

Aesthetics and politics: between Adorno and Heidegger

Antinomies of reason

The alignments of T. W. Adorno to the protracted, difficult process of coming to terms with a broken Marxist inheritance and of Martin Heidegger to the Nazi politics of rethinking the human might seem to leave them at opposite non-communicating poles of political difference.¹ Their views on aesthetics seem similarly starkly opposed, in terms both of judgements and of the place of aesthetics within the philosophical pantheon. Aesthetic theory for Adorno marks out a domain of experience relatively immune from the impact of the banalisation of evil, indicated by Hannah Arendt to be distinctive of the latter part of the twentieth century.² Heidegger conversely seeks to build the movement of presentation and withdrawal of art in artworks into a central place in his dangerous affirmations of a fatal twentieth-century and specifically German destiny.³ With his mythologising hope for a distinctively German word for holiness, spoken by that distinctively German poet Hölderlin, Heidegger displaces aesthetics as analysis of sensibility and judgement, with universal scope, in favour of affirming a transformative power of poetic naming within a quite specific linguistic register: German. The differences between Adorno and Heidegger, then, concerning politics and language, aesthetic analysis and its philosophical significance are clear cut. This essay will however suggest that taking their positions as two halves of a divided exposition, rather than as competing accounts of art, gives a clue to the paradoxes of the relation between art and politics, which have caused much perplexity in the twentieth century. While Adorno and Heidegger give different philosophical responses to these paradoxes, they are in agreement about the importance of an analysis of artworks in assessing what philosophy can contribute to an understanding of epochal change and world crisis.⁴

This epochal change and world crisis Adorno analyses in conjunction with Horkheimer, in 1944, as an irresolvable dialectic of enlightenment, Heidegger in terms of a dangerous domination of human endeavour by technology.⁵ Adorno goes on to read Heidegger critically in *Jargon of Authenticity: On German Ideology* (1964) and in the even more demanding *Negative Dialectics* (1966), from which the former text was separated off.⁶ The proposal here is to read Adorno and Heidegger as presenting two

apparently incompatible halves of one argument, two halves of what Gillian Rose has called a 'broken middle' or an unresolved antinomy of reason.⁷ The key to the commonality in their analyses is to identify the role of time and of temporality in their respective accounts of enlightenment and reason, of technology and authenticity. The notion of antinomy has a complex origin in the writings of Kant.⁸ It is also deployed distinctively by Adorno, in his analysis of artworks.⁹ In this context, however, its development as a technique for thinking about specifically twentieth-century conditions in the writings of Benjamin is more significant. For Benjamin, in his address to the Institute for the Study of Fascism, 'The Author as Producer' (Paris, 1934), the antinomy is between the necessity to align artistic activity with the exigencies of political transformation and the constraint of artworks providing their own standards of excellence.¹⁰ The task is to show how both lines of determination can be shown to be true and compatible one with the other. It is thus Benjamin's version of antinomy which is to be evoked here, for both Adorno and Heidegger work in philosophy for its own sake but also with an eye to a political transformation.

Notoriously Heidegger thought for a while that the destiny of the German people had a promising future under the leadership of Hitler and his Nazi party. Of course Heidegger was not alone in this, and was not alone later both in claiming to recognise the enormity of the error and in failing to give an account of it. This, however, is not the topic of the current essay, as the literature discussing Heidegger's Syracuse is too vast to permit of easy summary.¹¹ Instead this essay gives an account of Adorno's critique of Heidegger's notion of authenticity, in his book *Jargon of Authenticity: On German Ideology*, in order to argue that this emphasis on authenticity, aligning Heidegger with existential philosophy, conceals a more challenging engagement between Adorno and Heidegger on the nature of history and time, and on the relation between historical conditions and concept formation. Indeed it will become clear that had Adorno discussed Heidegger's concept of historicity at greater length, perhaps even making it and not authenticity the focus of the title, the encounter would have been more clearly delineated. For what Heidegger shares with existentialism is less significant than what he shares with Adorno: a dispute for the inheritance of the Western philosophical tradition. Adorno reads this tradition as culminating in negative dialectics, because philosophy, 'which once seemed to have been overtaken, remains alive since the moment of its realisation was missed'.¹² Heidegger reads that history as culminating in devastation and destitution, as a consequence of a retreat of being behind its emanations in historical circumstance. This retreat of being behind its historical instances leads to a flattening out of the presentation of being in history as no more than what is simply present, erasing both history and being. Heidegger reads artworks not as sites for a restricted exploration of sensibility but as showing how more generally in what presents itself to an observing subject, there is an emphasis on what is present, in which its mode of presentation goes missing. For Heidegger this mode of presentation as concealment conceals within it, and thereby obscures, the moment of being as how there comes to be what there is; and it conceals its historicity and its relation to time.

For Adorno there is a determination of time as the no longer of political hope; for

Heidegger there is both a no longer, in a loss of an understanding of being, and a not yet of a return of being, arising out of this distorting emphasis on the now of presentation. For both, different historical epochs present different possibilities for philosophy. This sets up a difference between history as a sequence of events of history, ordinarily understood, and history as transcendental condition for the occurrence or non-occurrence of philosophy. A focus on Heidegger's notion of historicity then permits the differences between these two responses to the history of philosophy to emerge and permits a thinking of the differences between them on the no longer of hope and the not yet of its retrieval. Adorno's allegiance to Marxism indicates his recognition of a relation between historical process and its role in forming what can be thought. Heidegger's notions of authenticity and historicity provide a challenge to the apparently dehistoricised notions of politics and aesthetics, which are in fact burdened with an unthought-through reception of the Greek notions of order and community. The notions of aesthetics and of politics in their Greek origins contain implicitly a presumption concerning a continuity between divine and human faculties, and a hierarchy of human competencies, with some included and some excluded both from the processes of deliberation about collective goals and from engagement in artistic activity. This continuity and hierarchy is broken by Heidegger in his insistence on an analytic of finitude, and, less directly, in Adorno's identification of the negativity of dialectics.

Heidegger displaces the temporally unrestricted notions of aesthetics and politics in favour of the temporal relation set out between authenticity and historicity. This temporal relation describes the situation of determinately existing being, *Dasein*, in its relation to history. *Dasein* is Heidegger's technical term for an analysis of the human situation, whereby a human determinacy in space and time, its *Da*, and its relation to being, *Sein*, can be held out for analysis.¹³ Authenticity and historicity then pick out what is distinctive about one and the same structure of *Dasein*, as where it happens to find itself, but viewed from two radically distinct stances. Historicity is the condition viewed from the outside, in advance of any determinate existence actually acquiring an understanding of itself as historical. Once this abstractly viewed historicity is appropriated as true for an actual existence, it becomes authentic, viewed from within, as following on from that actual existence. Thus *Dasein* is first of all abstractly historical, inheriting a condition, but it is then able to take up a relation to that condition and make it its own. These determinations of *Dasein* bear in them temporal indices of a before and an after, as lived processes of growing self-understanding, in conflict with and as challenges to the inherited philosophically established notions of the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, that which comes before experience and that which comes after experience. For the notion of experience has been displaced by Heidegger in favour of an analysis of *Dasein* as being in the world and as being in time. This structure marks a definitive break, cutting the finitude of human reasoning free from the idealisation of a divine wisdom. The key contrast here for Heidegger is that between the supposed timelessness of a concept of eternity and the temporality concealed in any human thinking of time.¹⁴

For Adorno, time and history pose the problem of the continuing availability and

adequacy of inherited notions of categories and concepts for the task of philosophy. It is this problem which poses for him the necessity of rewriting Hegel's dialectics as negative, as no longer providing their own completion in real lived relations. Emphasising Heidegger's innovation in his analytic of finitude and analysis of historicity as authenticity focuses discussion between them. It makes room for the thought that there is a more subtle critique of Heidegger available to Adorno than the emphasis on authenticity in *Jargon of Authenticity*. This critique concerns the relation between concept formation and a thinking of time. Heidegger introduces a notion of existentials through which what is distinctive about Dasein is articulated. These existentials are not neutrally ascribable to entities from the outside, but must be owned and lived through as the structure of an actual existence. Thus they undercut any distinction between concept formation and thinking about time, since the concept formation concerning existentials takes place in the time of an actual living being, Dasein, stretched out between a quite specific date of birth and a quite specific time of death. For Adorno this renders the meaning of existentials irreducibly contaminated by contingency and by arbitrary determination of meaning, not least by their inventor, Martin Heidegger. Adorno by contrast supposes there to be an all-important break between the possibilities of thinking and the constraints imposed by actual historical and political context, which are traced out by the notion of negative dialectics, the non-matching between thought and its context.¹⁵

Both Adorno and Heidegger pose a challenge to the analysis given by Kant in the transcendental aesthetic of the first critique about time, space and the place of thought.¹⁶ Kant's transcendental aesthetic appears to give a single universally applicable account of the relation between time and space in human reasoning and experience, whereas Adorno and Heidegger give historically, temporally and spatially specific accounts of the structuring of human experience by space and time, responding to the specific conditions in which human beings find themselves: Adorno in terms of dialectics, Heidegger in terms of a developing relation between technology and nihilism. Adorno and Heidegger in developing further the relations between time, temporality, philosophy and history continue a line of discussion suggested by Kant, while displacing some of his key concepts. For Adorno, the nineteenth-century emphasis on historical progress and cumulative human emancipation is a delusion, and a political thinking of time and history, in relation to a less problematic notion of space, must give way to an aesthetic thinking of a more highly problematised notion of space in relation to a notion of time, as no longer the arena of change. This permits a critique of the idea of progress, in the name of which philosophy is not realised in a just society but abolished in favour of positivity.¹⁷ For Heidegger the sendings of being are in each epoch distinct, but have culminated in the twentieth century in a triumph of technicity in which thinking and being have been almost entirely erased.

The discussion between these two is here held in place not only by reference to a reception by Benjamin of the Kantian notion of antinomy of reason but with respect to Kant's analyses of imagination, time and judgement in the first and third critiques. Adorno repeatedly returns to the critical philosophy of Kant and especially the analyses of the third critique, reading the division between aesthetic judgement of artworks

and teleological judgement of natural processes as concealing the possibility of a thinking of the processes of history as an elided combination and subversion of the difference between these two. Heidegger, in his study, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1928), concentrates on the first edition of the first critique, where imagination is to be shown to be the condition of possibility for the inauguration of new orders of experience and community, not just as a condition for historical change but as the structure of temporality itself.¹⁸ The contrast between the directions of these readings could not be more extreme and yet the concerns are similar: the question of the place of a thinking of time and history.

This essay has two further sections. The second part is called 'Aesthetics and politics: beyond and behind'. The third part is called 'Once more a question of translation'. They seek to retrieve Heidegger's thinking of authenticity as a thinking of historicity from Adorno's attempted demolition. This opens the possibility of rethinking history as neither linear, held in place by chronology, nor catastrophic, held in place by irretrievable break points. It proposes a notion of elliptical history. This rethinking takes the form of a movement of ellipsis, a destabilised oscillation around the two points, variously Adorno and Heidegger, aesthetics and politics, and artworks and political history.¹⁹ An ellipsis in time traces a movement where what is left out at an earlier point in a sequence returns to disrupt the linearity of that sequence at a later stage; and whereby the appearance of standstill turns out to be not an irretrievable break but rather a turning point. This third movement, neither linear nor catastrophic, is held in place by the structures of antinomial reasoning, concerning aesthetics and politics, and concerning the temporalities of the no longer and the not yet. The paper thus presents a thought experiment under the titles 'antinomy' and 'ellipsis'.²⁰

Aesthetics and politics: beyond and behind

It is possible then to read the enquiries of Adorno and Heidegger as cumulatively moving beyond Kant. Instead of the Kantian project of determining the scope of concepts and categories, irrespective of historical and linguistic conditions and constraints, they affirm the possibility of a historically and politically determinate context of conceptual determination. This then poses the problem of historicism. By reading Kant, Adorno and Heidegger explicitly in terms of the historical and temporal conditions of possibility, making their thought comprehensible, it becomes possible to develop an account of the historicity of thought, of concepts and of categories. This sets up an oscillating move between conceptual determinacy and historical specificity, between occasion for thought and conditions of possibility, understood as historical conditions. This oscillation becomes a movement of ellipsis since the thinking of both Adorno and Heidegger is pulled off course by the gravitational force exerted by the Kantian system on the one side and by its disaggregation in the writings of Benjamin on the other. The Kantian system is no less important to Benjamin than it is to Adorno, and Benjamin develops three quite specific challenges to it: a challenge to the modal notions of possibility, actuality and necessity presented in the first critique, a challenge to the notions of virtue and happiness in the second critique, and a challenge to the

distinction between art and nature in the third critique, affirming instead the notions of ruination, destruction and technique, which are simultaneously modal and critical. This permits Benjamin to recast conceptual determination as always marked by an historical index and as temporally unstable, thus radically displacing the neutralisation of history and time in philosophy.

Benjamin's relation to Adorno is highly contested. His critique of Heidegger is severe, and he would see the attempt to separate the judgements of the man from the philosophical task as spurious, since there is one and only one sensorium, which in failing to think the specificity of its situation fails to perform politically, and fails to do justice to the twin claims of time and truth. Important here is a transformation at work in Benjamin's analyses, from a notion of a logical contingency, subordinate to a notion of necessity, completability and perfectibility, placed within the hierarchy of Kant's categories of modality, into a notion of a necessity subordinated rather to a principle of radical non-identity. The temporalities of anachronism, delay and destruction take over from those of Kant's analogies of experience, permanence, succession and coexistence, and completed works are to be thought of as death masks, not as fulfilments of their conception. This is alluded to in the thirteenth thesis on the technique of the writer, in *One Way Street and Other Writings*: 'The work is the death mask of its conception.'²¹ From an innovation in the order of things, the artwork through its reception becomes domesticated and subordinated to generalising accounts of the relation between time and art, from which it has to be again wrenched free, to reactivate its moment of disruption. By contrast to a limited notion of the contingent, which could be otherwise, could be corrected and completed, there is here a radical contingency, which is necessarily incomplete in the form in which it is, as a matter of fact, found. This is the ruination brought to our attention by Benjamin's preference for the irresolutions of Renaissance and Baroque mourning plays over Greek tragic resolution, as discussed in *The Origins of German Tragic Drama* (1928).²² This notion of ruination, like the notion of ellipsis, is also remarked by Heidegger in his lectures on Aristotle from 1921–2 and is subsequently developed in *Being and Time* into the notion of Dasein's condition as *Verfallen*, the movement of absorption in everydayness.

A link between this notion of contingency and a recasting of the notion of contemporaneity has implications for the relation of theorists to their own context: 'if the perspectives of the philosophy of history should prove to be an essential part of a theory of tragedy, then it is clear that the latter can only be expected from research which shows some understanding of its own age', Benjamin wrote in 1925.²³ The challenge is to construct a philosophy of history, of politics and of historicity, which resists the banalisations of relativism, scepticism, historicism by affirming a notion of necessity which is not reappropriable into the historical neutrality of its insertion into the Kantian system under the sign of completability and perfectibility. The three levels of Benjaminian disaggregation consist in an affirmation of a relation to contemporaneity as the basic historical determination; a recasting of any philosophy of history in such a way as to respect this priority; and a rethinking of modality as radical contingency, not to be subverted by a presumption that all the same there is a City of God,

by contrast with which human imperfection and fallibility may be measured. Through these moves Benjamin's notion of antinomy can be set apart from those of both Adorno and Kant. Even antinomy is not generalisable, and is to be performed on each occasion in relation to a reading of specific texts in terms of discrete, determinable topics and topologies. This is Benjamin's innovation in aesthetics.

While Adorno seeks systematically to set out a separateness of aesthetic experience, Heidegger tears up the customary subdivisions of philosophy and indeed discards the protective shield of universalism and abstraction, plunging the philosophical inheritance into the maelstrom of political culpability. For Adorno, the separability of aesthetics from the accommodations of epistemology and metaphysics, which substitute exchange value for use value, permits aesthetics still to trace out the registration of an experience not yet appropriated by that which it experiences: 'Kant shall have the last word on aesthetic hedonism.' Adorno writes at the end of the first section of *Aesthetic Theory*: 'In his analysis of the sublime, which is set apart from art, Kant wrote that happiness in relation to works of art is the feeling they instil of holding one's own, of resisting.'²⁴ Aesthetics may for Adorno have become the necrology of art; nevertheless, it is the only living aspect of philosophy. For Heidegger, by contrast, the destruction of these internal divisions between philosophical specialisms is the only route to retrieving the initial and sole source of philosophical energy: an uncontaminated, uncoerced wonder in response to what there is. He makes this clear in the *Letter on Humanism* (1946), but the thought is already in evidence in *Being and Time* (1927) where the customary division between epistemology and metaphysics, between ethics and aesthetics, is not to be found.²⁵ Where Adorno resists the question of origin and genesis, of art, of sensibility, indeed of what there is, for fear of some coerced complicity in an inhuman totalisation, for Heidegger there is one question, and one question only, in pursuit of which all and everything may and must be sacrificed: why is there something rather than nothing?

In his essay 'The origin of the artwork', Heidegger pursues this ontogenetic question through the inflection 'how is there something rather than nothing?'²⁶ Not only is the question of the origin of the artwork thereby to be resolved but also that of the origin of there being a world in which human being can question itself and its relation to being as destiny. Heidegger makes three moves. 'Art is truth setting itself to work', he says; 'To be a work means to set up a world'; and then:

World is never an object that stands before us and can be seen. World is the ever non-objective to which we are subject as long as the paths of birth and death, blessing and curse keep us transported into being. Wherever those decisions of our history that relate to our very being are made, are taken up and abandoned by us, go unrecognised and are rediscovered by new inquiry, there the world worlds.²⁷

He goes on: 'A stone is worldless. Plant and animal likewise have no world; but they belong to the covert throng of a surrounding into which they are linked.' This provides the background for Heidegger's claim that the happening of truth is historical, in the double sense, both as calling history into existence and as grounded in historical specificity. There is then an internal consistency to his insistence that art culminates

in poetic composition and the imposition in poetry of linguistic specificity. For linguistic specificity, the languages of human beings, by contrast to language as such, is inseparable from the occurrence of history and from historical specificity.²⁸ This line of thought puts in question the presumption that what is at stake in aesthetics and in philosophy more generally is the status of universalising judgement. For universalising judgement presumes the availability of a single theory of judgement true for all times, whereas Heidegger supposes that judgement arrives differentially in different specific human contexts, in accordance with current understandings and misunderstandings of their positioning in time and history. As Heidegger puts it, even a refusal of time and of history is a relation to history, if of a deficient kind.

Heidegger links the analysis in 'The origin of the artwork' back to that of *Being and Time* by citing the notion of resolution, *Entschlossenheit*, and by replaying the disjunction, thrown projection, discussed at length in *Being and Time*, in the following manner: 'Truth is never gathered from objects that are present and ordinary. Rather, the opening up of the Open and the clearing of what is, happens only as the openness is projected, sketched out, that makes its advent in thrownness.'²⁹ There is no determinacy of truth given in advance of thinking and time, but rather truth takes shape and arrives as a result of specific efforts to think and to understand the relation between thinking and the passage of time. Heidegger draws his reflections together in the last pages of the essay thus: 'The origin of the work of art, that is the origin of both the creators and the preservers, which is to say of a people's historical existence, is art. This is so because art is by nature an origin: a distinctive way in which truth comes into being, that is, becomes historical.' When art happens, according to Heidegger, there is a beginning in history, a departure for history, an emergence in history of what is historical, which can then be preserved or abandoned. The crucial sentences are:

Whenever art happens, that is, whenever there is a beginning, a thrust enters history, history either begins or starts again. History means here not a sequence in time of events of whatever sort, however important. History is the transporting of a people into its appointed task as entrance into that people's endowment.³⁰

The double challenge here is: how to think this endowment, inflected as it must be through the implicit hope for a German collectivity under the sign of brown shirts. This endowment (the German is *ein Mitgegebenes*), is also challengingly a transposition of the Kantian task of reason, *die Aufgabe der Vernunft*, as *Aufgegebenes*. The task of reason takes thinking away from this historical specificity, whereas the happening of art takes place nowhere but in specific historical conditions and contexts, and is responded to or ignored by the people who are exposed to it. Despite the specificity of the linguistic connection, however, it would be a mistake to think that each, the collectivity of brown shirts and the task of reason, can be thought to be specifically German destinies. For Heidegger, it is art, not Germanness which, as founding, is essentially historical and grounds history; and this notion of the essentially historical takes up from *Being and Time* the theme of historicity, as a translinguistic category, or as Heidegger there calls it an existential.

For Adorno the notions of resolution, of thrown projection, of endowment and of essential historicity are empty abstractions, and in *Jargon of Authenticity* he emphasises his differences from Heidegger on the use of the language. They are thus in battle not just for the inheritance of the philosophical tradition but also for its articulation in German. There is a remarkable asymmetry between the registers and range of reference for Heidegger and for Adorno. Heidegger in 'The origin of the artwork' seems quite deliberately to constitute a series of works with the hallmark of simplicity, with no irony and no gesture of delimiting critique. The series, the temple, the thing poem, 'The Roman Fountain' by Meyer, and the Van Gogh painting, could be linked together under the title unsophisticated primitivism. By contrast, Adorno prefaces *Jargon of Authenticity* with the following epigraph from Samuel Beckett: 'It is easier to raise a temple than to compel the object of the cult to descend into it.' This, with its resonance of Voltaire, and its obvious edge against exactly Heidegger's invocation of the temple in the artwork essay, has the effect diagnosed by Benjamin: 'Quotations are the muggers of literary work, leaping out armed to relieve the unwary of their convictions.'³¹ For Adorno the exemplary artworks are Berg's *Wozzeck*; the writings of Samuel Beckett, abstract minimalism, and he has no time for a theorising of art irrespective of historical context. Thus for Adorno it makes no sense to align a continuity and contrast between the absence of the gods in the Greek temple and Hoelderlin's diagnoses of the departure of the Greek gods in his hymns on the German reception of Greek thought; and to contrast this then to the enigmatic presentation of a pair of shoes in Van Gogh's paintings.

The figure against whom Adorno and Heidegger turn, with shared venom, is Lukács. Adorno, in his essay 'Reconciliation under duress', wrote witheringly of Lukács's theory of a necessary reconciliation to the order of what there is, when Lukács took on the role of apologist for the State Socialism of Hungary.³² Heidegger implicitly denounces Lukács in the *Letter on Humanism*, in the critique of deployments of the categories of rationalism and irrationalism. There are no consolations of philosophy for Adorno and Heidegger: Adorno regrets the moment of the failure to realise philosophy in Marxist revolution. Heidegger, similarly regretful but addressing the lost hopes of Hoelderlin and Nietzsche, rather than Marx and Engels, observes in 1962: 'Only a new god can save us now.'³³ While for Adorno philosophy has moved from the possibility of political engagement back into an autonomous articulation, for Heidegger the movement goes the other way, from a long history of separateness into a political alignment made necessary by the globalisation of technical mastery of natural processes and the concomitant nihilism with respect to values higher than those of mastery and calculation. The notion of an elliptical history then is one in which there is an oscillation both between the orientations of Adorno and Heidegger with respect to politics and to aesthetics and between a supposedly irretrievable past possibility and an undesirable because still not emancipatory future.

Lacoue-Labarthe argues in *Heidegger, Art and Politics: The Fiction of the Political* (1990) that Heidegger's political affirmation fictionalises politics, under the aegis of Hoelderlin.³⁴ It is a fiction, in the sense of composing, *Dichten*, in which there are no longer external standards of good and bad, human flourishing and human evil: in a

moment of caesura, a break in the linear development of the line, of meaning and value, and of time, a term borrowed from the technical performance of Hölderlin's poetry, a standstill makes way for the invention or arrival of order. As Lacoue-Labarthe puts it, concerning holocaust: 'That is why this event – Extermination – is for the West the terrible revelation of its essence.'³⁵ However, there are no controls over what may arrive in the moment of standstill, with its implied condition of destitution. Thus for Lacoue-Labarthe, Heidegger's much disputed silence after Auschwitz is required by the nature of that event, and is not to be read as the inadequacy specifically of Heidegger's political judgements.³⁶ Adorno too, perhaps no less inadequately, announced in 1949: 'Cultural criticism finds itself up against the last level of a dialectic between culture and barbarism: to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric and this also eats up the cognition which expresses why it became impossible to write poetry today.'³⁷ He subsequently came to modify the claim in his *Aesthetic Theory*, for which aesthetic activity seemed the only possible form of insurrection or indeed self-protection against the impact of a controlled controlling world. Each stance, that of Adorno and that of Heidegger, is open to trivialisation and misrepresentation; for each the extremity of disaster brings poetry and writing, and thinking and philosophising, to a standstill, in a realisation of Hölderlin's caesura.³⁸ According to Lacoue-Labarthe this 'counter-rhythmic suspense' leads to a turn into a better understanding of the 'law of finitude', first set out by Heidegger in the 1920s. In the writings of philosophy, this must lead into an affirmation of the radical contingency of philosophical order, which would appear to suggest that there is no philosophical inheritance for Adorno and Heidegger to contest. Adorno accepts and Heidegger rejects Kafka's diagnosis: an infinity of hope, but not for us. Adorno is willing to wait for another turn in the awkward asynchrony between historical time and human fulfilment. Heidegger affirms the more distant Nietzschean, Hölderlinian hope for a new god. Thus Heidegger accepts and Adorno rejects Nietzsche's affirmation of Heraclitus: that if a human being has character, there is an experience which constantly recurs. Their responses to the twentieth-century political and aesthetic exigencies are quite distinct, one affirming Nietzsche's eternal return and the other Kafka's surrender, but there is demonstrably in the conjunction of their writings a shared moment of inarticulacy in response to Auschwitz.

Once more a question of translation

The strategy here, then, is to take Heidegger's notions from *Being and Time*, *Geschichtlichkeit*, variously translated as historicity and as historicality, and *Eigentlichkeit*, usually translated as authenticity, and to retranslate them, in order first to reveal their interconnection in delineating the move from fallenness, as absorption in everydayness, into a self-transparent historically given human existence. It is then possible to show how as a pair they make available a distinctive construal of the relation between human sensibility, the present, the opening of the future and the retrieval of the past. This opens out a question to the self-evidence both of the meaning of these two terms and of the meaning of the notions of aesthetics and politics. Each set of

terms then is to be deployed in order to unsettle the sense of obviousness and meaning of all three conjunctions: Adorno and Heidegger, aesthetics and politics, authenticity and historicity. By translating *Eigentlichkeit* as appropriation, it is possible to underline the manner in which *Eigentlichkeit* sets up the challenge of coming to terms with an occasion for thought, in excess of a capacity for thought. This involves thinking in a context determined by forces above and beyond the compass of any given cognitive ability, presentation or evidence. The cognitive ability develops or not as the case may be only as a response to the challenge. This is a thinking, which must almost necessarily impose distortions on what is thought, but in such a way as to constitute the identities of the thinkers themselves. This, then, is no idle distortion but one constitutive of human identities and future possibilities.

In authenticity or appropriation, there is a projection of an identity and a future as a horizon for meaning and activity. This is framed by what it responds to, and this is the play of *Geschichtlichkeit*, which in parallel with thrownness predisposes a certain way of appropriating what arrives. It is tempting, then, to translate *Geschichtlichkeit* as aptitude, playing up the connection to the cognate notion, *Geschicklichkeit*, ability, facility or fatality, for it was one of Benjamin's self-deprecatory complaints that he was ill-equipped, or indeed not fated, *ungeschickt*, to deal with twentieth-century conditions. However, more promising for an understanding of Heidegger's text is the translation of *Geschichtlichkeit* as the conditions of possibility for appropriating history, given on each occasion differently to Dasein in its pre-theoretical understanding of both time and being. This displaces any alignment of *Geschichtlichkeit*, as straightforwardly historical or political category, rendering it rather a question of aesthetic sensibility and attunement. There is then the correlative possibility of relocating *Eigentlichkeit* as nothing like an ethical category of moral worth nor yet an aesthetic category concerning a refinement of self-awareness, but much more as the condition of being human, as constrained by specific historical and political contingencies. It is the manner in which human beings come to terms with circumstance, as a result of which certain individual and collective trajectories might or indeed might not be set out. It is the occasionality of this condition that goes missing in Adorno's reception of it, as does the specificity of Heidegger's question to the continuing relevance of the distinction between, and indeed the validity of the very categories, politics and aesthetics.

In 1964 Adorno published his *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit*, separately from and in advance of *Negative Dialectics*, as a response to the emergence in the pre-Nazi and Nazi years of the strand of philosophising called existential philosophy, in the writings of amongst others Heidegger and Jaspers. The language of care and concern (*Sorge* and *Besorgen*), commission (*Auftrag*), resolution (*Entschlossenheit*), ambiguity and of course authenticity comes in for derisive critique. There is a brief mention, almost in passing, of Heidegger's notion of history, as cited in the *Letter on Humanism*. Adorno quotes Heidegger and then provides a devastating brief critical comment about the magical immediacy of the arrival of the human in its community with being. What for Adorno might result from an unceasing political and intellectual labour appears with Heidegger to occur simply by fiat: thus the human is. This, then, is the quotation from Heidegger, cited by Adorno:

Human being is not the lord of existence. Human being is the shepherd of being. In this 'less' human being loses nothing, but rather wins by reaching the truth of Being. He wins the essential power of the shepherd, whose worth consists in being called, by Being itself, into the trueness of its truth. This call comes as the throwing from which the thrownness of existence stems. In its essence, as being historical (*seinsgeschichtlichen Wesen*) human being is the existent whose being as ek-sistence consists in his living in the neighbourhood of Being. Human being is the neighbour of being.³⁹

And this the comment by Adorno: 'Philosophical banality is generated when that magical participation in the absolute is ascribed to the general concept – a participation which puts the lie to that concept's conceivability.'⁴⁰ For Adorno the generality and simplicity of the claim renders it vacuous. If the absolute is to be thought it is, for Adorno, to be thought in conflict with and against the grain of any given simplicities or natural contours of language, whether everyday or sophisticated. The contrast of registers is of course deliberately startling.

For Heidegger, the *Nachbar*, the neighbour, is the nearby farmer, the *Bauer* who is *nab*. The combination of homely etymologies with a desanctified deployment of the Christian language of shepherds and keepers is hardly likely to recommend itself to Adorno's more sophisticated concern with the conceivability of the concept in current conditions. These notions of neighbourhood and shepherding for Adorno offer neither the insights of poetry nor the conceptuality of philosophy, but solely banality. The polemical verve of Adorno's critique is indisputable; its focus would be sharper, however, if the attention paid to the notion of authenticity were counter-balanced by an equal attention to Heidegger's notion of historicity, as here transformed into a notion about the history of being. The history of being for Heidegger is the arrival of a deepening crisis of destitution through the neglect of presentation in favour of what is presented. The history of being sets out the process in which there is or is not an arrival of an understanding and an appropriation of human historicity. Adorno does not here develop a discussion of this aspect of Heidegger's thinking and after this passing observation, the thinking of history fades back into the background. Even within the limits set out by the task of a critique of authenticity, Adorno misses the power of his own arguments. The antipathy between Heidegger's manner of descriptive imperatives and a retrieval of conceptuality could be sharpened. Heidegger is suspicious of a conceptuality which sets itself up in opposition to an already given order, and rather supposes that what there is must be conjured into revealing itself to an attentive composing thinking.⁴¹ The virtue of Husserl's phenomenology as far as Heidegger is concerned is that it offers this possibility of revealing what is not already given, instead extracting what there is from its concealment in everyday taken-for-granted relations. Heidegger and Adorno thus share a suspicion about the adequacies of everyday understanding and what is given in uncritical or unreduced perception. The standoff between Adorno and Heidegger will be all the more marked once their contrasting responses to a limited availability of a diagnostic language and a lack of adequate conceptuality are set out.

Authenticity, *Eigentlichkeit*, is for the Heidegger of *Being and Time* an existential, a category distinctive of the kind of existence, which has given to it an understanding

of being. It is thus never simply an experiential structure but one with cognitive and ontological preconditions and consequences, out of which understanding is projected. It is a question of appropriating and understanding this structure of preconditions given in advance of any particular experience and always in excess of the cognitive capacities of the bearer of that understanding. This is the structure of thrownness and throwing to which Heidegger refers in these lines from the *Letter on Humanism* and which elicits Adorno's mockery. However, it is also the structure of *hyperbole*, excess, and *elleipsis*, deficiency, discussed in the early Aristotle lectures, giving rise to the analysis first of ruination, *Ruinanz*, and then of fallenness, *Verfallen*, as necessary and not contingent features of the existence of human beings, modalities of existence no longer thought in accordance with Christianised notions of perfectibility. The caesura of the Hoelderlinian line can then be located within this structure of the thrown throwing, as its condition, when a third movement, a counter-movement, 'counter-rhythmic suspension', *Gegenwurf*, is added to the thrownness, *Geworfenheit*, and projection, *Entwurf*, of *Being and Time*.⁴² These movements are to be understood not as some children's game but as a description of the spatio-temporal dimensions within which human being responds or fails to respond to the question of being, and something more like the Heraclitean image of children dicing with destiny begins to emerge.

This is a further challenge to the account in Kant's transcendental aesthetic of the basic structures of time and space, now thought in terms not of separable forms of time and spaces but of distinctive movements, combining time and space, in an arrival in the present as thrownness, projection out of a present, and contrary movement, in the present, in the counter-movement of the caesura. This provides a way into thinking different presentations of what is present. In *Being and Time* Heidegger theorises a retrieval of the past and the arrival of the future in a present, as conjoined conditions for a standstill, in a transformatory moment of insight into the nature of the movements of time and human understanding. Once these movements are highlighted, it becomes less obvious that Adorno can deploy the objection that Heidegger erases the movements of mediation and sublation at work in dialectical philosophy. Rather, Heidegger has taken up these movements and thought them differently, in response to the suspicion that dialectics were always at a standstill, always only capable of thinking what they had already resynthesised. At this point Adorno's and Heidegger's rather different responses to Kant's diagnoses of dialectical movement come into view. Adorno, by discussing Heidegger in the context of Jaspers's notions of existential philosophy and of limit conditions, aligns Heidegger's thinking more closely to a politics of individual self-affirmation than is quite accurate. For Heidegger, much of the point of his insistence on analysing *Dasein* is that it is not and cannot be immediately aligned to individual human existence. For Heidegger, human individuality emerges out of its interconnections with others, which may in some circumstances never permit the release of an individual into its own self-appropriated destiny. *Dasein* is thus a significant technical device which permits Heidegger to point out how unfamiliar humanity is to human beings, both collectively and individually. There is also an important dimension to Heidegger's class position, which disconnects

him from the liberal politics of self-assertive individualism taken for granted in intellectual circles. For Heidegger, the question of community is much more: how does someone emerge from their communal background such as to be able to take up a relation to being, and accede to a decisiveness of thinking? It is not how to think community from conjoined individuals. Adorno thus aligns Heidegger too closely both with Jaspers and with Sartre, whom Adorno so memorably denounces in his essay 'Commitment'.⁴³ Heidegger's differences with Sartre are of course equally well known, and he sets them out in some detail in *Letter on Humanism*. More significant here are Heidegger's differences with Jaspers.

Already in a review of Jaspers in 1919, Heidegger is taking issue with Jaspers' theory of worldviews, although with respect:

Though Jaspers has only gathered up and depicted what 'is there', he has nonetheless gone beyond mere classification by bringing together in a new way what has already been available to us, and this must be evaluated positively as a real advance. However if it is to be capable of effectively stimulating and challenging contemporary philosophy, his method of mere observation must evolve into an 'infinite process' of radical questioning that always includes itself in its questions and preserves itself in them.⁴⁴

These differences emerge more clearly in the course of the 1920s, but as with Heidegger's differences with Husserl, they become enmeshed in Heidegger's political adventure of the 1930s. Jaspers's critique of the third withheld section of division one of *Being and Time*, 'time and being', persuaded Heidegger to keep it back on publication in 1927.⁴⁵ Jaspers also wrote the reference on Heidegger in 1947, declaring that Heidegger's non-interactive mode of lecturing and teaching was unsuitable in a context seeking to develop a new style of philosophising, free from any Nazi connection. The question is: how might Adorno's critique of authenticity and Jaspers's critique of the third section of part one of *Being and Time* be brought together to show how for Heidegger but not for Jaspers there is a questioning of a collective destiny, *Mitgegebenes*, *Geschichtlichkeit*, *Mitdasein*, in which the questions of politics, how to think collectivities, and questions of aesthetics, how to think receptivity, how to think local universals, how to think affectivity, might be recast.

The notion of authenticity, as deployed by Sartre and depicted by Adorno, is one which attaches to a romantic individualism and to individual identities. The one deployed by Heidegger in *Being and Time* attaches to Dasein not as an individual *Selbstsein* but as a generational and intergenerational transmission, one which is situated between predecessors and descendants, ancestors and successors. Thus the generational dimension of Dasein's authenticity goes missing in Adorno's account. This is especially odd since this notion of generational identity grounds the fatal decision to choose a hero as an intimation of another possible future. The notion of generational being provides a location for thinking a relation between history and historicity and the moment of Dasein as *Mitsein*, being with, as *Mitdasein*, determinate existence alongside and coming into contact with other such existence, and a projection into a survivable future. It is here that we can tie together the notions of historicity, *Geschichtlichkeit*, to be understood as condition of possibility for appropriating

history; destiny, *Geschicklichkeit*; and aptitude, *Geschick*.⁴⁶ On this account, the manner in which to understand the notions of historicity and of authenticity is to think them together, to think them as replicating the movement of thrownness and projection; to locate them as displacing the concerns of aesthetics, with affectivity and receptivity on one side, and politics, as concerned with collectively constituted constraints on human understanding, on the other; to think instead in terms of trajectories of collective transformation. Such a thinking acquires a bad name when it is locked into the kind of transformations at work in Nazism, and the thought of trajectory, beyond good and evil as it is, requires some other thinking of normativity and of human flourishing in order to prevent it bringing with it the death of all human flourishing. For such a thinking, the value of human life and flourishing is to be argued, not taken for granted, and is to be hoped for, and worked for, not assumed as a necessary outcome of a preconstituted historical process. For the development of this thinking Benjamin's writings provide some significant cues and clues. These cues and clues, however, can be followed up only once the divided inheritance of Kant's thinking of imagination and art, of nature and the concept, as handed down through Heidegger's and Adorno's writings, is brought together again and relocated as a response to the new conditions of the coming century.

Notes

- 1 For Adorno, see M. Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. J. Cumming (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972). For Heidegger, see the papers and observations gathered together in G. Neske and E. Kettering (eds), *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers*, trans. L. Harries (New York: Paragon, 1990).
- 2 See H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: The Banality of Evil* (New York: Viking, 1965).
- 3 See the analyses in 'The origin of the artwork' (1936), published in *Holzwege* 1951, trans. in A. Hofstadter, *Poetry Language Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 15–87, subsequently referred to as PLT; and the protracted engagement with Hoelderlin, from the 1933–34 lectures on Hoelderlin's hymns, *Germanien* and *The Rhine*, published in the Gesamtausgabe (GA), (Frankfurt: Klostermann) as GA 39, to the 1941–2 lectures on *Andenken*, GA 52, extracts from which were published in *Erläuterungen zu Hoelderlins Dichtung* (Elucidations of Hoelderlin's Composing) 1949, 1951, and in GA 4, and in 1942 on the hymn, *The Ister*, GA 53. On the latter, see M. Froment-Meurice, *That is to Say: Heidegger's Poetics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999). See also ch. 4, 'What is it to be human?' in J. Hodge, *Heidegger and Ethics* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 102–33.
- 4 I should like to take the opportunity here to thank Simon Malpas for a wonderfully rigorous reading of this paper, which has led to its immense improvement, and Ewa Plonowska Ziarek, who understood it even when it was still in a state of abyssal obscurity.
- 5 For the development of his analysis of the danger of technology and its contribution to a deepening nihilism in the Western world see the papers collected together in M. Heidegger, *The Question of Technology and Other Essays*, trans. W. Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).
- 6 See Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. K. Tarnowski and F. Will (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), from Adorno, *Jargon der Eigenlichkeit: Zur deutschen Ideologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1964), subsequently cited as JA and JE. *Negative Dialectics* was translated by E. B. Ashton (London: Routledge, 1973).

- 7 See G. Rose, *The Broken Middle* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986). For the Hegelian background to this and indeed to Adorno's recasting of Kantian antinomy as dialectic of enlightenment see G. Rose, *Hegel contra Sociology* (London: Athlone, 1981).
- 8 The notion of antinomy here has a history going back to the writings of Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781, 1787), in which he analyses the antinomies of the understanding with respect to the deployment of concepts. Kant sets out an antinomy of practical reason in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, which concerns the different trajectories of an analysis of virtue and of happiness respectively. The argument considers the impossibility of deriving principles of virtue from considerations of happiness, and the indefensibility of supposing 'the maxim of virtue must be the efficient cause of happiness' (Ak. V. 113–14). There is a further deployment of the notion of antinomy with respect to judgement in the third critique, which will be averted to in what follows.
- 9 See T. W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. R. Hullot-Kentor (London: Athlone, 1997), and for a careful analysis of it, C. Menke, *The Sovereignty of Art: Aesthetic Negativity in Adorno and Derrida* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).
- 10 See W. Benjamin, *Selected Writings, Volume Three, 1927–1934*, ed. M. W. Jennings, H. Eiland and G. Smith, trans. R. Livingstone *et al.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 768–90.
- 11 For a recent account giving an overview of the different strands of French, German and North American discussion, see M. de Bestegui, *Heidegger and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1999).
- 12 This is the famous first sentence of *Negative Dialectics*.
- 13 This is the task is undertaken in *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), where the notions of authenticity and historicity are introduced.
- 14 This breakthrough is already in place in the 1924 lecture to the Marburg Theological Society, *The Concept of Time*, trans. W. McNeill (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).
- 15 *Jargon of Authenticity* works in a way as a prolegomena to a reading of *Negative Dialectics*, which presents an extended critique of Heidegger's account of being and of ontological difference. The issues are too complex for easy summary, and the dispute between Adorno and Heidegger will not here be pursued into this second text.
- 16 The implication here is that in the end Kant's distinction between a sensibility subordinated to understanding, in the first critique, and a sensibility conjoined with the imagination and not thus subordinated to the understanding, in the third critique, is not sustainable. For reflections on the arguments leading to such a disruptive outcome see my paper on Jean Luc Nancy's reading of Kant, 'Why aesthetics might be several', *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 7:1 (Spring 2002), 53–66.
- 17 For Adorno on the delusions of positivism, see Adorno *et al.*, *The Positivist Dispute in German Sociology*, trans G. Adey and D. Frisby (London: Heinemann, 1976).
- 18 See M. Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, 5th edn, trans. R. Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). It is important to mark the difference between thinking in terms of concepts of time, its eternity or finitude, its limitlessness or its delimitation, which gives rise to antinomies, and a thinking of temporality, concerning the manner in which time makes itself evident to human understanding. The givenness of an intuition of time takes place in the workings of the imagination, which are thus revealed to be the condition of the possibility of time. Thus imagination as condition of time is understood to be temporality itself, as the mode of presentation of time. For a discussion of this reading in which Heidegger is criticised for losing sight of his own insight, and in

- effect erasing ontological difference in turn, in affirming the sendings of being, see S. Žizek, *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology* (London: Verso, 1999), part 1, ch. 1.
- 19 On the emergence of the notion of oscillation in Heidegger's thinking, see my paper on Heidegger's thinking of time as movement, 'The genesis and structure of a thinking of multi-dimensional time', *Research in Phenomenology*, 21 (Autumn 1999), 119–40.
- 20 The word 'ellipsis' is retrieved by Heidegger from the texts of Aristotle in the course of the 1920–21 lectures on Aristotle, which he presented as an introduction to phenomenology in W. Broeker and K. Broecker-Oltmanns (eds), *Phaenomenologische Interpretation zu Aristoteles. Einführung in die phaenomenologische Forschung*, GA 61 (Winter 1921–22) (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1985).
- 21 See W. Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter (London: NLB/Verso, 1979), p. 65 in Benjamin *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. H. Schweppenhäuser and R. Tiedemann (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1974), WB GS IV.1. p. 107, referred to here as OWS.
- 22 W. Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. J. Osborne (London: NLB/Verso, 1977), WB GS I.1, pp. 203–427, subsequently referred to as OGTD.
- 23 OGTD p. 102, GS I.1. 280. It is noteworthy that Benjamin here approvingly cites G. Lukács, *The Soul and its Forms*, trans. J. and N. Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1967).
- 24 See Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 22.
- 25 M. Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, trans. F. A. Capuzzi, in W. McNeill, (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Pathmarks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 239–75.
- 26 Originally published in *Holzwege* (1950), this essay is a version of lectures given in Frankfurt in 1936. It is translated in PLT.
- 27 PLT pp. 39, 44, 44–5.
- 28 See Walter Benjamin's essay, 'On language in general and on the languages of human beings', in *One-Way Street*, pp. 107–23, WB GS II.1, pp. 140–57. For Benjamin there is no such ontological difference, as there is for Heidegger, grounding a distinction between systems of meaning at work in a natural order and those of human beings; all for Benjamin are merely moments in the unfolding of 'the unity of this movement of language' (p. 157). The privilege accorded by Heidegger to the notion of 'world' is unacceptable to Benjamin.
- 29 See English, PLT p. 71. The German reads: 'in dem die in der Geworfenheit ankommende Offenheit entworfen wird.'
- 30 See PLT p. 78 and then p. 77.
- 31 See Benjamin, OWS p. 95, WB GS IV.1, p. 138.
- 32 See Bloch *et al.*, *Aesthetics and Politics*, ed. R. Taylor (London: NLB/Verso, 1977), pp. 151–76. Apologising for Hungary's unique road to socialism and beyond takes on a rather different hue in the light of the role of Hungary in breaching the Berlin Wall in 1989.
- 33 The interview with Rudolf Augstein and Georg Wolff took place on 23 September, 1966, to be posthumously published, on 31 May 1976, in *Der Spiegel*, pp. 193–219. It appears in G. Neske and E. Kettering (eds), *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers*, trans. L. Harries (New York: Paragon, 1990).
- 34 See P. Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics: The Fiction of the Political* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).
- 35 Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger*, p. 37.
- 36 For a discussion of this, see M. de Bestegui, *Heidegger and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1998).

- 37 Adorno's essay 'Cultural criticism and society' is translated in Samuel and Sherry Weber, *Prisms* (London: Neville Spearman, 1967); see *Prisms*, p. 34, German, p. 31.
- 38 See ch. 5, 'The caesura', in Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, which ends, 'This is unfortunately what Heidegger, who knew a good deal about the caesura (what else after all is the *Ereignis*?) and Heidegger alone can help us to understand, he who obstinately refused, however, to acknowledge Auschwitz as the caesura of our times' (p. 46).
- 39 For Heidegger's text, see McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*, pp. 260–1.
- 40 See Adorno, JE p. 46, JA p. 51.
- 41 On conjuration, see J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. P. Kamuf (London: Routledge, 1994).
- 42 See note 37 for the discussion of this in relation to Heidegger. See also Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typographies: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. C. Fynsk (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), especially ch. 3, 'The caesura of the speculative'. In both books Lacoue-Labarthe cites Hoelderlin's definition of caesura as this counter-rhythmic suspension of alternation (p. 234). He notes the resonance on the status of Hoelderlin's lyric poetry between Heidegger and Benjamin's earlier analyses from perhaps 1914–15; see note appended to volume 2, of WB GS II.3 p. 921. Lacoue-Labarthe writes: 'If there is such a thing as an oeuvre of Hoelderlin, and if, as such, it culminates or finds its accomplishment at some point, then undeniably it does so in the lyric, however lacking in relevance such a category might be here. Heidegger it should be added is not the only one to insist rightly on this, and one can find exactly the same motif in the tradition (I am thinking, essentially, of Adorno and Peter Szondi) inaugurated by two well-known texts by Benjamin' (p. 211).
- 43 In Bloch *et al.*, *Aesthetics and Politics*, pp. 177–95.
- 44 See McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*, p. 37.
- 45 Jaspers's critique of the third section of the first part of *Being and Time* may have been on grounds of an inadequately thought-out relation between authenticity, as individual fate, and historicity, as collective destiny. It may have been in relation to an incipient biologism in Heidegger's writings, rehearsing Husserl's complaint that Heidegger in *Being and Time* was installing a regional ontology where he claimed to be doing fundamental ontology. Until some long-lost protocol of the discussion between Heidegger and Jaspers comes to light we cannot know. However, it may also be that the problem lies in the articulation of the relation of historicity to intentionality and of authenticity to the individuation of Dasein as *Selbstsein*. It is the notion of historicity which for Heidegger transposes the abstractions of Husserl's notion of intentionality into a system of localised meanings and connections, with specific linguistic registers such as give rise to the emergence of quite specific human beings with quite specific intellectual concerns. Appropriation, *Eigentlichkeit*, then would be the moment at which what is sent, the inheritance which is given, *Hingabe*, is taken up as an inheritance to be worked through, the *Aufgabe*, again deploying the term heavily invested by Kantian critique.
- 46 Tied into this etymological string is the further notion of *Geschlecht*, briefly invoked by Heidegger in *Being and Time*, which Derrida in a series of writings from the 1980s shows not just to be identifying human differences, between two or more sexes, but picking out differences based in blood ties and family relations. Derrida has four papers on Heidegger's notion of *Geschlecht*, three of them published and translated. 'Geschlecht, sexual difference, ontological difference' (1983) is to be found in P. Kamuf (ed.), *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 380–402; 'Geschlecht II: Heidegger's hand' in J. Sallis (ed.), *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 161–96;

and 'Geschlecht IV: Heidegger's ear; philopolemology' (1989) in J. Sallis (ed.), *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 163–218. It is important to consider the very different resonances of a thinking of family resemblance and of sexual difference on the one hand, as philosophically domesticated notions, and of racial difference and blood ties, as politically supersensitive.