destination. Bearing in mind the intimate intertwinement of Europeanisation and globalisation, we may point out that this absence of destination is already present from the outset of the "Europeanisation" of the world. Consequently, the de-territorialisation of such absence, which in turn allows the unlimited expansion of the general equality, reaffirms the power of the *one* that equates the inequalities of the world. In other words, what emerges at this point in Valéry's thought of the world becoming one is a fundamental exhaustion of the universal destination of the world, which Valéry aims to describe with his "unique" example of Europe (HP, 28).

Recently, Schuback has offered a useful framework for understanding the global world when she argues that the disappearance of "each one" gives way to the hegemony of the one *as* the only one, which thereby entails that this one is no longer determinable as one among others. As she writes, '*Each one becoming other: this is a way of defining the global world as a world of global fragmentation. The one without any other: this is a way of defining the global world as a world of global hegemony.*' (Schuback 2013: 15)

Indeed, with the appearance of general equality Valéry realises that the loss of European hegemony based on inequality is replaced by the hegemony of a global world without otherness, of one world without any other. Having recognised the 'shape of the earth's surface […] depicted its parts more accurately, guessed at and verified its closed convexity, found and summed up the laws of its movement, discovered, appraised, exploited the resources and usable reserves of that thin layer in which all life is contained…' (HP, 13), Valéry thus sees that there is no way out of the world in that, on the one hand, events of the world happens simultaneously all over the world due to the interconnection of space and time, and, on the other hand, the space of this global interconnectedness of the world is without escape.[239]

In other words, the general equality according to which all points of orientation are equal to one another transforms the sense of the world into a closed and homogenous system with no space for interruptions, interventions or otherness. This transformation of the sense of the world shakes the self-understanding of Europe in that Europe has not only now become contested by, for example, a line of geopolitical factors such as its continental extension or natural resources, but also in that Europe, in being shaken to the

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[239] As Schuback argues, 'because there is no way out, the only possible utopian transformation would be a conformation to the global, in a more just and equal globalism.' (Schuback 2013: 16)

core of its being, now finds its own self-understanding to have become a part of the problem. In fact, the very way in which Europe understands itself via its spiritual traits of reason, science, and technology that have made it into an exception based on inequality (or, more precisely, into the exception it believed itself to be), is also the way in which Europe comes to understand itself as a problem. This in turn brings into focus Europe's self-understanding as a relation to nothing but the world as finite.[240]

Yet, if a *finite world*, as suggested above, means that there is no other world, nothing other, and nowhere else, that is, that there is nothing but the world in the sense that the world is abandoned all to itself, then "we" can no longer understand "our" relation to the world on a model of loss, not even of a loss of illusions. In this respect, as Nancy suggests, 'this world consists in rendering justice to itself, to the whole world and to everyone, and to nothing other than the world,' (Nancy 2007b: 533) so as to expose the global horizon of a finite world to an infinite opening, which concerns a future that is 'stripped of any future' (HP, 229).

We have seen how this infinite opening will henceforth always already have been exhausted of all purposes, aims, and expectations, which means that the future is by itself emptied of an end and thereby brings an end to closure. Put differently, the "future without future" brings us—I believe—to a reopening of the differences of the world—a point hinted at but not developed in Valéry's writings. Allow me, however, the liberty to expand upon this point by reference to an essay by Valéry from 1938. As he writes,

> If the modern world is not to end in the universal and irreparable ruin of every value created by centuries of effort and experiment of every kind, and if […] our world is to reach a certain, political, cultural, and economic equilibrium, we must look to the possibility that the various registers of the globe might one day use their difference of all sorts to complement rather than to oppose each other. (HP, 329)

The claim I would like to make here is not that Valéry attempts to set out an account of the world in which the differences of wealth (whether political, cultural, or economic) gesture in the direction of an inequality in favour of Europe, let alone a general equality that tends to level out the differences of the world, but rather that the *interrelatedness* of each part of a world becoming global opens up a difference within the world that carries the possibility of imagining something different from difference as opposition. Whatever

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[240] To some extent, this might seem to be what Sloterdijk calls 'the dysangelium of modernity,' consisting in a 'loss of periphery' rather than a 'loss of the centre' (Sloterdijk 1999: 825).

the differences of the world might be, what is important to note is that the finitude of the world-becoming-one serves as a marker of not only an equalisation of everything in the world but also of a possibility of reaffirming the singularity of the world and each of its parts by sharing (out) their finitude in such a manner that Europe, *for example*, is exposed to other singularities in light of its very existence. In contrast to a general equality, which makes everything equal in terms of an abstract substance, a third thing, or a general equivalence, an equality of "our world" has rather to do with each single part of the world and the interrelated incommensurability of these parts. In short, the equality of the world has to do with the world as a relation to itself. This relation, however, is not static but rather dynamic in the sense that it opens up the very world in which it occurs.

In conclusion, let us summarise our preceding points in order to outline the possibility of reconsidering an equality not in terms between determinable differences, but rather in terms of that which remains different from such determination: in short, in terms of a *difference as non-indifference*.[241] We have seen that in characterising the world as global, Valéry not only observes the technological aspect of equalisation, which he registers in the calculating evaluation of everything, including spirit, but he also provides an assessment of the "equality" that articulates the real value of the world—or, to put it crudely, the economy that lies at the heart of the world as an image. It is here that we find the fundamental principle of general equivalence that is important for us to bring into relief in order to better understand Valéry's thought of the disappearance of inequality. To reiterate Valéry's result, the inequality on which the predominance of Europe has been based carries itself to the point of its definitive equalisation in terms of its "success" of becoming worldwide. It is in this sense that inequality disappears into general equality, which nevertheless in turn becomes an alibi for another form of inequality.[242] To put it

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[241] This expression owes to Lévinas 1978: 133. Non-indifference refers not merely to a double negation, as though in-difference were to negate or neutralise difference; rather, the non-indifference refers to what cannot be negated or neutralised but remains incommensurable to general equivalence and unequal to any equalisation. Cf. Waldenfels 2006: 45-49.

[242] In this respect, Derrida has argued that, in a certain sense, there has never been a "globalisation" and that it is 'a false concept, often an alibi; never has the world been so unequal and so marginally shareable or shared.' (IW 62) Whilst *globalisation* connotes the geometrico-planespherical notion of the globe, as outlined above, Derrida, not unlike Nancy, refers instead to *mondialisation* so as to emphasise the becoming-world-wide of the world (and not the globe), according to which an other world, a world other than that of and heterogeneous to globalisation, may be formed. What the Americans call "globalisation," Derrida notes, 'has been a universal Europeanization through science and technology, and even those who oppose this Europeanization, even those who, through acts of terrorist violence, claim to oppose this violent Europeanization, this violent Americanization, do so most often using a certain technical, techno-scientific, sometimes techno-economic-scientific Europeanization.' (IW, 61) Derrida commits himself to think 'a new European responsibility' (IW, 64), that is, 'a type of Europe that, far from wanting to Europeanize the

differently, for Valéry the exhausted destination of the world as the absence of a pre-given sense of Europe designates how the geopolitical equilibrium reaching its conclusion in a global world, serves as a springboard to reflect on the non-indifference of the world as a manner by which to reconsider the "differences" of the world in terms other than those of a general equality. As Valéry argues, the differences that allow the world to reappear otherwise, and hence not to end in a universal ruin of every value, are not to be conceived as mere oppositions but rather as those gestures of complementation or affirmation by which any difference of values is appreciated without being measured in advance.[243]

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world, could step between the hegemony of the American superpower […] and the rest of the world' (IW, 63).

[243] This sense of evaluation that is not based on any principle, is, as Nancy says, 'the affirmation of a unique, incomparable, unsubstitutable "value," or "sense"' (Nancy 2010: 24), on account of which nihilism shows itself the door, not by reactivating any value, any principle of evaluating values, but by affirming that nothing is equivalent, that is, any principle of evaluation is itself an-economic or an-archic because of the incommensurability of every value.

CHAPTER SIX

ECONOMY OF SPIRIT

> What is "spirit"?
> Spirit is: to live as dead
> (Kierkegaard, SKS 26, 436)
>
> There is no definition of spirit
> where there is no moment of irony
> (Kierkegaard, SKS 26, 414)

My purpose thus far has been to make visible something of how Valéry's understanding of Europe develops in his work between 1919 and 1939. This development was depicted as proceeding from an understanding of Europe as the unique destination of the world onto another understanding of Europe, which, as Valéry points out, is first of all aware of itself as imbued with a radical sense of finitude inasmuch as its "destiny" is bound up with the risk of obliteration. Furthermore, in our discussion of Europe's position in the world, we have seen how, on the one hand, the inequality on which Europe's predominance was based is gradually put out of order, while, on the other hand, another kind of inequality is becoming established through the globalisation of modern techno-science.

What is still not clear, however, is how this way of characterising the growing disorder of Europe as a general equality provides us with a clue for understanding the notion of spirit in Valéry. In order to gain some clarity on this point, we must seek to understand how the crisis of Europe occurs through an equally radical crisis of spirit. An understanding of the notion and sense of spirit will therefore be the main subject of our discussion in the present and final part on Valéry in which we shall continue to follow some of the guiding themes developed in the previous parts. Since Valéry uses the term "spirit" in many different contexts, I will be obliged to skip around a bit in his authorship in order to provide an analysis of how this term functions in his texts. With that, much of my analysis will focus on scattered passages in *La liberté de l'esprit*. In any case, I must openly confess that my reading here is not intended to give an exhaustive account of Valéry's sense of spirit, but rather to approach the matter in a more selective, thematic, and exploratory way. My goal with this approach is to explore how Valéry's thinking of the value of spirit can be thought together with the process of an evanescent signification of spirit that opens onto what escapes or exceeds "evaluation." This is because, as Derrida

shows, spirit is one value among others while at the same time it is also the absolute source of all value that detaches itself from any economy (AC, 94-98n.8/123-126n.8).

THE "SPIRIT" OF 1919

In *La liberté de l'esprit* from 1939, Valéry revisits his earlier works on the question of spirit and begins by squarely stating that the question of spirit is a sign of his age: 'It is a sign of the times, and not a very good sign, that today it is not only necessary but imperative to interest people's minds in the fate of the Spirit—that is, in their own fate.' (HP, 186) With this announcement, Valéry points back to his second letter from *La crise de l'esprit* written in 1919, where he makes it clear that 'the things of the world interest me only as they relate to the intellect; for me, everything relates to the intellect.' (HP, 31)[244] Twenty years later, in 1939, the picture looks at once the same and yet different with respect to Valéry's interest in spirit, with the crucial difference being that a certain interest in the future of humanity has become significant for his appeal to the notion of spirit.

One could then say that the difference of Valéry's interest in spirit shows how the very status of the "our," the "us," and the "we" has become uncertain wherefore the imperative to reflect on 'the future of spirit' (HP, 183) is critical to all of us in that it concerns our destiny as human beings. To put it tersely, in our age, conceived of as an age uncertain of its plural pronouns, as it were, the question of spirit as the sign of our age becomes different from a 'certain age' that is, as Valéry describes it, 'only too certain' (HP, 186) of itself. In order to elaborate on this point of difference, let me turn to an example that Valéry himself employs, namely, that of a man approaching a change of time, a transition.

In his essay *Le bilan de l'intelligence*, delivered as a conference paper at the Université des Annales in 1935, Valéry recalls an episode when a friend of his had once remarked that the phrase "every period is a transition" is most certainly a trivial statement. In reflecting over this episode, however, Valéry reveals that he in contrast to his friend is not altogether convinced of this statement's triviality, for, as he asks, would not someone who had lived through the 'years from 1872 to 1890, and then from the years 1890 to 1935 […] feel some difference of rhythm between these two periods of his life?' (HP,

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[244] We should keep in mind that when Valéry speaks of (human) intelligence, he always has in mind the question of spirit and 'its limits [*bornes*], its preservations, its probable future [*avenir probable*]—and for the spirit this is the paramount question of the day' (HP, 137/1064).

134-135) Given this remark, should we take Valéry's view of history to be one of continuity or discontinuity? As I read it, Valéry does not suggest that there is a continuity running from period to period—a continuity that would hypostatise the transitions of history as though it were possible to discern the 'development of the events that had taken place in the past' (HP, 135) and thereby to project a future on the basis of predictability. In what follows, I shall try to unfold this reading.

As we have seen in Chapter Four, Valéry argues that we can 'no longer look on the past as a son looks on his father' (HP, 131). One must therefore be careful to note that nothing can be derived from the past that would enable us to orientate ourselves precisely because nothing 'will orient us in the present or help us to imagine the future.' (HP, 136) What Valéry is doing here is to "reinvent" the notion of the future, and to do so by denying the possibility of any attempt to predict, anticipate or calculate what is coming—a possibility that is itself undermined by the refusal of the future to be reduced in any manner to a mere "consequence" of the present. Accordingly, Valéry makes the claim 'that the human race is entering a phase of its history in which all predictions become— by the sheer fact of being a prediction—a risk of error, a suspect product of our spirits.' (HP, 133)

What is notable here is not only that the risk of error, which would be intrinsic to all predictions, is being used to emphasise the essential instability of history, but also that the question of spirit as a question of "our destiny" entails the risk of error insofar as errancy is inherent to destiny as a product of spirit. Put differently, the future induces an anxious realisation of itself as an absolute break with the determinations of the present— the reason for this being that the future, as that which remains indeterminate, opens not just onto another present, but rather onto the present as other. As such, the future as incalculable carries with it that which *remains to come in the present*. Valéry's "story," in which he emphasises the inherent errancy of destiny and with which he highlights the dis-order at stake in "our age," therefore offers us a manner by which to reflect on the phase, or perhaps better put, the epoch of history *otherwise*. Hence, referring not so much to an archeo-teleology as to the 'too many innovations […], too many surprises, too many things created and destroyed, and too many great and sudden developments' (HP, 135) of history, Valéry sees how dis-order opens less onto the past or the future as horizons of

more or less predictable possibilities and rather more onto 'the future without the least shape' (HP, 136).[245]

Still, what remains a "critical" moment for Valéry is the dis-order, which is undeniably something of a brutal interruption of the continuity of history and of the unique destination of the world that "we" believed "ourselves" to have found within the name of Europe.[246] Such a critical interruption of continuity is not the inauguration of a new age, as if the solution to Europe's crisis as a crisis of spirit were located in some distant yet predictable future. The crisis of spirit, in other words, is not a founding event; rather, it suspends the continuous effort of history to decide and make a judgement (κρίνειν) regarding the principle of epochality.[247] For Valéry, "our age" calls us to live as if '*every man belongs to two eras*' (HP, 135) and in perpetual suspension of any epochal decision. As we have seen, this is a call that would seem to impose upon us the question that the "modern age" puts to itself—a question that remains without an answer insofar as such an answer would amount to a deciding of the undecidable.[248] Put differently, the age of modernity has perhaps already been exposed to its own limit without, however, being able to anticipate or represent any future epoch that would lie beyond this limit. What this means is that the modern human being is no longer enclosed in one epoch, but rather is stretched out between several (or, at least, *more than one*) undecidable epochs. According to Valéry, this being in-between, belonging neither here nor there, is directed

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[245] Valéry expounds on this view as follows: 'It used to be that in foresight our vision (and, consequently, the unforeseen at that time) was limited on the one hand by our knowledge and on the other by our means of action... We regarded the unknown future simply as a combination of things already known; the new could be broken down into elements that were not new. But this is no longer so' (HP, 175).

[246] As a name for the errancy produced by spirit to indicate "our destiny," dis-order may then designate a *destinerrance*, to put it in Derridean terms, which evokes our condition of being as a destiny without a given destination. This, however, is not the place to rehearse in detail Derrida's notions of *destinerrance*, *adestination*, or *clandestination*, which are discussed at various places of his work. In brief, then, what in my view is crucial to Derrida's notion of *destinerrance* is that the premise for a thinking of "our destiny" concerns how it inflicts an internal disturbance of destination. Thus, the question of spirit, in which Valéry urges us to show an interest, is an announcement of a destiny of wandering about without a principle of destination. In other words, *destinerrance* designates a wandering about in a universe not only without a centre but also without a periphery.

[247] In a remark on *Narcissus*, Valéry writes of the 'mirrored form, the arrested being, fixed, inscribed—of the history, the *particular* with—the universal center, the capacity to change, the eternal youth of *oblivion*, the Proteus, the being who cannot be fettered [*enchaîné*], the turning movement, the renascent function, the I [*le moi*] that can be wholly new and even multiple.' (C II, 284) Thus, the sort of other destiny of spirit, which I have tried to bring into view, pushes the past principles and idols to the past so as to prepare a passing from, as Schürmann would say, 'the era of Janus to the era of Proteus,' (Schürmann 1990: 274) that is, the epoch of multiple localities.

[248] In his early Heidegger course, Derrida explains that 'this question as the *in-between epochs* of being opens onto a historicity that is no longer enclosed in one epoch […]. This question is possible only if the one posing it no longer simply belongs to an epoch (i.e., to the totality of beings), but to the difference between being and the totality of beings.' (HQBH, 133)

"towards" 'that general sense of helplessness and incoherence that pervades our spirits, keeping us on the alert, in a state of anxiety to which we can neither become accustomed nor foresee any end.' (HP, 136)

In what follows, I would like to suggest that the sign of which Valéry speaks in order to characterise his age, is a sign of awaiting a self-understanding of that age perceived as an attempt to (re-)mobilise a sense of spirit. At this juncture, further clarification of Valéry's notion of spirit is therefore warranted.

A SENSE OF SPIRIT

The notion of spirit is of utmost importance in Valéry's writings. Moreover, this notion is so intrinsically bound up with the transformations resulting from the Great War that one could almost call it the '"spirit" of 1919'.[249] For Valéry, the notion spirit and the crisis of 1919 are so seamlessly integrated that their interweavement becomes reflective of Janicaud's blunt formulation that 'spirit *is* crisis' (Janicaud 1997: 134). In *La politique de l'esprit*, Valéry sums up his view on spirit and its relation to the critical disorder occurring in the aftermath of the Great War by outlining his strategy as follows: 'I shall try to show you the reaction of a spirit as it observes that disorder [*constate ce désordre*]: how, when it has taken the measure of what it can and cannot do, it returns to itself [*le retour qu'il fait sur lui-même*]' (HP, 89/1014; translation modified).

Valery's writings from 1919 to 1939 as well as his repeated return to the question of spirit as the key to his inquiry into the crisis of Europe all point to a similar account regarding the source of the European disorder. As I have already begun to indicate above, spirit strives to unravel this disorder only to discover that everything has been affected by it including itself: '*The Spirit itself has not been exempt from all this damage*. The spirit is in fact cruelly stricken; it grieves in men of intellect, and looks sadly upon itself. It distrusts itself profoundly [*doute profondément de soi-même*].' (HP, 308/1001)

In his 1922 lecture *L'Européen* given at the University of Zürich in which he observes that in the pursuit of resituating Europe in the world whereby the question of spirit becomes central, Valéry asks, 'What, then, is the Spirit? In what way can it be struck, stunned, reduced, humiliated by the present state of the world? Whence comes this deep concern for things of the Spirit, this distress, this anguish among men of spirit?'

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[249] This expression stems from Rosenzweig's (1984: 51) "Vorwort zu 'Hegel und der Staat'" (1914/1920), an expression which he finds impossible to rework in that the origin and intent of this book attests to a spirit of the pre-war years.

(HP, 308) It is precisely within the fundamental distrust that the spirit has gained of itself that Valéry recognises the importance of reconsidering the spirit, not so much in order to initiate a "return" to a former trustful spirit of Europe, but rather to examine the exposure of its fundamental ambiguity. As Valéry puts it in 1932, 'spirit must think of itself, of the conditions of its own existence (which are also the conditions of its growth [*conditions d'accroissement*]), of the dangers that threatens its virtues, powers, and possessions' (HP, 91/1016).

Hence, when Valéry in the 1930s comes to locate the spiritual troubles of Europe in a civilisation that has repeatedly delegitimised itself, he examines the conditions implicit to the spirit of Europe in order to lay bare how the very *freedom* of spirit becomes that which makes it possible for spirit to be harmed by itself. In effect, claims Valéry, the 'working conditions of the spirit have suffered [*subi*] the same destiny as all other human affairs, that is to say, they share in the intensity, the haste, the general acceleration of exchanges […] the fantastic flickering of events.' (HP, 138/1065) For Valéry, such an essentially ambiguous mode of both a curative and a destructive power is designated by the gesture of a single (albeit notoriously difficult to comprehend) notation: *spirit*.

At this juncture, it is essential for us to take a brief excursus where we address our own contemporary intuitions about the fundamental meaning of the term "spirit." When considered in retrospect, Valéry's interest in the question of spirit may, I admit, strike many as strange or even preposterous. Today the term "spirit," like "soul," is, if not worn out, then at least confined to religious realms. Moreover, it is often employed as a designation of what we are lacking in our age—a lack is blamed for the so-called "crisis" of decline, decadence, and nihilism in which we presumably exist. My intention in what follows is to try to reopen the question of spirit in Valéry by putting aside, as much as is possible, any preconceptions based on the frequent religious or melancholic references to this term. I find this exercise important in that the very usage of the term "spirit" forces us to encounter ourselves as those whose inheritance remains in abeyance and in escheat insofar as it is "we" who have inherited disinheritance—the consequence of which being that we are thus presented with our very inability to understand ourselves in relation to "our heritage."[250]

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[250] Nancy writes: 'the vacating of the very possibility of inheritance is implied in its idea, not only because it is possible that there might not be anyone to inherit but because the possibility of dis-inheritance is contained in that of inheritance' (Nancy 2016: 873-874).

In this task, we will take particular interest in exploring what spirit as a notation brings into view. Indeed, the difficulty pertaining to Valéry's texts in this regard has to do with the two strands running through the notation of spirit. On the one hand, such notation constitutes a more or less stable system of symbols used for describing a set of 'quite objective observations.' (HP, 95) Yet, on the other hand, Valéry maintains that the notation of spirit is itself characterised by a 'power of transformation' (HP, 104). Let us therefore attend carefully to this double notation of spirit in order to begin to draw out its fundamental ambiguity.

THE AMBIGUITY OF SPIRIT

What is particularly significant to our present context, is the manner by which Valéry's notation of spirit as a specifically European manifestation points to its originary dimension 'as a sort of myth.' On the one hand, this myth of spirit appears to found a community based on the 'the sensation of being a European,' (HP, 326) as well as to connect this community to a mythical past that has been handed down from our ancestors and inherited by "us Europeans."[251] On the other hand, however, what Valéry discovers in this myth of a European spirit—indeed what 'we discover in ourselves'—is 'a complex and intimate combination of elements deriving from all the cultures of Europe that we are forced to recognize, side by side with our national feelings, the existence of a broader sensibility and a capacity for understanding and—above all—*a desire for understanding and exchange* which we cannot imagine our own minds doing without.' (HP, 326) Although this latter discovery by Valéry may not amount to a demythologising of the myth of the European spirit, it nevertheless does introduce a potentially shattering analysis of it.

As Valéry notes, that which is peculiar to the desire for understanding and exchange pertaining to "our European" minds, can also be characterised by indicating how the heritage assembled under the term "the European spirit" is already in itself a multifarious conglomerate resulting from the 'many exchanges between the peoples of Europe' (HP, 327). In light of Valéry's understanding of the European spirit as an "original exchangeability," we may note that the myth of the European spirit is not uniform. To the

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[251] In his fascinating essay on the interrupted myth, Nancy refers to Schelling's (and thus to Coleridge's) notion of the *tautegorical* function of myth in order to indicate that which 'says nothing other than itself and is produced in consciousness by the same process that, in nature, produces the forces that myth represents.' (Nancy 1991: 49)

contrary, it interrupts itself from its very beginning by inscribing in itself both a responsibility to that which is different from itself and an unfinished 'communicating or bringing together works and ideas' (HP, 327). Nevertheless, the inscription of such an unfinished, infinite response to the other also makes the spirit of Europe vulnerable to its own mortality precisely in that the character of spirit's mythology also serves as the means of making '*unequal* exchanges' (HP, 105).

The second strand of Valéry's understanding of spirit is, to my mind, more important in that, by defining the spirit as a power of transformation, this strand goes beyond the established boundaries of a fixed notation. According to Valéry, this latter account of spirit is therefore not merely 'the result of observation or notation' (HP, 105) but rather draws its power from itself so as to attain its singularity. That is to say, even in referring to other things the spirit still refers to nothing other than itself—a process by which spirit autotelically establishes its own values in order time and again to overcome these values and itself. Yet, this definition of spirit is not, in Valéry's view, abstract, and neither does it involve 'any metaphysics' (HP, 95). It is, rather, operative in nature. Moreover, it is important to remember that Valéry's spirit is irreducible either to pure thought or to principles, but instead, as Valéry argues, it is a power of transformation, which 'can be isolated and distinguished from all other powers simply by considering certain events around us, certain transformations in our surroundings that can be attributed only to a very different kind of action from that of the known energies of nature.' (HP, 94-95)

Yet, if it seems undeniable, as Derrida reminds us, that Valéry's definition of spirit as a power of transformation is not entirely removed from the question of metaphysics, then we must be careful neither to dismiss this definition as a spurious conclusion nor to assume that Valéry simply "overcomes" metaphysics.[252] This double care is necessary in that the declaration of the overcoming of metaphysics is at the same time a confirmation

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[252] This is a point where I deviate from Janicaud's take on Valéry's metaphysics. Janicaud seemingly accepts that Valéry's spirit is not a metaphysical entity, and suggests that its potential for functionality lies in a Nietzschean "will to power." In my view, such functionality presents itself as a too explicit affront against metaphysics, which only invites a discussion as to whether the statement that spirit as the will to a power of transformation is not *of* metaphysics. Derrida, of course, is most sensitive to such claim, when he notes that one cannot not notice 'Valéry's invisible quotation marks' (DE, 98n.1/123n.2) around spirit. Thus understood, Valéry conceives spirit in an attempt to avoid the metaphysics of spirit by not avoiding the unavoidable, which is to say the double of spirit, understood as the spirit of spirit.

of that very order it claims to exceed—a declaration which, as Derrida reminds us, is thus still a metaphysical gesture.[253]

To provide further support for the point raised above, let us proceed to a seemingly metaphysical claim that Valéry makes about the human being as a 'bizarre living creature who has set himself off from all others, who stands above them by virtue of his …*daydreams*,' and who thereby changes not only his own nature but also 'the very Nature around him' (HP, 308). What becomes clear in this passage is that the power of transformation affirms spirit as a subject that not only transforms itself but also the totality and objectification of nature such that nature is made disposable and exploited *as* a natural resource. What initially becomes clear with this passage is how it repeats Valéry's remark in *La politique de l'esprit* that the most extraordinary invention of humankind is 'the invention of the *past* and the *future*.' (HP, 96-97) According to Valéry, it is by this invention that the human being sets itself apart and at a distance from the animal condition in which—to put it in Heideggerian terms—the temporal ecstasies of past, future, and present matter very little. Furthermore, the passage shows how the power of transformation affirms the spirit as that which alters 'the original animal condition of the species,' to such an extent that the human being is able to create a world different from how the world 'originally was.' (HP, 104) In other words, spirit is the power by virtue of which the human being becomes the measure of all value by becoming the *subject* of power whereby the dominance of nature over the human being is inverted into a dominance of the human being over nature.

However, there still remains more to the story of spirit as a transformative power. Since, the spirit of modern science as technology through which the human being comes to dominate nature as a resource and to conquer the world as a map, also alters the very conditions of spirit as the power of transformation and calls its existence into question:

> Man has sought in Nature the means and power to make things around him as restless, as unstable, as mobile as himself…as admirable, absurd, disconcerting, and wonderful as his own spirit. Now the spirit is unpredictable, nor can it predict itself. […] If then we impose on the human world the ways of the spirit, the world becomes just as unpredictable; it takes on the spirit's disorder. (HP, 176)

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[253] Interestingly, already in 1965 Jean Wahl discerned the involuntary potential of a great metaphysician (*grand métaphysicien*) in the thought of Valéry (Wahl 1965: 11).

Thus, as the human being gains the ability to transform nature through technology, this same human being, through the very process of technological transformation, is itself transformed into a resource of the technology of which it believes itself to be the master. The question of spirit therefore enacts an exposure to a certain power of transformation, which, in a somewhat Hegelian manner, creates both order and disorder that themselves affect the transformation.

THE SPIRIT OF TRANSFORMATION

What I would like to suggest in this section is that spirit, as a power of transformation, does not remain unaffected by its own capacity to create order and disorder in the world—as if spirit were the fixed form that transforms everything except itself. This suggestion, I believe, finds confirmation in Valéry's work on Europe and the world such as when, for example, in 1937 he writes that the 'spirit has transformed the world, and the world is repaying it in kind.' (HP, 167) This spiritual auto-transformation leaves open the question of whether or not, in repaying spirit in kind, the world, as the reference wherein spirit is encountered in its innermost being as a power to transform, at the same time prepares the ground for a reconsideration of spirit. This question is not to be readily answered; instead, it serves as a reminder of the ambiguity not only of spirit but also of that of the thinking of spirit. No doubt much of this ambiguity could be seen, were we to follow Marx's line of thought, through the lens of how the spirit of the world has been deprived of spirit (*Geist Geistloser Zustände*).[254] In order to prepare this issue, I shall expound a little further on Valéry's notion of spirit.

The critical point Valéry wishes to raise with his call to become interested in the question of spirit is that there is "TODAY"[255] a debate whether spirit is still spirit. We

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[254] Cf. MEW 1, 378. In *Die deutsche Ideologie*, Marx notes that our history turning into world history testifies to the fact that the current world-historical activity of human beings becomes 'more and more enslaved [*geknechtet*] under a power alien [*fremden Macht*] to them (a pressure which they have conceived of as a dirty trick [*Schikane*] on the part of the so-called world spirit, etc.), a power which has become more and more enormous and, in the last instance, turns out to be the *world market.*' (MEW 3, 37; cf. Nancy 2007a: 35-36) In Marx' view, the transformation (*Umwandlung*) of history proper into world history is not only an abstraction of self-consciousness or world spirit, that is, of a metaphysical ghost (*Weltgeistes oder sonst eines metaphysischen Gespenstes*), but also a material-empirical fact insofar as the material power is also the spiritual power. Thus, for Marx, the class that have the means to material production at their disposal also disposes of the means to spiritual production (MEW 3, 46).

[255] In 1927, Valéry inscribed in capital letters the word TODAY in his discourse of the European spirit, as though he wanted to mark its questionability. Without delving into this *today* here, suffice it here to say that the "today" denotes an appointed time and a moment of radical instability, which, as Valéry reminds us, calls for action: 'What are you going to do TODAY?', as Derrida remarks in *L'autre cap*, reissuing

may therefore wonder whether what remains of spirit after the Great War might be nothing but a vestige. In a sense, then, the question of spirit concerns the essence of spirit—a question overloaded, to be sure, with both sense and suspicion.

Given, as Valéry reminds us, that we still know very little, if not nothing, of 'the spirit itself' (HP, 184), we have no right to resort to idealism, or simply to reduce our understanding of the world to a principle of spirit. To expound upon this idea, let us quote at length a passage from 1937:

> The spirit has led man where he had no notion of going. It has given us a taste for life and the means of living, it has conferred on us a power of action enormously surpassing the individual's power of adaptation and even his capacity for understanding […]. Hence we have moved farther and farther away from the primitive conditions of all life, borne along as we are at a speed now growing so great as to be terrifying, toward a state of things whose complexity, instability, and inherent disorder bewilder us, allowing us not the least foresight, taking away our ability to reason about the future or to make out any of the lessons we used to expect of the past […]. All this necessarily reacts on the spirit itself. A world transformed by the spirit no longer presents to the spirit the same perspective and directions as before; it poses entirely new problems and countless enigmas. (HP, 167)

From this passage it becomes clear that Valéry's aim with this inquiry into the transformation of spirit serves the purpose of directing our gaze to the radicality of his notion of spirit—a radicality that plays out in the process whereby spirit, in transforming itself, comes to experience a transformation in terms of which it comes to appear in and to itself as different from itself.[256] As such, the transformation of spirit does not mean that the spirit departs from a state of order with the aim of entering into a state of disorder, or vice versa, without undergoing an essential change; but rather, the transformation of spirit means that spirit finds itself in the experience of transforming the world in which spirit, to put it in Hegelian terms, has produced itself as the spirit of the world or as the world spirit.[257]

Valéry's "today" by arguing that we today are looking for 'a completely new "today" of Europe' (AC, 18/12). For a discussion, Weber 2014: 14-16.

[256] As Stiegler says: 'Nothing in this confrontation of spirit with its own achievements, with its historic concretizations and concretions […] is simple; it is these works and these achievements themselves that confront and destroy one another.' (Stiegler 2015b: 4)

[257] At this point, I would not hesitate to say that there is much to learn from Hegel in the reading of Valéry. In this particular concern, for example, Hegel states toward the end of the introduction to his *Phenomenology* (HW 3, 78-79) that consciousness exercises a movement on itself to such an extent that both its knowledge and its object is affected—a movement Hegel refers to as "experience" (*Erfahrung*).

While much more can be said about this spirit of the world that transforms itself in the world, it is worth noting that, in transforming itself, spirit merges with the world and does so without retaining an otherworldly beyond. On these grounds, we are now prepared to specify the manner by which spirit comes to be as spirit in and of the world. Yet, these grounds are nevertheless more like an abyss in that the production of a foundation upon a spiritual principle is no longer tenable. This, in turn, raises the question of the spirit's original creation, namely, the creation *of* spirit.

A DOUBLING OF SPIRIT

The question of the spirit's original creation hinges on Valéry's understanding of how nature, on the one hand, is subjected to *death* by its own concept, and, on the other hand, awakens the "original animal condition" to consciousness by which it becomes a moment in the process of spirit becoming itself.[258] This understanding is most directly and extensively attested to in *La politique de l'esprit*, in which Valéry meditates on the self-reflection of spirit and identifies such self-reflection as *the spirit of spirit*. Recognising the ambiguity of the spirit *of* spirit, the reflexive structure at work in this doubling appears to hold in abeyance the determination of that to which reference is made with the consequence that it leaves undecided *what* the spirit of spirit *is*. To quote Valéry:

> I mean that, in varying degrees, he [man] has become *conscious of himself*. This consciousness makes it possible for him to be detached at moments from *everything*, even from his own personality; the *self* can sometimes look on its own person almost as some strange object. Man can observe himself (or thinks he can); he can criticize himself, and control himself. This is an original creation, an attempt to create what I shall make bold to call *the spirit of the spirit* [*l'esprit de l'esprit*] (HP, 98/1025; translation modified).[259]

On this note, one might suggest that the word "experience" as a matter of undergoing or crossing through danger (*experire*) also exposes the spirit to danger (*periculum*). Cf. Lacoue-Labarthe 1999: 18.

[258] As Hegel notes in the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, 'the animal dies; death of the animal [is the] becoming of consciousness' (JS, 159-160). In this regard, Derrida is right in characterising Valéry's proposal as a 'rather classical, or even neo-Hegelian, negative-dialectic definition of spirit as that which in the end "always says no," and first of all no to itself.' (DE, 98n.1/122n.2)

[259] "Self-consciousness" may very well be the hallmark of Valéry's spirit, but, as we saw in the first chapter, in the same way as Europe was about to lose consciousness in the aftermath of the Great War (HP, 24), the human being who has acquired various degrees of self-consciousness may also lose its consciousness when it realises how the sign of crisis marks the course away from itself (Œ I, 1218). Indeed, the self becoming exteriorised in its own reflection, comes to experience the resulting situation as one of self-alienation, since the character of this reflection "of" itself is 'a perpetual exhaustion, a detachment without respite and with exception of all that appears in it' (Œ I, 1225). And yet, as this very detachment shows, the self-alienation does not reflect the loss of the property of a pre-given presence but rather calls upon the exhaustion of a presence that shows itself as an estrangement to self.

In this rich passage Valéry sheds light on crucial aspects of his philosophical inquiry into self-consciousness and self-understanding both of which appears to be directly informed by and entangled with his "neo-Hegelian interpretation" of spirit.[260] With the notion "spirit *of* spirit," Valéry characterises spirit as a doubling of itself by a sort of repetition or even redundancy whereby spirit discloses a perspective of a folding of itself onto itself, which is both a condition and a threat to the power of spirit.[261] The question now is therefore what this essential doubling makes of spirit.

If we return to the initial point that started us on the path of trying to think the notion of spirit in Valéry, namely, that the spirit itself has not been exempt from its disorderly transformations of the world, we now see that we must cast this question of doubling in light of the question of negativity. In other words, we must ask whether or not spirit, by redoubling itself, is able to pull itself from the wreckage it has inflicted on itself. To put it in more Hegelian, but nevertheless still Valéryan terms, we must ask whether or not negativity constitutes an economy or a method that would enable spirit to 'dwell on it, accept it, and to overcome the pain [*s'attarder, s'y faire, surmonter la peine*]' (Œ I, 1154) of disorder.[262] Thus, the question becomes whether or not the "spirit of 1919" and beyond will be able to overcome that which it has done in the world, that is, whether or not the spirit will be able to save the world and thereby itself. As Valéry succinctly remarks: 'So, the whole question comes down to this: can the human spirit master what the human spirit has made?' (HP, 138/1065)

This way of looking at the issue that we have been raising here seems to me to address a question regarding the self-inflicted wounds of spirit that the spirit, according

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[260] Wahl therefore suggests that it would be interesting to compare the thought of Valéry with Hegel (Wahl 1965: 121). However, although Valéry regards Hegel as one of his skulls that was begotten by Kant and that later begat Marx, he still claims never to have read Hegel (LQU, 242).

[261] Hence, Valéry's *spirit of spirit* apparently satisfies the Cartesian heritage wherein, as Derrida notes (DE, 32-34/14-16), spirit reflects nothing but itself. Descartes undeniably plays an important role to Valéry, especially in concerning epistemological issues (Œ I, 812). In this sense, one might speak of a reinvigoration of Cartesian metaphysics in Valéry (Œ I, 804-805). However, Valéry argues that his interest in metaphysics consists neither in giving in to it nor in dealing with it as a mere historical interest, but rather to emphasise the 'eternal actuality' of Descartes (Œ I, 816). Thus, he sees in the Cartesian heritage of the spirit a chance to encounter the intelligible act according to which thought comes to inspect itself (*la pensée de la pensée*) (Œ I, 797).

[262] Without wanting to confuse different discourse about spirit, one is struck by a remarkable similarity, when Hegel in his *Ästhetik* shows just how central the issue of contradiction is to spirit: 'Yet whoever demands that nothing exists that carries in itself a contradiction as an identity of opposites is at the same time requiring that nothing living shall exist. For the force of life, and still more the power of the spirit [*die Macht des Geistes*], consists precisely in positing contradiction in itself, enduring it, and overcoming it [*zu überwinden*].' (HW 13, 162)

to the Hegel of *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, can itself heal in such a fashion that these wounds leave no scars: 'The wounds of the spirit heal, with no scars remaining [*Die Wunden des Geistes heilen, ohne daß Narben bleiben*]' (HW 3, 492). In approaching the question in this manner, we are immediately faced with what seems to be—in the words of Dennis Schmidt—a 'soteriological conviction, this view that in the end reconciliation is possible and suffering […] comes to an end' (Schmidt 2001: 215). But perhaps the crisis of spirit, for Valéry, is more profound than what is represented as the mere overcoming of crisis through spirit becoming itself in returning to itself. We may therefore ask, drawing on Janicaud, whether the 'distant origin [of spirit] is perhaps that folding back upon itself of an intellect that desires *certainty*,' but in such a way that spirit 'cuts itself off from its horizon of appearance.' (Janicaud 1997: 139) Indeed, one may say that no 'spiritual wound has truly healed over.' (Janicaud 1997: 132) Or, to put it in another way, the self-inflicted wound that spirit seeks to heal is itself spirit *and* is itself the trauma such that the healing process itself becomes the reopening of a wound that is already there.[263]

At this point, we begin to encroach upon the theme of the negative economy of spirit where spirit both displaces itself from itself by redoubling into the spirit of spirit and incessantly returns to haunt itself as the *other of spirit*. By redoubling itself spirit shifts itself from the same to the other so as to disclose the other in the same—a movement reflective of what we have already identified as the auto-immunity of spirit. Accordingly, although spirit must reflect or relate to itself in order to relate to the other, any reflection or relation of spirit to itself may, as Valéry remarks, ultimately turn out to affirm a suicidal tendency of spirit (HP, 201). Spirit as the power of transformation is able to transform itself in such a manner that the bearing of spirit is never present solely to itself; rather, spirit orientates itself by relation to itself in a differentiated manner. As such, spirit is essentially that which incessantly differs from itself. In this sense, then, "each" spirit enters the other beyond the dialectical relation between the other and itself, without ever returning to itself.

With respect to the transformation of spirit, Valéry thus espouses a sense of the "spirit of spirit" not in terms of a transition from what spirit has been to what it will

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[263] Žižek has pointed out that spirit's self-healing is not a 'magic gesture of retroactive sublation.' Rather, the point is that during a dialectical process, 'a shift of perspective occurs which makes the wound itself appear as its opposite—the wound itself is its own healing when perceived from another standpoint.' (Žižek 2016: 118)

become—as if the mythology of spirit has already destined the return of spirit *to* itself—but rather of spirit's becoming other in its erroneous sending of itself to itself. Paradoxically, then, whenever spirit encounters itself it already no longer encounters itself precisely because, as Stiegler suggests, spirit 'encounters itself anew as an-other, as incomparable with itself, or as singularity' (Stiegler 2015b: 52). This therefore brings us to the final and perhaps most difficult feature of Valéry's account of spirit, namely, his questioning of 'the spirit's current value and its future or probable value' (HP, 138). It is noteworthy that in raising the question of the value of spirit, Valéry immediately flags the fact that he uses the term "spirit" and its qualification of value in order to pose a *problem* that he not only sets for himself, but that, as he adds, he 'shall not solve' (HP, 138). In other words, the problem of the value of spirit that Valéry lays out has no general solution, that is, it is not as if Valéry would be able to untangle or absolve the double bind of spirit by explaining *what* spirit *is*. In our discussion below, we will therefore follow Valéry's lead in abstaining from seeking a solution to the problem of spirit and instead simply attempt to unfold and to attest to the problem's essential irresolvability.

THE FIDUCIARY LOGIC

With our discussion of Valéry's definition of spirit as a power of transformation, we touched upon a dimension of spirit in terms of which "we Europeans" are first and foremost *bound* together because, as human beings, our "original animal condition" has been essentially altered with the consequence that we have managed to build our own world different than that of the natural world. As Valéry writes: 'we have made the world like the spirit and we want to live in this spirit's world. The spirit wants to live in what it has made.' (HP, 209) At the same time, however, we have also seen how the disorder that is threatening the very existence of spirit, and hence those higher values that spirit creates within the world of spirit that Valéry identifies with Europe, is not made suddenly and overnight by something from outside of this world; rather, the disorder develops within the world of spirit as the very product of its European construction. This outline will help us to articulate the question of spirit and to understand what Valéry is aiming at when he says that the power of spirit is not given self-evidently by itself but rather is given by means of belief and trust. To begin with, we shall trace this logic, which we identify as a fiduciary logic, as it is unfolded within *La liberté de l'esprit*.

Valéry's claim regarding this fiduciary logic, were we to summarise it, is that there is a certain structure to the world that draws its power from belief and trust, that is, a 'fiduciary [*fiduciaire*] structure which is necessary [*qu'exige*] to the whole edifice of civilization' (HP, 107/1035). The point here seems to be, in part, that the task of understanding oneself within the world requires *faith*, although this term should not lead us to succumb to the temptation of reducing Valéry's fiduciary logic to a mere effect of a religious discourse. The question this raises is, of course, how the definition of spirit as a transformative power fits into this structure of the fiduciary. The most obvious place to begin in answering this question is with Valéry's description of faith as having its '*origin in us, in our own spirit*' (HP, 105). This description implies, for instance, that an 'oath, a contract, a signature, the institution of credit, and the relations which all these imply […] are wholly based on the cardinal principle of our spirits, *not to treat as things of the spirit things that are of the spirit only*.' (HP, 105) In other words, the fiduciary structure of the world is a 'work of the spirit.' (HP, 107)

This is a key insight for our purposes since it connects the power of spirit with the power of trust and thereby displays not only how faith is founded on spirit but also how faith in turn sustains the spiritual constructs. Yet, as I have already indicated, our age is one which is not only facing a decline of interest in the question and destiny of spirit, but also one in which the "we," wherein the power of faith has its origin, has become doubtful and uncertain. We should not be surprised, then, to see Valéry introduce, along with the decline of interest in spiritual matters, a decline of values in that the upholding of values implies at least a minimal act of faith. [264] Valéry openly acknowledges this double decline and associates it with the 'collapse of the securities and currencies which we, and everyone else, once thought were unshakable values.' (HP, 186; translation modified) Needless to say, this decline brings about a radical transformation of the human world of spirit precisely in that through such a decline we come to witness the ruin of our 'former faith in the spirit, a faith that was the foundation and, in a way, the postulate of our life.' (HP, 186; translation modified) Yet, if "to believe" is just as indispensable 'to human

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[264] In this connection, we may note that there is no oath or signature without the credit we attribute to it. An act of oath is a performative act (in contrast to constative speech acts such as claims). Yet, the power of performing an oath has its origin in "us," Valéry says, so that the social structure is itself sustained by power of belief and the fiduciary gesture it performs. Which is to say: the "we" in which the act of belief receives its power is at the same time that which constitutes the social, judicial, economic, and political world, in such a way that the performativity of belief comes to be anterior to any oath, contract, signature, or credit. In other words, there is at the origin of belief a kind of performative gesture with which the origin differs from itself, and which therefore renders every '*onto-anthropo-theological horizon*,' (FK, 16) to use Derrida's expression, of Valéry's "we" indeterminate.

beings as to trust in the firmness of the ground,' (HP, 105) what then is the ground of faith? For Valéry, spirit is the term that 'refers to the source and value of all other words' (HP, 186), in spite of the fact that it is itself *indecipherable*. If it is indeed the case that the spirit as a power of transformation constitutes the fiduciary structure of the social, judicial, and political worlds, what then does it mean to have 'faith in the spirit'? With this question Valéry invites his reader to consider how we are to understand what happens to spirit when the civilisation, which is "ours" on account of its fiduciary values, provides testimony of nothing but an abiding exhaustion of the '*spiritual nature* of social order' (HP, 108).

The result of this testimony is therefore that the ultimate authority, which, in Valéry's view is the spirit that gives structure to the world, both lays bare all of that which was built on faith and undermines the firm ground of the edifice of "our" civilisation. Nothing is spared from this weakening. Not even the highest values associated with civilisation and culture that range from reason and progress to knowledge and duty are able to escape enervation and the decline into nullity. In other words, the crisis of spirit is understood not only as a decline of any given value but also as a decline of that which is 'giving it all its value' (HP, 108). As such, this implies that the very basis of values, and even 'the *basis of that basis*' (HP, 108), has fallen into discredit. Valéry's questioning of a spirit and a civilisation in crisis seems to lead to 'a notion of the spirit, and various standards of intellectual value which, though very ancient—not to say immemorial—are perhaps not eternal.' (HP, 156) This implies a shift in the traditional notion of spirit, from the eternal necessity that produces the foundation of trust, to a collapse of the very basis on which trust was based—a collapse announced by the abandonment of spirit's claim to power.

As Valéry puts it, the disbelief or discredit of the value of spirit might have occurred before, but never, he says, 'to the universal extent we must unhappily recognize in our day' (HP, 108). As we shall see in what follows, Valéry comprehends the discredit of spiritual values *via analogia* through that which once seemed to contain the very 'essence of confidence!' but has since lost its 'immemorial and mythical sovereignty' (HP, 109). On this view, then, the crisis of spirit proves ultimately to be a 'crisis of confidence, of fundamental conceptions […], of all human relationships' (HP, 109).

The discussion of a general crisis of Europe's spirit points to a much larger issue, an issue I argue lies at the base of the Nietzschean intuition of nihilism. My claim here turns on the idea that the "death of God" brings into relief not only a withering away of the belief in the otherworldly, but also, since there is no longer a "true" world beyond or behind the "apparent" world, a loss of faith in *this* world. With the death of God, an imprint of "loss" is left on the trust or the faith in any metaphysical or ultimate authority in which thought believed it had held its ground. Even if he does not explicitly address the "death of God," Valéry refers to an event of a loss of faith that is intrinsically affected by the transformation *of* spirit. Here I shall draw on this outline of nihilism in order to show that, in Valéry's view, such a profound crisis of spirit is not only unprecedented, but also that it, in the words of Janicaud, precipitates 'a spiritual life of Man without God nor principles, given over to indifference' (Janicaud 1997: 132).

The exhaustion of spirit paves the way for nihilism. A rigorous account and understanding of this movement from exhaustion to nihilism certainly seems to be found in Nietzsche, for whom Valéry, as can be seen in his *Quatre lettres au sujet de Nietzsche* from 1927 (CW 9, 259-264), had great admiration. Short of giving an overview of either Nietzsche "himself" or Valéry's "Nietzsche," with the following reading I intend only to indicate a few implications of the concept of nihilism. In his writings, Nietzsche employs various terms in order to articulate his particular account of nihilism, and while these are not necessarily synonymous with one another they nevertheless paint the picture of nihilism as inherently ambiguous. As I show below, this account proves important to our project in this chapter.

Nietzsche's explanation of the spread of nihilism can be reiterated as follows: faith in the categories of reason (*der Glaube an die Vernunft-Kategorien*) by virtue of which we have hitherto 'measured the value of the world' has suffered a collapse. Moreover, this collapse is so profound that these reasonable categories '*that refer to a purely fictitious world* [*rein fingirte Welt beziehen*]' (KSA 13, 49) will henceforth bear witness to nothing but a 'general crisis of values' (HP, 109).

Thus, despite the many nuances that can be discerned in Nietzsche's thought concerning nihilism, the most relevant point for our purpose here is found in the way in which the *spirit of nihilism* signals both an *increased* power of spirit and a *decline* of

spirit.[265] What is remarkable in Nietzsche's thought is that even though 'the spirit may be worn out [*ermüdet*], exhausted [*erschöpft*], so that previous goals and values have become incommensurate and no longer believed,' the weary nihilism still reaches its maximum strength as the active 'violent force of *destruction* [*gewaltthätige Kraft der **Zerstörung***]' (KSA 12, 350-351) that accompanies the exhaustion of spirit. In other words, nihilism is the name that signifies the spirit's turning against itself, as if the spirit were destined to undermine itself. On such a view, spirit represents itself to itself not as a wholesome *one* opposed to nature, but as a split in itself in terms of an inextricable double bind emphasising the spirit *of* spirit. To this distinctive way of revealing 'a contradictory spirituality,' (Stiegler 2013b: 64) Valéry also assigns a specific name: the value of spirit or spiritual value. Before broaching the strange economy in which the spiritual value appears to be inscribed, it is important first for us to get a clearer picture of what is meant by the "crisis of values."

At the outset of our clarification of the "crisis of values," we must note that Valéry sees no way "back" to a discourse that would restore the value of which things have been exhausted.[266] From here it is but a short step to seeing that Valéry's aim is to expose how 'we are today witnessing a true and gigantic transmutation of values (to use Nietzsche's excellent phrase)' (HP, 189). The idea behind the transmutation of values is that the effect of crisis is not restricted merely to the level of values; rather, this effect, as was also the case concerning the loss of illusions, likewise extends to the very principle from which the values derive their value. This critical moment in Valéry can be considered in relation to the fiduciary logic with respect to which the world is given its structure by virtue of the power that is essentially 'a spiritual value' (HP, 106). The question is, then, what happens when the value of spirit becomes exposed to the subterranean tremors that call into question the function of spirit as the basis of basis.

At the end of Chapter Five, I pointed out that the entry into the one-dimensionality of a global world and the hegemonic inequality of the principle of general equality not only makes it possible to evaluate things associated with spirit such as knowledge or technology, but this entry also places these same things into exchange as commodities

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[265] See our discussion of Heidegger's nihilism in Chapter One and Three.
[266] Valéry notes that while 'the spirit makes higher values' out of 'leisure and dreams,' it is not 'a veritable philosopher's stone' to restore values or a discourse of values, but rather, as 'the transmuting agent of all material or mental things' (HP, 96), to consider what is happening with the conditions of values.

with the consequence that the singularity of each "thing" is effaced by means of a general equivalence. In an important passage, Valéry writes,

> Radiating outward to thousands of other beings over the surface of the globe, has given rise to the whole economic machinery. But there is no place in it for the useless. Basically the economic machine is an enlargement, a colossal amplification of the human organism; and such an apparatus, founded strictly on the equal usefulness of all objects and services exchanged by men, cannot accommodate objects and services that satisfy only desires, not absolute needs, and cater only to individual dispositions, not to vital functions. […] Any exchange of things having *value for all*, in return for things having *value for some but not for others*. (HP, 179)

This is the context for Valéry's analysis of the value of spirit as conceived of through an analogy to oil, wheat, and gold values (HP, 190). That is to say, commodities such as those listed here all gain their value from an evaluation driven by means of equalisation. Referring implicitly to the principle of general equality, Valéry goes on to say that a commerce of spiritual values has 'just as much meaning on the internal market […] as in the world of material interests' (HP, 191). Thus, the determination of all values on the sole condition of their exchangeability with one another becomes the principle of the reification or "thingification" of every-*thing*. As has been seen, this principle implies that that which has value for all has no value in and of itself, but rather the value of something is evaluated strictly with respect to its comparability value to other things. Valéry thus analyses spiritual value by analogy with, for example, gold—an analogy with which the price of spirit is thereby calculated in terms of its importance, its rarity.

Ultimately, Valéry wants to make use of the Nietzschean account of the "transmutation of values" in order to show how the discourse of values carries with it the movement of nihilism—a movement comprised of a gradual shift from an appreciation of the spirit as the highest value to an estimation of spiritual values with respect to a general equality whereby the spirit is ultimately robbed of its singular esteem. What this leads to is an altered sense of the spiritual value that seems 'to be suffering the same fate as material values.' (HP, 190) According to this view, the material and spiritual economies of "our time" are intimately bound together in an original co-belonging to the principle of general equality. For Valéry, this interrelation means that the different economies can be 'summed up as a simple conflict of *evaluations*.' (HP, 191) In light of this discussion, I proceed by drawing out Valéry's implicit claim that the two economies

mentioned above cannot be opposed to one another, such that spirit would become opposed to matter.

THE ARCHI-ECONOMY OF SPIRIT

One central purpose of Valéry's understanding of the relation between the spiritual and the material is to support his key argument that these two notions are to be conceived of less as separated and more as contradictory economies that are bound together. While these two economies are distinguished in terms of that which is useful and useless, Valéry highlights the interrelation between the spiritual and the material by focusing in on how their contradictory products in actuality belong to the same *organ* (HP, 188). Valéry confirms this interrelatedness when he declares that 'there is an analogy of functions' between the two economies that has a 'profound substantive origin, since the organism itself governs it.' (HP, 189) Before moving on to a more detailed discussion of Valéry's analogy, however, we should first make several observations on the material and the spiritual.

As made apparent by the etymological heritage of "spirit" as traced through the Greek πνεῦμα, the Latin *spiritus*, the German *Geist*, and the French *l'esprit*— acknowledging the neglect of the Hebrew *ruah*, to say nothing of the vast differences between these terms—spirit is often conceived of as immaterial and is thereby held to be the opposite of matter and the material.[267]

While at first glance it appears as if Valéry unquestioningly adopts a very similar spiritual/material binary view due to his definition of spirit as a transformative power, in a 1939 essay he straightforwardly calls the conception of the spiritual as set up in opposition to the material an 'outworn antithesis' (HP, 185). Indeed, what at first seems to be the result of this worn-out meaning, namely, that the discussion of the spirit is reduced to an estimation of its value on the global market of equalisation and thereby becomes emptied out of its essence, under more careful investigation turns out to be a derivative mode of what Valéry calls the *primacy* of spirit: '*the spirit came first*' (HP, 194).

Again, this primacy certainly incorporates aspects of the traditional account of spirit, which Valéry apparently approves of when he contends that spirit is nearly

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[267] In the Buber-Rosenzweig translation of the Bible, it is stated that spirit is not the opposite of matter in that the Hebrew word רוּחַ (*ruach*) as a *hapax legomenon*, represents the archi-word (*Urwort*) that 'encompasses in itself both spirit *and* nature' (Rosenzweig 1979: 793).

synonymous with the word, the λόγος and refers to the biblical passage from the Gospel of John: 'In the beginning was the Word [Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος]' (John 1:1). Valéry's position, then, may surprise the reader, for in his view it is 'the commerce of spirits that was necessarily the first commerce in the world, the very first, the one that started it all'— that is to say, the original: 'for before swapping goods, it was necessary to swap signs, and consequently a set of signs had to be agreed on.' (HP, 194) As discussed above, Valéry introduces the notion that the spirit not so much "has" as it "is" the power to structure the world through an originary belief that is present at the origin of commerce. Another way of putting this is to say, in rather blunt terms, that the material and the economic are themselves neither something material nor economic precisely in that spirit constitutes the ἀρχή of economy as the condition without which there would be no market and no exchange. Spirit is therefore, in short, the archi-economy upon which all other economies are based.

This reading may seem to open up a broader scope for the meaning of spirit than that allowed by Valéry's writings themselves. This is because the manner by which Valéry speaks of language as 'the first instrument of all trade' (HP, 194) as well as the spirit as λόγος might lead us to the view that the *word*, being spoken as the first seed of trade, acts almost as a kind of zero point of trade, that is, a *zero* full (or empty) of infinite possibilities, in that it emerges as the founding origin of exchange.[268] In order to sidestep such a reading that perhaps only strengthens our suspicion that Valéry adheres to a metaphysical account of the spirit, I would suggest that it might be more fruitful to articulate the *word* as always already referring us to a thought *of* spirit and hence to an origin that appears to have no sense before its genitive structure (cf. ED, 169/115).

The genitive structure *of* spirit has been well described by Derrida, who, although in a context of writing on Heidegger (with Valéry nevertheless in mind), suggests that the λόγος entails a gathering together of spirit in its relation to itself as other than itself. Thus, if spirit is bound up with the ἀρχή in general, this origin, conceived of as the identity of spirit with itself is immediately heterogeneous (DE, 176/106-107). Yet, if the origin is always already heterogeneous, as Derrida reminds us, and if the spirit, according to Valéry, is originary, one could say that such spirit is never given *as such* but always as

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[268] Interestingly, however, while Valéry takes his cue from a biblical Greek tradition, Derrida provides another avenue for understanding Valéry's archaeology, in that Derrida takes into account Valéry's *Au sujet d'Eurêka*, which he ends as follows: '"IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE FABLE. It will always be."' (BS I, 257/190; Œ I, 867) Derrida's point is, hence, not word or λόγος was in the beginning, but the Fable, as its Latin name indicates, is 'first of all Speech.' (BS I, 257/190)

other than itself, that is, given as the spirit *of* spirit.[269] In light of our discussion of the self-reflection of spirit, this means that spirit—having to double itself *as* itself in order to appear in the first place—brings to the fore the question as to whether the incongruous spirit *of* spirit is, in fact, capable of grasping itself "in itself" as *one* or whether the duplicity of spirit has always already contaminated its own ἀρχή, which in turn is the origin of everything. Hence, if spirit continues to be the origin, one could argue that this origin is delivered over to its own collapse in that the spirit is, from the beginning, a transmission, a transport, and a passage that cannot serve as a basis on which to posit a 'normative difference' (Schürmann 2003: 550) between the spirit and its other. In other words, the gesture by which Valéry attempts to think the spirit *as* spirit, is not merely meant to state an insurmountable distance between spirit and itself, but also is intended to show how the essence of spirit is always already intertwined with its other.

In other words, spirit does not name a substance resting solely on itself—unless the very designation "itself" also sets itself apart—but, to the contrary, spirit indicates a movement that is defined in virtue of what Nancy has called the exhaustion of the 'regime of signification' (Nancy 1997b, 5). Such an exhaustion *signifies* precisely that spirit no longer has (if it ever had) an assignable sense but rather designates that which remains measureless. That is to say, spirit is removed (or removes itself) from the property of being represented as a separate entity gathered in itself, as a λόγος in that spirit itself "is" relation—or, to be more precise, it is the very opening of relation that is separation.

THE ANALOGY OF SPIRIT

With regards to the spirit as an opening of relation or a relation to openness, Valéry's reassessment of spirit as 'the ability, the need, and the energy to separate and to develop thoughts and acts which are not necessary to the functioning of our organism,' (HP, 187) indicates the overall structure of an analogic argument. As I have pointed out above, although the logic of analogy that Valéry draws on when trying to explain the notion of spirit, introduces a certain parallelism between the material and spiritual economy, this same logic nevertheless seems to refer us back to a dissymmetry between spirit and value. What evokes this dissymmetry is something of the spirit that does not belong to the value of spirit, and hence to the relation that the spiritual economy of value establishes. Indeed,

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[269] In his 1971 essay *Qual Quelle*, Derrida reminds us of the origins, the sources, which in Valéry—a Valéry other than Valéry—'could multiply themselves infinitely' (M, 327/275).

one will find in Valéry a figure of spirit that is neither "valuable" nor "spiritual" but "otherwise." However, as Valéry reminds us, since the spirit "itself" is indecipherable, we are compelled to probe the essence of spirit by analogy to another known notion. Any such analogy, for Valéry, only makes sense because it reveals that there is something about the spirit that we do not know. In what follows, I will try to clarify Valéry's employment of analogy.

Whilst acknowledging that there does indeed exist a rich tradition regarding the notion of analogy, I would here like merely to note two salient points. The first point pertains to the general meaning of *value*, regardless of whether such value is articulated on a spiritual or a material level. In any case, value is determined as a *relation* by which the analogy between the spiritual and the material is based upon a comparison not between terms but rather between relations.[270] The second point is that an analogy expresses a similarity of relations, meaning that each value as relational stands out from itself and toward another as well as towards itself as an other. In what follows, it is therefore important to note at the outset that the type of analogy at stake in this discussion is one that is made up of heterogeneous relations, for example, the analogy regarding the functions of an organism that Valéry employs in order to draw a connection between the material and the spiritual.[271]

While the first point is an explicit conception of analogy, the second pertains to the implicit structuring of the analogy as determining not only a similarity between relations but also a dissimilarity. To put it in another way, the analogy is not only constructed out of a mediation between the two similar economic relations, but also out of a separation in the sense that this analogy opens up the relation of relations to the other of the analogy, that is, to the aneconomy of the analogy between the spiritual and material economies. In this case, the analogy, as we know from Derrida's reading of Valéry, performs a double gesture insofar as it determines not merely a relation as the mediation between two values, as if the analogy were to present spirit in itself, but also exposes a radical dissymmetry between these relations whereby the limits of the analogy itself are exposed. As Derrida

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[270] For instance, if two relations are symmetrical, whereby the value of one relation is analogous to the value of the other, then the analogy designates a (mathematical) proportionality (e.g. 2:4=8:16). See, for instance, Plato's 'proportion between the things' (Rep. 534a).

[271] Valéry's analogy gets even more complicated by the fact that there is not only an analogy between two relations, but also between these relations and the organism, designating not so much an entity as a mode of activities and functions as a relation between its organs. As Stiegler puts it, the analogy of organism is always an organology, which, because of its contradicting economies, is also a pharmacology insofar as what an organ can accomplish in the material economy 'may be *contrary* to what this very same organ makes possible in the spiritual economy' (Stiegler 2013a: 13).

notes in *L'autre cap*, the thrust of Valéry's analogic is premised on the claim that 'spirit is one of the categories of the analogy *and* the incomparable condition, the transcendental, the transcategorical of the whole economy.' (AC, 94n.8/123n.8)[272] In a certain sense, then, by establishing the analogy as a manner by which spirit encounters itself (as a comparable value), spirit as the other of the analogy at the same time withdraws from its comparison.

Despite the withdrawal at work in the analogical relation, one attribute of the spirit that remains is that of λόγος. As we have underscored in the discussion above, at the origin of spirit Valéry finds the λόγος—a term which he translates as '*calculation*, *reason*, *speech*, *discourse*, *and knowledge*' (HP, 194), as though such words gestures at something synonymous. As Derrida has suggested, this originary λόγος reflects a yearning for gathering the spirit into one whereby the spirit is that which 'regulates all analogy and which itself is not analogical.' (E, 19) In this respect, one may say that Valéry's most characteristic employment of the term "spirit" is one by which he attempts to elicit it as a value whereby it enters into exchange with other values. But as soon as spirit enters into an economic circulation, it is evaluated in such a manner that the analogy manifests what it cannot describe precisely in that spirit as the archi-economy constitutes the source of all value. This clarification enables Derrida to argue that Valéry's 'original spiritualism indeed presents itself as a logocentrism,' (AC, 96n.8/125n.8)—a logocentrism that under certain (Greco-European) conditions, privileges the structure of λόγος as reason, speech, calculation, etc.

On this reading, the orientation of the analogy between the spiritual and the material is determined by a spiritual arche-telic schema that proceeds from and returns to the origin of spirit as λόγος. That is to say, its dynamic unfolds according to a logocentrism in terms of which the spirit presents itself so as to place itself in an "anteriority" in view of the similarity and dissimilarity whereto the analogy attests. A further consequence of such a logocentric presupposition is that if everything were to be measured on a scale where the spirit was afforded the highest value as that which is the 'the universal analogical equivalent,' (E, 18) the spirit would thereby become the "thing" that is ultimately responsible for bringing all values into exchange. In other words, spirit becomes the "thing" through which every-thing receives its value as exchangeable with any-thing. Succinctly put, spirit would be an absolute value or the value of the absolute.

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[272] Derrida continues: 'It is an example and an exemplary example, the example *par excellence*.' (AC, 94n.8/123n.8)

However, the economy according to which spirit appears as the ἀρχή that becomes the fixed equivalent of exchange, such that spirit itself is accorded a presence precisely on account of a logocentric *interpretation* of λόγος, might turn out to be deceiving.[273] In fact, if spirit presents itself as the λόγος, one could argue that it presents itself only as it withdraws as the idea of λόγος. Hence, instead of returning to itself as the ideality of reality, the idea of spirit effaces its ideality in order to be what it is; yet, that which spirit "is" is ultimately not, and cannot simply be itself in that it must redouble itself so as to be itself in the first place.[274]

As I have been suggesting throughout this section, perhaps it is the very figure of the spirit, particularly the figure of the spirit as archi-economy that becomes disfigured by the spirit "itself" through the encounter with its *other* essence or, as Derrida says, with the '*origin-heterogeneous*' (DE, 176/107). With this almost archi-origin of spirit as the origin of Europe (as the spirit of Europe)—a particular origin that we have argued is to be understood as that which is *at once* heterogeneous from the origin, heterogeneous to the origin, and 'heterogeneous *because* it is and *although* it is at the origin' (DE, 177/108)—one may suggest that the spirit is rendered unrecognisable from within the economy of which it is supposed to be the origin. As such, the figure of spirit prefigures within itself not only another spirit but also an other than spirit, and in this manner it projects retrospectively towards an ἀρχή that appears always already to be broken.[275]

In order to develop these critical questions of spirit in greater depth, I turn now to another aspect of Valéry's analogy of spirit—namely, that the analogy withdraws what it seems to be giving, that is, a definition of spirit.

ALMOST NOTHING: THE SPIRIT GOING UP IN SMOKE

The overall aim of this chapter has been to investigate Valéry's understanding of spirit, and in carrying out this task we have discovered that there are indeed astonishing insights

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[273] Derrida's parenthetical remark in the midst of a discussion on Mauss, the gift, and madness from *Donner le temps* seems to support this suggestion: 'As Valéry says of spirit, the gift would be at once a value and the—priceless—origin of all value.' (DT, 64/44)

[274] One may think here of the empty word with which Hegel begins his *Wissenschaft der Logik II*: 'The logic exhibits the self-movement of the absolute Idea only as the original *word*, which is an *utterance* [*Äußerung*], but an utterance that inasmuch as it is immediately vanishes [*verschwunden*] again as something outer [*Äußeres*]' (HW 6, 550). This reference is indebted to Nancy 2001b: 107.

[275] This is what Schürmann calls "anarchy," designating an inner break that has already happened from the beginning so that the archic remains originally indistinguishable from the anarchic. That is to say, spirit as the first, as the ἀρχή, is anarchic—for if it had an ἀρχή, spirit would no longer be first (Schürmann 2003: 529; 629).

to be gathered from a *double reading* of Valéry (cf. D, 10/4). Thus, even though one may have encountered the notion of spirit in various forms, such as the power of transformation, the absolute value, and the logocentric category, one is nevertheless at the same time also exposed to its crisis. For, in the midst of celebrating the achievements of spirit, Valéry hits upon the theme of crisis understood not as a destitution that leads to the subordination of spirit under the sway of materialism, but, rather, crisis as the instigation of a kind of disorder that forestalls any return to spirit's ultimate authority. What is crucial to our double reading is therefore the constitutive value of spirit—or, more precisely, the absolute value of spirit—according to which spirit appears by detaching (*absolutum*) itself from every relation, even the relation to itself. As I would read it, then, there remains a kind of value or esteem to spirit that escapes from its presence precisely in that the spirit affirms its absolute value as the withdrawal of its own essence.[276]

Accordingly, the absolute value of spirit is no longer comparable or relative to a foundation or a substantial determination of spirit; rather, the absoluteness of the value of spirit designates a relation that is itself incommensurable—perhaps even a relation to the incommensurable. In *Notre destin et les lettres*, a lecture given at the Université des Annales in 1937, Valéry explains this relation in the following manner:

> But again, whether real or ideal, that value [of spirit] is incommensurable; it cannot be measured in society's terms. A work of art is worth a diamond to some, a pebble to others. It cannot be assessed in man hours [remembering that Marx defines "values" by the labour required to produce the commodity]; it cannot, therefore, figure as a universally negotiable currency for every kind of exchange. The useful is that which satisfies men's physiological needs, whose possession frees man from some sensation of pain or deficiency, some physically defined depreciation. (HP, 178)

Accordingly, we see with clarity that within Valéry's thought regarding the declining value of spirit a resuscitation of the question concerning the *dignity of spirit* is already at work. Precisely this is the basis of Valéry's persistent interest in the question of spirit. In following a Kantian line of argument, Valéry seems to develop the idea that the dignity

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[276] Recognising Derrida's specification of Valéry's spiritualism that presents itself as logocentrism, one might suggest that Valéry's definition of spirit cannot be oriented toward presence as such but rather to a *showing* itself. In this sense, Valéry's "spirituology" transforms into a "monstrology" insofar as the determination of λόγος as discourse, calculation, rationality, etc., shifts into a showing (*monstrare*) whereby a moment of non-presence becomes interior to the presence of spirit. I owe this point to Sallis 2000: 42.

of spirit remains unappropriable due to the very fact that it resides beyond all value.[277] To be sure, this consideration of the absolute dignity of spirit invites the question of what exactly this spiritual dignity might consist in. As we have seen, however, this question presupposes a knowledge that not only lends itself to a hypostatisation of spirit but also shrinks from being called into question *in* the question in such a manner that the question of spirit thereby runs the risk of being too vague, or simply "indecipherable" as such.

In order to remain consistent with what I have been suggesting throughout this chapter, we should note that articulating the question of dignity might serve to reissue the question of spirit as a way of looking further into the spirit's ambiguous essence. Therefore, when Valéry, following in the footsteps of an immense, long, and highly complex philosophical and theological tradition concerned with the meaning of spirit, undertakes a discussion of the spirit, he raises doubt not only about whether the spirit is able to master what it has created, but also about whether the spirit is to be considered powerful or powerless with respect to the question of saving the world and thereby itself (HP, 138). Valéry underscores that the aim of his writing is not to justify spirit, that is, to develop a sort of pneumadicy that he remarks would be an attempt to determine the 'spirit's current value and its future or probable value' (HP, 138). Instead, Valéry attempts, as we have come to see in our double reading of his work and his reissuing of spirit, to think how the saving power of spirit takes place only where the crisis of spirit is at stake.[278] Given this, one could suggest that one is not readily able to rescue the spirit from its crisis by transferring it to its absolute worth of dignity due to the fact that in turning its transformative power against itself the spirit incessantly inverts itself into its own opposite and thereby engenders an indignity of (un)spirit.[279] In other words, spirit has interiorised what remains other than spirit—a movement that plays out not in the sense of an appropriation reducible to a moment in the overall formation of spirit, but rather in the sense of ex-appropriation according to which spirit "itself" is always already intimated by the exteriority of its other.

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[277] This is not the place to rehearse a complex history of dignity—from Pico to Kant, and beyond—but merely to note that for Kant the positing of law determining all values must have 'eine Würde' in the sense of an unconditional and incommensurable worth (*unvergleichbaren Werth*). Cf. KW 6, BA 79.

[278] I note that this indeed very Heideggerian question is considered by Heidegger himself as he ponders with respect to the Hölderlinian stanza "Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächts / Das Rettende auch" whether or not art could expressly foster the growth of the saving power (GA 7, 35-36). Thus, towards the end of *Die Frage nach der Technik*, Heidegger defines τέχνη not merely as the origin of technology but rather as the production (ποίησις) of truth in the arts (*schönen Künste*) (GA 7, 35).

[279] See Stiegler 2013a: 149n.18.

At this point, I would like to go one step further in the discussion of the *valorisation* of spirit in order to consider the radicality of its crisis. Towards this end, allow me to return to *La liberté de l'esprit* where Valéry, on the background of the rising and falling of the great stock markets of 1939, brings into relief 'the price we are willing to pay for the value we call *the spirit*.' (HP, 190) In the same fashion that all value is inscribed within the principle of general equivalence, spirit too has come to fluctuate in obedience to this same principle. Yet, as Valéry writes, 'All these values, rising and falling, constitute the great stock market of human affairs. On that market, *spirit* is "weak"—it is nearly always falling.' (HP, 190) This is a remarkable idea, and it should prompt us to ask how we are to understand this near perpetual fall of spirit. As I see it, it is the very inscription of spirit into the equating market of value that allows Valéry to imagine a spirit fallen from its height of supremacy. In order for something to be subjected to a fall, it must somehow or another be burdened with a weight—a weight that itself serves merely as the predisposition for something to fall. Regarding the spirit, it might appear as though its very evaluation is what allows the spirit to sink, in which case the spirit can no longer be distinguished from its own weight, that is, from the differing values that have been attached to it throughout its entire tradition.[280]

On the one hand, then, spirit is weighed down by its inscription into the market of valorisation, while, on the other hand, the absolute value of spirit retains an attestation of its withdrawal from any relation in which it would be deemed measurable. However, on account of this duplicity pertaining to spirit it can no longer distinguish itself from what is not "itself."[281] In other words, the withdrawal of spirit from itself constitutes a "spirit without spirit," as it were, that both touches upon the innermost core of spirit and remains an exteriority. It is for this reason I am stressing that the transformative power of spirit is at the same time a transformation of itself, which it does not master, whereby the power of spirit also becomes a testimony of its impotence and its weakness. For Valéry, the testimony of spirit is its creation, that is, a world that without an ἀρχή conceals nothing

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[280] Augustine states that God is measure (*mensura*), number (*numerus*), and weight (*pondus*). Accordingly, God "is" the *weight without weight* (*pondus sine pondere est*) because God in itself (*esse ipsum*) is the standard for what derives from it, while it does not itself derive from anything else (Augustine 1894: IV.8.4).

[281] On this last point, it is worth recalling how the transformation of spirit, as Nietzsche's Zarathustra tells us, debouches into the spirit of weight (*Geist der Schwere*), which burdens us with its heavy words and values (KSA 4, 241-245). Meanwhile, we may ponder whether these heavy words and values are already exposed to their self-debasement in the madman's question—'What after all are these churches and now if they are not the graves and tombs of God?' (KSA 3, 160)—to the extent that the transformative power of spirit is itself transformed. In short, one might ponder whether or not the spirit of weight becomes the weight of spirit that pulls not only its creations down but also itself.

but its very own unmasterable "nature." Hence, if the world is always spiritual, as Heidegger also seems to claim, it is so only insofar as the spirit no longer reproduces itself in the form of a world; rather, it marks itself as an illimitation of its own unworlding in becoming-planetary.[282]

While such a reading of Valéry is no doubt highly speculative and inferential, it may also serve as a useful catalyst for inspiring further reflection on Valéry's understanding of the spirit. This is the case precisely in that this reading considers the phrase *spirit of spirit*, here understood as a relation of spirit to itself, in such a manner that the presence of the absolute other of spirit exposes spirit to an absence of ground or to an abyss that is initially given to it. Although it may appear as if we have departed significantly from the writings of Valéry, one could argue that our reading has nevertheless remained as faithful as possible to Valéry in that is has brought to light why Valéry's understanding of the spirit cannot be employed merely for the sake of recovering some lost ideality of spirit. Moreover, our reading also suggests that *we have not yet arrived at the end of the end of spirit*, even if the spirit perhaps does not name anything other than the inexhaustible exhaustion of the very power of spirit.

These last comments concerning the withdrawal and exhaustion of spirit indicate how spirit becomes *almost nothing*. Noting that the spirit has transformed the world, and that the world is repaying this transformation in kind, Valéry writes that 'the spirit is unpredictable, nor can it predict itself […]. If then we impose on the human world the ways of the spirit, the world becomes just as unpredictable; it takes on the spirit's disorder.' (HP, 176) Furthermore, Valéry goes on to say that 'we know nothing about the spirit itself' (HP, 184). As Mallarmé puts it, some-thing weighs on spirit so that 'its total equals spiritually nothing, almost [*spirituellement à rien, presque*],' (Mallarmé 1945: 398) and the transformative power of spirit results in a transformation of the sense of spirit. Hence, while Valéry defines spirit as the power of transformation, this power is transforming itself to such an extent that the very sense of spirit is transformed with the consequence that spirit is taken to its extreme where, in the words of Hölderlin, it enters into 'the night of the present [*die Nacht der Gegenwart*]' where it finds 'no salvation [*keine Rettung*].' In this situation of insolvency, as it were, spirit is 'standing as a criminal

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[282] One can put this in a slightly different manner, as does Nancy, inasmuch as the spirit (of onto-theology) has produced itself as a subject of the world, that is, as a world-subject or world-spirit. In so doing, however, the spirit simultaneously subjugates itself as the supreme referent of the world and transforms itself in the existence for-itself of the world without an outside. See Nancy 2007a: 44.

[*Verbrecher*] before history' (HCD, 307) exposed to an embarrassing sense of the remembrance of its vanished greatness.

The withdrawal of spirit, by which the trace of spirit re-inscribes itself as that which is almost nothing, emphasises the duplicity that the spirit's exhaustion of itself is at the same time that from which spirit also draws its power. Such duplicity is evidenced by the instability of the notion of spirit in Valéry's writing since, as he remarks, 'But that value [of spirit], the value produced by the poet's hand, is complex, ambivalent, and, in both cases, essentially unstable. It is composed of one part reality (that is, it can sometimes be exchanged for money) and one part *smoke* indeed' (HP, 178; my emphasis). Although Valéry adds that the value of spirit may one day solidify into some monumental work, the essence of spirit does not equivocally present itself as an idea, as the λόγος, or as the fire, flame, burning (*Der Geist ist das Flammende, der Flamme*), which Heidegger presents in his 1952 reading of Trakl. Or, if spirit would in fact present itself as any one of these things, such a presentation would be due to spirit's affection of itself, which, as Derrida reminds us, means that spirit '*gets affected* by fire' (DE, 133/84) in its own incineration of itself. But perhaps the spirit never was the flame in order for it to become affected by fire; rather, spirit was perhaps nothing but the effect, the vestige, or the smoke of an absent fire.[283]

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[283] I am indebted to Nancy's account of the vestige, see Nancy 1996b: 96-98.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Wer kann das heute sagen?
Wir wissen, daß der Geist sich blamiert
(Jacob Taubes 1993: 62)

In the preceding six chapters of this thesis we have been presented to two main strands in the tradition of the spiritual geography of Europe, namely, the two strands found in the writings of Heidegger and Valéry. To conclude this work I would like to draw out some closing reflections on its body: first by outlining the course of the thesis in a brief recapitulation of its essential themes; and second, by considering the spirit of Europe in light of the subtitle of the present dissertation, "the end of spirit," so as to give some shape to the thought of "spirit" today.

Let me recall what was already stated in the introduction, namely, that the title of the thesis, "The Spirit of Europe," signals towards a double movement taking place in the writings of both Heidegger and Valéry—a double movement concerning, on the one hand, the rise of the question of Europe and, on the other hand, the crisis of Europe's spirit. In order to fully expound on this double movement, the two parts of the thesis were developed as a sort of thinking together with Derrida and his various readings of both Heidegger and Valéry. However, Derrida's intermediary function in the thesis by no means serves to establish some dialectical resolution between the two thinkers, in such a manner that the works of Heidegger and Valéry could be viewed simply as two aspects of the same determinate object called "the spirit of Europe." Rather, Derrida's position in-between Heidegger and Valéry constantly engages the fragile opening that the notion Europe constitutes within their texts without it being able to gather itself in a unified sense determined by its spirit. Accordingly, we have sought to show how Europe, as Derrida writes, 'opens itself, it has *already* begun to open itself, and *it is necessary* to take note of this, which means *to affirm in recalling*, and not simply to record or store up in the archives a necessity that is already at work anyway. It has begun to open itself onto the *other shore of another heading*' (AC, 74/75-76).

Throughout the thesis, I have tried, on the one hand, not to infuse its voice too heavily with the (idiomatic) voices of Heidegger and Valéry, while, on the other hand, allowing their writings to speak for themselves, as it were. As outlined in the introduction, however, the thesis does approach the writings with which it engages with a certain interpretative strategy in that it aims at setting up an encounter between Heidegger and

Valéry through the ambiguous situation of Europe's heading as it is traced out in Derrida's *L'autre cap*.

Hence, although the many aspects of what "Europe" and "spirit" represent to Heidegger and Valéry are as different as their respective manner of thought, the thesis has sought to show that the two thinkers nevertheless both regard Europe as representing an essential feature of the world. This feature is determined precisely by the notion of spirit, which constitutes a sort of structure or logic of the world. As such, Heidegger argues that the world is always spiritual wherefore the roots of the darkness that he takes to be spreading across the world must be uncovered through a questioning of spirit. Valéry, for his part, seeks to describe and to understand the transformations taking place in and of the world in the aftermath of the Great War in terms of the spirit defined as a power of transformation that turns out also to be a power of disempowerment.

Yet, despite of the possibility of setting up an encounter between Heidegger and Valéry through the spirit of Europe, significant differences remain. The thesis illustrated one such difference by showing how Valéry's idea of Europe, as it is exemplified by the Greek spirit appropriated by the Mediterranean basin into a Greco-Roman strand, remains wholly foreign to Heidegger's idea of Europe, which displays an unmistakable preference for the "Germans," whom Heidegger claims are standing in an inner relationship with Greek language and thought. Another difference became evident by way of contrasting Heidegger's frequent unflattering remarks about Europe with Valéry's positioning of Europe at the very apex of the world, even if this privileged position is also said to be in the process of exhausting itself in a general equalisation.

After this brief outlining of the Greco-Germanic and the Greco-Roman strands of Europe's heading of which the two names Heidegger and Valéry are representatives, let us resume the overall path by which we have arrived at these closing reflections.

OUTLINE OF CENTRAL THEMES

Part One of the dissertation introduced the overall aim of charting the development of the (to some extent) subdued question of Europe in Heidegger's writings. Insofar as the motif of Europe does play a role in Heidegger's thought, however, it is as a name for the "modern Evening-land," which Heidegger regards as the end stage and completion of metaphysics. Chapters One to Three addressed Heidegger's question of Europe in terms of the need to arrive at a deeper understanding of the question of Being than that of the fundamental question of metaphysics. Chapter One thus introduced Heidegger's notion

of Europe in the 1930s in order to prepare the way for an in-depth analysis of his 1935 lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. The reason for placing so great an emphasis on this course was that it not only establishes the groundwork for Heidegger's question of Being, but also contains the most elaborate and detailed exposition of his reflections on the question of Europe. Chapter Two developed this point by suggesting that Heidegger by his return to the Greeks sought to uncover the question of Being from its oblivion throughout the history of metaphysics. In returning to the Greeks, however, Heidegger also discovers how deep-seated the affinity between the question of Being and that of Europe is, in that the destiny of Europe is said to depend on the translation and elision of the single Greek letter "ε"—an elision, moreover, that Heidegger regards as a spiritual matter. Chapter Three reissued the question of Being in Heidegger's *Einführung in die Metaphysik* and its relation to the European nihilism that was indicated at the end of Chapter One. This relation was advanced through a consideration of the phenomenon of "world-darkening"—a phenomenon that Heidegger defines in terms of the disempowering of spirit. In light of this definition, we argued that the question of Europe in Heidegger is inextricably bound up with the question of spirit, in that the disempowering of spirit comes from Europe itself such that Europe's dire situation becomes a matter of its spiritual condition. In 1935, however, Heidegger's appeal to the dire situation of Europe was made with the particular intention of situating within Europe the people of its centre—the Germans—for whom the question of spirit was truly endangered (and therewith the question of their destiny). Finally, it was suggested that Heidegger's notion of the spirit implies a sort of autoimmunitarian dynamics in that spirit defined as the empowering of the powers of Being harbours within itself the power of its own becoming disempowering. For Heidegger, this autoimmunity of spirit plays itself out most evidently in the manner by which modern technology has become hegemonic in the Europe of his day.

Part Two of the thesis was dedicated to Valéry's understanding of Europe in the aftermath of the Great War. Chapters Four to Six demonstrated how Valéry's conception of the crisis of Europe should also be understood as a crisis of spirit. Chapter Four offered a survey of Valéry's notion of Europe in the aftermath of the Great War—a war by which Valéry discerns a radical dislocation of the question of the European civilisation, given that it brought Europe to the realisation that the mortality of its civilisation is no different from the mortality of every other civilisation ever to have emerged and vanished in the world. The fourth chapter concluded with a discussion of the European crisis as one in

which the significance of Europe is levelled out into the endless array of crises such that there is no longer any *one* crisis and therefore no longer any *one* critical moment in which the future of Europe could be decided. Chapter Five continued the discussion from Chapter Four in order to elucidate how the crisis of Europe has become a "crisis of crisis," in terms of which Europe has reached what Valéry calls a "perfect state of disorder." In this perfect state of disorder, Valéry recognised a sort of globalised general equality according to which the inequality on the basis of which Europe had hitherto held a privileged position over against other parts of the world has disappeared. As an implication of the disappearance of Europe's privileged difference, Chapter Six finally highlighted how Valéry, with the spreading disorder of general equality, discerned a transformation by which the spirit came to entertain a profound distrust of itself.

Following this summary of the trajectory taken by this thesis, we might ask what, besides the immediate purview of the question of Europe in Heidegger and Valéry, does this thesis offer? In closing, I will argue that the exposition of the spirit of Europe presented by this thesis helps to prepare the way for further research into the ongoing discussion of an alleged "end of the spirit." In other words, we will close off these closing remarks with an opening of the question concerning an end of spirit that apparently has no end.

THE END OF SPIRIT AS THE SPIRIT OF TODAY?

Why take up the question of the spirit of Europe? As I mentioned in the introduction, European philosophers, poets, and thinkers have not ceased to entertain the idea of Europe as a spirit. From Hegel to Heidegger, Novalis, Husserl, Valéry, and others, the question of spirit has been associated with Europe in the sense that Europe has been identified as the very *body of the spirit*. However, in the wake of the two World Wars this spiritual body appears to have been gravely wounded. In discussing the spiritual situation of Europe after the Second World War, Karl Jaspers, for example, reconsiders the widespread idea of Europe as constituting the spiritual pearl of the globe—an idea according to which Europe designated the colonising appropriation of the globe (*den Erdball kolonisatorisch aneignete*). According to Jaspers, the postwar world experiences a transformation of hitherto unprecedented velocity such that 'one must live with the globe before one's eyes,' rather than behind one's eyes as a conquered territory. One consequence of this rapid transformation is, so Jaspers claims, that Europe no longer represents the body of spirit but rather that 'Europe has become a little thing' (Jaspers

1947: 17). Echoing Valéry, Jaspers thus describes how Europe finally come to identify itself with what it really is, which is nothing more than a little peninsula stretching from the Eurasian continent of the earth around the Mediterranean to the furthermost coasts of the Atlantic Ocean (Jaspers 1947: 7).[284] As Lacoue-Labarthe puts it, 'the situation is global [*mondiale*], and the situation of Europe, if something like that still exists, is no longer in Europe. […] Europe does not exist. In fact, the situation of Europe today responds to the globalisation [*mondialisation*] of Europe' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1985: 65).

As we have seen throughout the thesis, the phenomenon of globalisation plays an important part in both Heidegger's and Valéry's notions of Europe in that the crisis of the European spirit, as Valéry notes towards the end of his second letter of *La crise de l'esprit*, has come about because of phenomena such as 'democracy, the exploitation of the globe, and the general spread of technology, all of which presages a *deminutio capitis* for Europe' (HP, 36). In his 1959 lecture on Hölderlin, Heidegger discusses Valéry's question of whether Europe is to become what it is, that is, a mere cape, or whether Europe is to remain the brain of the entire terrestrial globe, that is, the power that manages the technological-industrial calculation. Heidegger's manner of responding to this question is strikingly similar to Valéry's own, in that both thinkers emphasise an essential ambiguity of power and powerlessness pertaining to the European spirit, which becomes especially evident in their considerations of the European 'technological-industrial domination [*Herrschaftsbezirk*] already covering the entire earth' (GA 4, 176).

Following the two World Wars, then, it seems that we have been witnessing something like a disengagement of Europe from the spirit, which does not, however, immediately follow the same form or logic of the beheading or decapitating of the spiritual head of Europe (AC, 21/15).[285] In order to see what is at stake in such a disengagement of Europe from the spirit, it might be worth recalling Derrida's logic of exemplarity in order to clarify the thought of *Europe as the body of spirit*. For Derrida, the logic of exemplarity serves the purpose of elucidating how Europe as an historical-empirical accident is supplemented by a universal value whereby Europe seeks to overcome its geographical particularity. Taking his point of departure from Valéry's

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[284] As Jaspers' contemporary, Jean-Paul Sartre in *Orphée noir* from 1948 similarly notes how Europe has become 'no more than a geographic accident, the peninsula that Asia shoves into the Atlantic' (Sartre 1988: 292).

[285] I note here that the question for Derrida is the heading of Europe toward the 'other *of* heading,' that is, of how Europe can 'respond, and in a responsible way—responsible for itself, for the other, and before the other—to the double question of *le capital*, of capital, and of *la capital*, of the capital?' (AC, 21/16)

claim that Europe as a particular region of the globe has specialised in the *sense of the universal*—understood both as a meaning or value of Europe and as the direction of Europe enveloping the whole world—Derrida discusses how Europe, in assuming a value of universality, thereby becomes 'linked to the value of *exemplarity* that inscribes the universal in the *proper body of a singularity*, of an idiom or a culture, whether this singularity be individual, social, national, state, federal, confederal, or not.' (AC, 71/72; partly my emphasis)

In the course of the present work, we have seen how the motif of spirit to a certain extent runs parallel in Heidegger and Valéry. As has hopefully been made clear from the analysis undertaken in each particular case, the definition of the spiritual feature that makes possible such drawing of a parallel owes much to Derrida's brilliant interpretations of Heidegger and Valéry. As Derrida shows in *De l'esprit*, the question of spirit is for Heidegger not just another question. Indeed, the name *Geist* is the question *of* the question in such a manner that *Geist* is that which offers the 'essence and dignity of thought' (DE, 24/9) to our very questioning of the question of spirit. As such, for Heidegger *Geist* becomes the 'unquestioned possibility of the question.' (DE, 26/10) In parallel, Derrida in a note to *L'autre cap*, demonstrates how Valéry's notion of *esprit* is not only a value among others, but is also the 'sublime surplus value of the priceless,' which is to say that spirit is the 'incomparable condition' (AC, 94n.8/123n.8) of any analogy between spirit and value. It is, in other words, the exemplary example of the spirit of Europe that shows how the spirit inscribes its exemplarity, its universality in the body of Europe.

In order to illustrate Derrida's point that the exemplary logic of spirit ends up in a universalism proclaimed by nationalism, let me turn for a moment to Lacoue-Labarthe's reading of the Nazi-ideologist Alfred Rosenberg's *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1930). In his reading, Lacoue-Labarthe refers to the myth of Nazism as a myth of self-foundation of the German people in order to emphasise how the realisation of myth is a power to gather together the fundamental forces and orientations of the German people (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 137/93-94). On this understanding, Lacoue-Labarthe makes the provocative claim that in the collapse of abstract universality 'Nazism is a humanism in so far as it rests upon a determination of *humanitas* which is, in its view, more powerful—i.e. more effective—than any other.' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 135/95) In other words, Nazism is "successful" to the extent that it succeeds in defining how universal humanity is based on the particular Aryan race wherefore the Jews no longer belong to the

humanitas and remains a "foreign body" for European culture (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 144/100).

Hence, bearing in mind Husserl's description of Europe as having its 'spiritual birthplace in ancient Greece such that the embodiment of universal value came to be Europe's trademark—a value reserved for European humanity vis-à-vis the philosophers who thus became the *functionaries of humanity* (Hua VI, 72), one might, in view of the atrocities of the Second World War, ask whether we can still believe in 'the phantasm of a "proper body" of Europe' (Lacoue-Labarthe 1987: 145/101)? In other words, can we still believe that Europe has an identity of its own, as though the spiritual inscription of the universal onto the body of Europe would designate the homogenous singularity of Europe? In the introduction to his terrific work from 1996, *Des hégémonies brisées*, Reiner Schürmann proposes the following thesis about postwar Europe:

> All that European humanity has made of itself in the first half of the twentieth century, and all that it is in the progress of doing to itself on a planetary scale in the second half that makes darkness so familiar to us, must have distant and profound origins. These are good enough reasons to suspect philosophers of shady dealings. Have they perhaps always received a return on their "principles" from dealings carried out in the dead of night? (Schürmann 2003: 3)

Schürmann's rich thesis about Europe exceeds the horizon of this conclusion, but it does indicate to us the doubly disastrous characteristic of twentieth century Europe: on the one hand, the extermination of the Jews that became the act of Europe's suicide in that the "foreignness" which the Jews represented turned out to be constitutive of Europe's very own body; on the other hand, the colonisation by which Europe exploited the entire globe and thereby ended up exhausting itself.[286] This double catastrophe of Europe invites us to ponder whether or not the spirit of Europe can be said to have come to an end. Has the spirit of Europe exhausted and devalued itself to such an extent that, as Derrida notes, no one 'wants anything to do with it [spirit] anymore'? Moreover, in focusing particularly on 'the entire family of Heideggerians, be they the orthodox or the heretical,' Derrida

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[286] In an article "Au nom de l'Europe" in *Le Monde* (Nov. 6, 1992), Lacoue-Labarthe raises the question how to think of the spirit of Europe "after Auschwitz." However, Lyotard has pointed out that in speaking in such manner one runs the risk of surreptitiously reintroducing a "we" and thereby a "spirit" whenever speaking about "Auschwitz:" 'There would not even be a spirit, a spirit of the people or of a spirit of the world, which are *wes*, to repossess [*ressaisir*] the name "Auschwitz," to think it and to think itself inside it.' (Lyotard 1981: 298)

further asks why no member of this family 'ever speaks of spirit in Heidegger. […] Why this filtering out in the heritage, and this discrimination?' (DE, 16/3-4)

However, as Derrida also points out, even in trying *to avoid speaking of spirit*, for example by calling attention to the question of its end, we are already working in the service of the spirit of Europe and its self-understanding insofar as the spirit of Europe only ever comes to see itself '*on the horizon*, that is to say, from its end' (AC, 32/28). Europe, in short, reveals its taste for *death* including its own. Such European discourse concerning the end of Europe is, however, already a '*traditional discourse of modernity*' (AC, 32/28) in that this discourse, if one may put it thus, is essentially an apocalyptic-eschatological discourse in that it brings the end of the European spirit into connection with a teleologically informed orientation of history towards its completion (AT, 8; 21). One may therefore be tempted to dispose of the discourse of the "end of spirit" in order not to succumb to the European chorus of the apocalypse. However, putting an end to the "end of spirit" is still, argues Derrida, to participate in this apocalyptic chorus in that one would still venture to *utter* the end of Europe in an 'eschatological language.' (AT, 21)

Given these precursory considerations that portray how the end of spirit has perhaps not come to an end after all, one might expect a *return of spirit*. However, the manner in which this return *of* spirit is articulated, amounts, as Derrida says of Heidegger, to an anachronistic or even a 'provocatively "retro"' (DE, 15/3) mode of thought. Still, such an anachronistic provocation of spirit does not necessarily designate a nostalgic return to the spirit of Europe as the brain of its terrestrial body, nor to the spirit as the end-goal of history. Rather, it is as if the anachronistic character of the spirit motif in Heidegger, and I would argue also in Valéry, brings into view how this spiritual motif in fact never comes *on time*. The return of spirit, in other words, has the effect of displacing the position of the spirit *beforehand*, as it were, so that the mode of thinking spirit *retro*-jects spirit toward an unforeseeable future—a future in which spirit returns only to realise how its originary position is always already preceded by something other than itself, as well as it is always already anticipated by something yet to come.[287]

As this thesis has attempted to show, to entertain the idea of an end of spirit—even if this designates the end of the end of spirit—will always be determined by a sort of latter-day discourse about Europe. However, as Derrida remarks, such a latter-day discourse seems to have 'exhausted [*épuisé*] all the possibilities of discourse and counter-

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[287] For a discussion of the structural similarity between immemorial past and immemorial future, see Bennington 2010: 19-34; Lawlor 2014: 128-130.

discourse about [the spirit of Europe's] own identification.' (AC, 30/26)[288] What does it mean, then, to *say* that the spirit of Europe is exhausted, or even better, that the spirit of Europe is exhausting itself within an exhausted discourse?

To be sure, an exhausted Europe seems to designate an immensely tired Europe, that is, a Europe whose spirit is barely able to breathe in that Europe suffers from a "historical emphysema" resulting from the caesura of its double disaster "after" which Europe is struggling to catch its breath again. In the fierce words of a heavily smoking Lacoue-Labarthe in the film *The Ister* (2004), Europe has "pulmonary difficulties." Hence, if the spirit of Europe or, rather, the spiritual existence of Europe, aspires to life such as the long history of πνεῦμα, *spiritus*, *anima*, *animus*, or *ruah* suggests to us, it does so only insofar as this life, echoing the famous passage in the preface to Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, neither shrinks from death nor keeps itself untouched by disaster. Instead, already the Hegelian spirit designates the life that 'endures and maintains' (HW 3, 36) death within itself as an essential negativity albeit without scarring. However, what has been revealed in the history of *the proper body of the spirit*, is that Europe has been irreconcilably wounded by its own deeds. That is to say that the spirit of Europe comes to find itself incarnated in a wound where it seeks to regain a hold of its death. Yet, the difficulty is that this death has been altered by the two World Wars and is perhaps no longer a death that is essential to the life of spirit but rather, as Sarah Kofman remarks, a death that has become 'scandalously indifferent' (Kofman 1998: 52) in the multiple death camps inhabiting the European body.

Thus, if we return to the question of the exhaustion of Europe's spirit, another discourse about Europe is implied, which, as we have seen in both Heidegger and Valéry, is the discourse of a "general equivalence" according to which the spiritual destination for Europe is exhausting itself through an absence of destination (Nancy 2001a: 12).[289] In a certain sense, then, the exhaustion of Europe is also *other* than a tired Europe seeing

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[288] Thus, there seems to be a connection between the statement that Europe is exhausted, and that the very discourse about Europe as exhausted. In what follows, then, when I shall discuss the exhaustion of the spirit of Europe, I do not intend to attribute to spirit its own reality, but rather to refer to the idea, which Europe is said to embody, but which is determined within a certain regime of significance that has exhausted itself. Cf. Nancy 1997: 4.

[289] In November 1959 in his work notes to *Le visible et l'invisible*, Merleau-Ponty reflects on Valéry's expression '*body of the spirit* [*corps de l'esprit*]' (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 270) by stating that 'the spirit is neither here, nor here, nor here… And yet, it is "attached," "bound [*lié*]," it is not *without bonds*' (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 271). Visker has suggested that Merleau-Ponty's enigmatic thought could be connected with what he calls the "Western problem" in that the spirit has abandoned its body, its bond, so much so that the discourse on the West has become vacant or, rather has been replaced by a discourse of capital, of technology that is '*without bonds* altogether' (Visker 1999: 208).

as a tired Europe may no longer dispose of the resources to realise any of its possibilities, but these possibilities nevertheless still remain. Put differently, a tired Europe has only exhausted the *realisation* of the possible, whereas an exhausted Europe that has lost its breath has exhausted the very *modes* of the possible. As Deleuze puts the difference, the tired 'can no longer realize, but the exhausted […] can no longer possibilize.' (Deleuze 1998: 152) Accordingly, it would seem that the spirit of Europe today is still exhausting itself in the exhaustion of the possible, and is in this manner putting an end even to the possibility of ending. As such, to speak of the spirit today is also to speak of the heritage of the spirit, that is, the heritage of spirit from which one always selects one spirit from the evocation of the spirit in the plural. As Derrida puts it, 'There is always more than one spirit.' (NEG, 111) and with this multiplying of spirit, we are bereft of the right to decree: '"Spirit ends here!"' (Janicaud 1997: 138) The end, then, as Beckett remarks, seems to appear only in the form of the im-possibility 'to end yet again' (Beckett 1976: 60).

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