



THE DILEMMA^{OF} HOMECOMING

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total war or terrorism, or the “conservative revolution”—a metaphysical fascism that claims to be against fascism?

Everyone, every culture, needs a “home,” but it doesn’t need to be an exclusive and substantial place. It is the aim of this book to show that it is not only necessary to seek alternatives, but that it is possible to do so by opening the question of technics not as a universal techno-logy, but as a question of different cosmotechnics. This involves the re-appropriation of the metaphysical categories from inside a culture, as well the adoption of modern technology into it, transforming it.

In comparison to the Communist appropriation of technology as a means of economic and military competition after 1949, the New Confucians took a different approach toward modernisation. They went back to traditional philosophy fortunately without invoking the same kind of metaphysical fascism; the reason for their failure is historical and philosophical: firstly, since modernisation took place at such astonishing speed, it increasingly left no time for any philosophical reflection whatsoever, especially given that the Chinese philosophical system had perennially failed to identify the category of *Technik* in itself; secondly, the tendency to reconceptualize technology took a rather idealist approach, and therefore became embedded into a cultural programme without having any profound understanding of technology. Cosmotechnics proposes that we reapproach the question of modernity by reinventing the self and technology at the same time, giving priority to the moral and the ethical.

What is the historical significance of the spread of the empty rationality and calculation that is the destiny of Western metaphysics? It is presented as a crisis an emergency which European philosophy is not able to deal with, since it is already planetary. The “Asiatics,” whether inside or outside Europe, are considered to be a threat to Europe; however, the Asiatic countries outside Europe were not able to confront technological modernisation either, and the Kyoto School also tried to follow Heidegger in his retreat into the *thinking* of the *Heimatum*. This in turn legitimated a “metaphysical fascism,” in a “turn” that is common to Heidegger, the Kyoto School, and more recently their Russian fellow conservative.

This reveals the limits of Heidegger’s reading of the history of Western metaphysics and the history of technology (as history of nature). However, we must also ask: Why did Heidegger’s metaphysical analysis have such a strong resonance in the East? Because, once again, what he described is undeniable: namely, the destruction of tradition—for example, when the village loses its traditional form of life and becomes a tourist site. Although it fell outside of his primary concern for the destiny of Europe, Heidegger seems to have suspected that this experience of modernity would be graver outside of Europe than inside—for example when he writes that, if communism comes to power in China, China will become “free” for technology. After a hundred years of modernisation, the “homecoming” of all philosophies, whether Chinese, Japanese, Islamic, or African, will be of increasing concern in the twenty-first century because of accelerated dis-orientation. So how can one avoid the fanaticism of

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for the spread of an otherwise empty rationality and calculating ability, which have, consequently, acquired a shelter [*Unterkunft*] in the ‘spirit’ [*Geist*] without nevertheless being able to grasp, moving from themselves, 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.’”

But it is not only the Jews who are portrayed as a malign metaphysical force and an obstacle to accessing the question of Being; Heidegger also has the “Asiatics” in his sights here, described as “barbaric, the rootless, the allochthonic.” It is not entirely clear what is meant by “Asiatic,” but it is clear that it carries the general meaning of “non-European.” On 8 April 1936, at the Hertziana Library of the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute in Rome, Heidegger gave a lecture entitled “Europe and the German Philosophy,” in which he began by defining the task of European philosophy:

“Our historic Dasein experiences with increasing urgency and clarity that its future is facing a stark either-or: the salvation of Europe, or [alternatively] its own destruction. But the possibility of salvation requires two things:

1. The shielding [*Bewahrung*] of European people from the Asiatics [*Asiatischen*].
2. The overcoming of its own rootlessness and disintegration.”

versal, since it is only revealed to those who went back home, not to those who are not at home, and definitely not to those who stand between the people (*Volk*) and their homecoming. The latter are subsumed under the category of the mass (*dos Man*), and of course the Jewish people figure foremost in this category in the *Black Notebooks*, in which what Donatella Di Cesare describes as a ‘metaphysical anti-Semitism’ prevails: in this reading of history of metaphysics, the Jews become those who have completed and amplified a metaphysical deracination:

“The question of the role of World Jewry [*Weltjudentum*] is not a racial question [*rassisch*], but the metaphysical question [*metaphysisch*] concerning the kind of humanity [*Menschen Omlichkeit*], which, free from all attachments, can assume the world-historical task of uprooting all beings [*Seiendes*] from Being [*Sein*].”

The *Judenfrage* and the *Seinsfrage* constitute an ontological difference, but for Heidegger, *Juden* is not something stationary like a being-present-at-hand; rather, it is a force that drives the West towards the abyss of Being. Judaism appropriated the modern development of Western metaphysics, and is spreading “empty rationality” and “calculating ability.” Judaism walks hand-in-hand with toxic modern metaphysics:

“The reason why Judaism has temporarily increased its power is that Western metaphysics, at least in its modern development, has offered a starting point

What should we take from these attempts to overcome modernity? Attempts to take a position cleaving to Heidegger’s interpretation of philosophy and technology ended up with metaphysical fascism. The Kyoto school’s adoption of Hegelian dialectics and Heidegger’s mission of philosophy as the theory of the Third Reich to achieve the East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere led not only to a metaphysical mistake but also to an unforgivable crime. However, it is not enough to criticize them simply out of moral indignation: Heidegger did point out a problem that is produced by the planetarization of technology, namely the destruction of tradition and the disappearance of any “home.” But it is a question that must be taken beyond a critique of nationalism, so as to reconsider the grave consequences brought about by technological globalization. A failure to understand this dilemma will end up in the fanaticism of the Kyoto School, which sought to reestablish a world history even at the expense of a total war; or that of Islamic extremism, which believes it can overcome the problem with terror. The cinders of fanaticism will not be extinguished without a direct confrontation of technological globalization, without which it will spread everywhere, both inside and outside Europe, in different forms. The first two decades of the twenty-first century reflect this incapacity to overcome modernity.

The theory of the Russian new right Heideggerian thinker Aleksandr Dugin, meanwhile, can be given as a recent representative example of the tendency to appropriate the “homecoming” of philosophy as a response against technological planetarisation. Dugin proposes what he calls a “fourth political theory” as a successor to the major twentieth-century political theories, namely fascism, communism, and liberalism. This new programme is a continuation of the ‘conservative revolution’ usually associated with Heidegger, Ernst and Friedrich Junger, Carl Schmitt, Oswald Spengler, Werner Sombart, Othmar Spann, Friedrich Hielscher, Ernst Niekisch, and, more notoriously, Arthur Moeller van den Bruck (1876-1925), whose 1923 book *Das Dritte Reich* considerably influenced the German nationalist movement, which saw modern technology as a great danger for tradition and turned against it. Modernity seems to Dugin an annihilation of tradition, while postmodernity is “the ultimate oblivion of Being, it is that ‘midnight,’ when Nothingness (nihilism) begins to seep from all the cracks.” Dugin’s proposal to overcome both modernity and postmodernity consists in following in the footsteps of Van den Bruck by proposing that “conservatives must lead a revolution.” Dugin’s idea is go back to the Russian tradition and to mobilize it as a strategy against technological modernity. He concretizes this idea in what he calls the “Eurasia movement,” which is both a political theory and an *episteme*, in the sense that it uses tradition as an *episteme* “opposed to an unitary *episteme* of Modernity, including science, politics, culture, anthropology.” Even though the proposed reestablishment of this new *episteme* resonates with what

we have thus far demonstrated, Dugin’s programme fails to develop it further into any philosophical programme, and it becomes a mere conservative movement.

The “conservative revolution” is invariably a reactionary movement against technological modernisation; Heidegger was one of the first to have transformed this question into a metaphysical one, namely that of modern technology as the completion of metaphysics. But Heidegger left open the possibility of a “homecoming” to the Presocratics. In doing so he may have been alluding to Hölderlin’s lyrical novel *Hyperion*, which consists of letters between a Greek, his lover, and a German interlocutor. From the letters, we know that Hyperion once left his country and travelled to Germany to acquire Apollonian rationality. However, he found life in Germany unbearable and went back to Greece, to live as a hermit. Ancient Greece for Hölderlin is an “experience” and “knowledge” of a singular historical moment, when technics and nature are presented in tension and conflict. Heidegger appropriated this in his own diagnosis of the contemporary technological situation, and presented it as a ‘recommencement’. It is not difficult to see the common ground of the political programmes of Heidegger, the Kyoto School, and Dugin in this notion of a homecoming.

The homecoming of philosophy as a recommencement beyond modernity is not only a refusal of technology, characterised by the Heidegger of the 1930s and ‘40s as “machination (*Machenschaft*),” a precursor to the term *Gestell*. The renunciation of metaphysics is based on the hope that something more “authentic” can be revealed—the truth of Being. The truth of Being is however not uni-