Research Article

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Earth and World(s): From Heidegger's Fourfold to Contemporary Anthropology

Abstract: This article aims at contributing to the contemporary reception of Heidegger's thought in eco-philosophical perspective. Its point of departure is Heidegger's claim, in his Bremen lectures and *The Question Concerning Technology*, that today the earth is submitted to permanent requisition and planned ordering, and that, having thus lost sight of its auto-poiesis, we are no longer capable of listening, tuning in, and singing back to what he calls in his course on Heraclitus the "song of the earth." Accordingly, first we examine how the inherently reciprocal dynamics of "earth" and "world," as thematised by Heidegger in *The Origin of the Work of Art*, have become opaque. Second, we analyse whether it is possible to find those same dynamics at play behind Heidegger's "Fourfold," which we propose to reread in binary key in dialogue with contemporary anthropology, from Bateson and Lévi-Strauss to Wagner and Viveiros de Castro, and in light of Guattari's notion of "trans-entitarian generativity." Third, we stress the need to reposition Heidegger's thought alongside contemporary concerns on "worlding" and we explore its plausible intersections with today's object-oriented ethnography. Lastly, we discuss the possibility of rereading Heidegger's Fourfold afresh against the backdrop of Heidegger's non-foundational thinking, as a conceptual metaphor for the joint dynamics of *Abgrund* and *Grund*.

Keywords: binary thought, ecology, *Gestell*, *Geviert*, worlding

> one possible strategy for radicalizing Heidegger's philosophy would be this: finding a way to make the fourfold not only less inscrutable [...] but also less boring
>
> – Graham Harman[1]
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> Defining an image of savage thought with the help of Kant, Heidegger, or Wittgenstein is entirely possible.
>
> – Eduardo Viveiros de Castro[2]

1 Introduction

This is not so much on Heidegger's philosophy as it is an essay in dialogue with two of its key concepts: "earth" and "world" and their permutations within Heidegger's thought. Yet rather than thinking about Heidegger's own concepts we want to think with them in conversation with others not supplied by

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1 Harman, "Dwelling with the Fourfold," 298.
2 Viveiros de Castro, *Cannibal Metaphysics*, 92.

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Heidegger himself, so as to replace Heidegger's thinking in a broader web of problems and ideas. We are willing to call this to *deterritorialise* Heidegger, in accordance to the employment of the verb to "deterritorialise" in social anthropology, where it designates the delinking of objects and practices from their conventional locations.

More specifically, we aim at:

(a) re-examining Heidegger's "Fourfold," as originally formulated in his Bremen lectures, in light of the coupling of "earth" and "world" in *The Origin of the Work of Art* – so as to stress their shared binary structure;

(b) cross-examining the result of such analysis in conversation with Gregory Bateson's notion of "schismogenesis," André Leroi-Gourhan's theory of biocultural evolution, Claude Lévi-Strauss's structural anthropology, and Roy Wagner's, Marilyn Strathern's, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's contributions to contemporary anthropological theory in binary key – so as to put Heidegger's thought in due anthropological perspective;

(c) analysing the role of Heidegger's Fourfold *vis-à-vis* what he calls the "song of the earth" in his first course on Heraclitus; and assessing such role against the backdrop of contemporary concerns on "worlding" as expressed in the works of Donna Haraway, Elizabeth Povinelli, and Hilan Bensusan, and what may be called Heidegger's non-foundational philosophy.

Overall, our purpose is to contribute to today's reception of Heidegger's thought in eco-philosophical perspective.[3] More specifically, we are interested in the possibility of comparing and bridging, without erasing their differential nature, non-nihilist ways of semiotising the real that, by being sensible to the shining forth of what Heidegger calls "being," may contribute to *world*, instead of un-world, the earth. Our hypothesis is as follows: the modern "enframing" (*Ge-stell*) of the real, which modern science and technology both make possible and assure, has turned the earth, as Heidegger says, into a standing reserve of resources over which humans exercise permanent control and command; in this way, i.e., by subjecting the earth to permanent requisition and planned ordering, we have lost sight of its auto-poiesis and are no longer capable of listening, tuning in, and singing back, to its song. In proportion to the unilateral-ness and, ultimately, the violence by which modern humanity has thus imposed itself upon and against the earth, the inherently reciprocal dynamics of earth and world have become opaque, for which reason, as we shall see, recovering the earth we have lost entails, too, restoring their correlation, i.e. re-establishing their binary structure. The latter is epitomised, we argue next, in Heidegger's conceptual figure of the Fourfold, with its two intersecting mirroring binary axes. Drawing on Heidegger's own example of a "jug" in his Bremen lectures, we further compare Heidegger's Fourfold to the results of the object-oriented fieldwork carried out by Morten Pedersen among the Darkhad in northern Mongolia. Additionally, we discuss Graham Harman's interpretation of Heidegger's Fourfold and briefly examine how to relate the latter's binary logic to what might be labelled as Heidegger's non-dichotomous thinking.[4] Based on Hölderlin's and Heraclitus's, Heidegger's binary thought matches, we suggest, Leroi-Gourhan's paleo-anthropological studies as well as Bateson's, Lévi-Strauss's, Wagner's, Strathern's, and Viveiros de Castro's anthropological theorising, all of which build on binary epistemological premises; moreover, Heidegger shows that philosophy, in its beginnings, shared, partly at least, those very premises, as well.[5] Subsequently we inquire whether one of the axes of Heidegger's Fourfold, namely, the axis that revolves around the correlation of "Mortals" and "Immortals," reflects particularly well the essence of the binary structure of earth and world in connection to the reciprocal articulation of life and death whose experience defines our mortal condition. And from this we move on to propose a new interpretation of Heidegger's Immortals, or "gods," in light of Gilles Deleuze's distinction between the "actual" and the

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3 On which see Irwin, *Heidegger, Politics and Climate Change*; Hatzisavvidou, "Dwelling Politically: Reading Heidegger in the 'Anthropocene';" Zwier and Blok, "Saving Earth: Encountering Heidegger's Philosophy of Technology in the Anthropocene."

4 All these we examine in the section titled "Of jugs, shamanic gowns, and their mirroring phenomenological dynamics."

5 This, in turn, will be found in the section titled "Putting Heidegger's binary thought into anthropological perspective."

"virtual" and in close dialogue with Susanne Claxton, Richard Polt, and Richard Rojcewicz.[6] Lastly, we explore how different ways of poetising the earth may be comparatively approached on the basis of Heidegger's conceptual metaphor of the Fourfold for the sake of less coincidence than interlocution, connecting this to the present-day concerns on worlding.[7] Our conclusion is that we will not be in a position to listen, tune in, and sing back to the earth's song if we do not rethink in binary or reciprocal terms the relation between earth and world, of which extra-modern peoples offer a good many examples and Heidegger's Fourfold supplies something like a *figured bass*, to use a musical metaphor, despite the convenience to read Heidegger's philosophy in non-foundational terms.[8]

2 Of jugs, shamanic gowns, and their mirroring phenomenological dynamics

"World and earth are essentially different ⟨*verschieden*⟩ and yet never separated ⟨*getrennt*⟩ from one another," writes Heidegger.[9] On his reading, the earth is silent and opaque; bringing to light and gathering what shines forth from it, human language *worlds* it. One may object to this that uninterrupted communication, both multidirectional and multiperspectival, forms reality's tapestry, which is like a cubist semiotic prism painted in fauvist chromatics: the anteater's snout is an icon of the galleries of any anthill, the roar of a jaguar is for the attentive monkey an index of the predator's presence, my hunting of a peccary is perhaps perceived by the peccary itself as an act of war as per its own peccary-centred perspectival ontology, etc.[10] So the earth is neither silent nor opaque as such, *pace* Heidegger.[11] Yet human verbal semiosis is about conferring symbolic meaning to that prism's faces, while non-verbal semiosis, human and non-human alike, folds, unfolds, and refolds that prism's faces in an action-oriented way: in the first case one "throws away the fish and keeps the net,"[12] and it is only then that a *world* as such appears.[13] Besides, there are as

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6 See further the section titled "Re-tuning in and singing back to the earth's song."

7 We go through these two issues in the section titled "Re-tuning in and singing back to the earth's song" and the Conclusion, respectively.

8 In dialogue, basically, with Schürmann's *Heidegger on Being and Action*.

9 Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, 26 (=GA 5: 35).

10 Kohn, *How Forests Think*, 32, 74; Viveiros de Castro, *The Relative Native*, 28–34.

11 Who in this sense remains, as Harman observes (in "Dwelling in the Fourfold," 294–5), within the correlationist "bounds" of Kant's philosophy.

12 Merleau-Ponty, *The Prose of the World*, 47. See further the distinction therein (47–113) between "perception," on the one hand, and "expression" and "meaning," on the other hand.

13 Of course it is possible to say that, in one way or another, all organisms have their own "lived worlds" with their corresponding existential landscapes (as von Uexküll anticipated; see Buchanan, *Onto-Ethologies*, 7–38). The tick's gravitates around what we call thermoception. The dolphin's, around what we call echolocation. Hence, it would be tempting to concede that all organisms have "worlds" different from ours. Yet it is obvious that calling a dolphin's world and a tick's world "worlds" amounts to give them an exclusively human designation. For, as Kant in this case rightly stresses, "world" is an *idea* of our reason that brings unity to the otherwise unsynthesised plurality of everything we perceive; and there is no evidence that dolphins, ticks, elephants, butterflies, hummingbirds or seahorses have ever produced the idea of "world," or any other idea for that matter. Besides, should they be given a chance to, neither the tick nor the dolphin would probably describe their worlds as "worlds," but as "3w4; iojxwel;k" and "≦a♯⌐x;p oOP;I," respectively (ignoring this would naively overlook what is famously called, after Quine's *Word and Object*, the "inscrutability or indeterminacy of reference"). Ultimately, however, since dolphins and ticks do not describe things, the more we can say is that, seen from their own ticklish and dolphinish perspectives, the dolphin's and the tick's worlds are more sort of a "…" and a "…" than anything else. Evidently, this does not make them *less* than us: it just makes us *different* from them.

many worlds as there are languages: to each language its own world, one could say paraphrasing Wittgenstein.[14] For, as Susanne Claxton puts it, "earth manifests as worlds."[15]

This nuances aside, we find Heidegger's thematisation on the *reciprocal* manner in which earth and world relate fitting enough. "World," writes Heidegger, "is grounded [*gründet*] on earth, and earth rises [*ragt*] up through world."[16] Yet "the relation between world and earth," he goes on to say, "never atrophies into [an] empty unity [*leeren Einheit*] of opposites unconcerned with one another."[17] Rather, it is "[i]n its resting upon earth [that] the world strives to surmount it."[18] The movement is twofold, though: "As the self-opening [*Sichöffnende*] [the world] will tolerate nothing closed [*Verschlossenes*]. As the sheltering and concealing, however, [the] earth tends always to draw the world into itself and to keep it there."[19] For

> world is not simply the open [*Offene*] which corresponds to the clearing [*Lichtung*], [and] earth is not simply the closed [*Verschlossene*] that corresponds to concealment [*Verbergung*]. [...] Earth is not simply the closed but that which rises up as self-closing [*Sichverschließendes*].[20] [Thus] world and earth are essentially in conflict [*nach streitig*], intrinsically belligerent [*streitbar*]. Only as such do they enter the strife of clearing and concealing

in which *being* consists, concludes Heidegger.[21] And this implies that earth and world are less complementary fractions than co-belonging opposites whose reciprocal presupposition or *binary* relation is both unstable and dynamic.[22]

Now, as Heidegger suggests[23] and we have analysed elsewhere,[24] the modern *Ge-stell*, rather than worlding the earth, unworlds it. For its *bestellen* ("ordering") erases what earthly things are – albeit not as self-standing things-in-themselves, prior to their technological appropriation. Put differently, it does not suppress an alleged pre-*bestellt* ("ordered") self-referentiality of theirs, upon which a supposed "democracy" of equally valuable and self-standing "objects"[25] could be otherwise established.[26] What it suppresses is, in the case of non-human-made things, their auto-poietic shining forth from the earth into unhiddenness. Therefore, when they are forced into the modern *Ge-stell*, they do not lose their autonomy to enter a world: they lose their earthly embedment to enter an unworld, or an "extra-terrestrial ~~world~~," i.e. a pseudo-world, a world lacking any earth.

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14 Cf. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 5.6.

15 Claxton, *Heidegger's Gods*, 48.

16 Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, 26 (=GA 5: 35).

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Just like "world is the self-opening openness [*sich öffnende Offenheit*] of the broad paths of simple and essential decisions" (ibid.).

21 Ibid., 31 (=GA 5: 42).

22 Cf. Heraclitus, DK B51: "οὐ ξυνιᾶσιν ὅκως διαφερόμενον ἑωυτῷ ὁμολογέει· παλίντροπος ἁρμονίη ὅκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης" ("they do not understand that what diverges [actually] coincides: back attunement, like that of the bow and the lyre" [our translation]); B54: "ἁρμονίη ἀφανὴς [...]" ("unapparent harmony [...]" [our translation]). The formula is patent: Συμφέρω: Διαφέρω, Διαφέρω: Συμφέρω ("Convergence:" "Divergence," "Divergence:" "Convergence").

23 In his Bremen lectures (=GA 79: 5–77) and *The Question Concerning Technology* (=GA 7: 7–36).

24 Gevorkyan and Segovia, "Post-Heideggerian Drifts."

25 *Pace* Bryant, *The Democracy of Objects*.

26 See for a criticism Gevorkyan and Segovia, "Post-Heideggerian Drifts."

What, then, about those things which are human made but not modern-technologically made,[27] like a jug, for instance?[28] They witness in their simplicity, says Heidegger, to the intersection of *four* cardinal ontological components:

(A) "earth" – the generous *earth* on which we, mortals, live, which gives us all we have while we live on it, and to which we shall return at death;

(B) "sky" – the sky whose events determine the weather cycles that make possible the emergence and continuity of life on the *earth*;

(C) "mortals" – ourselves in our quality of poetic dwellers of the *earth* who live on it under the sky aware that all things perish and, therefore, ready to sing to them and care for them so as to avoid that they lapse into oblivion after going back to the *earth*;[29] and

(D) "immortals" – i.e. our ways of pointing with awe at, and of rendering respectful homage to, the *earth*'s ever-living forces on which our lives depend.[30]

That is to say, non-modern-technologically human-made things bring about the nearness of such cardinal components, which, taken together, form a *conceptual figure* – a Fourfold. Yet their nearness, says Heidegger, has nothing to do with the "uniforming distance-less-ness" implemented by modern technology, as, contrary to the latter's intrusiveness, which eliminates all distance and proximity at the same time (for there can only be proximity if there is distance and *vice versa*), it allows the "Four" to "approach one other" and "shine together" in the "unity" of a "mirroring reciprocity," thus forming a circling Fourfold.[31] It can be argued, then, that non-modern-technologically human-made things prove ontologically *earthly translucent* in their own way, since the earth can be said to be the fundamental component of the Fourfold (notice its recurrent, italicised presence in the four-part description made above).[32]

We would now like to make three quick additional points: (i) on the binary logic of Heidegger's Fourfold, (ii) on its suitability in light of the "thinking through things" current in contemporary anthropology, and (iii) on how to relate such binary logic to Heidegger's non-dichotomous thinking.

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27 Pretending all human-made things are made in the same way as those produced by modern technology obliterates the ontological difference brought about by the modern *Ge-stell vis-à-vis* former artisanal production. As Bret Davis remarks (in "Heidegger's Releasement," 133), "Heidegger's critique of technology is not a luddite-like rejection of the use of technological devises, nor is it a mere Romantic nostalgia for bygone bucolic times [...]. Rather, it is an attempt to illuminate the way in which beings are revealed – and concealed – in the contemporary world. That way of revealing/concealing is inherently willful. Beings are viewed and treated as mere standing-reserve (*Bestand*); as material and energy resources, they are made to stand at the beck and call of what Heidegger calls the technological *will to will* [...]. This is a will that no longer seeks anything outside itself, that is to say, it wills nothing other than the power-preservation and power-enhancement of its own increasingly cybernetic system." In this sense, despite any claims to the contrary, an artisanal jug (or a shamanic gown, as we shall see) cannot be equated, we think, with "a cybernetic cooling system for an American boxing match shown by live worldwide television and projected via real-time hologram in Singapore and Kuwait," to use Harman's example in "Dwelling in the Fourfold" (297); for the technological production of the cybernetic cooling system, of the TV signal, of the TV transmitter and receiver devices, and of the hologram thus transmitted, frames the fight (which as such might still evoke the Fourfold) *qua* "simulacrum," in the Braudillarian sense. Cf. Baudrillard's take on holograms in *Simulacra and Simulation* (172–8) and Friedberg's thesis on the death of perspective in *The Virtual Window*.
28 Which is Heidegger's own example in the first of his Bremen lectures (*Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, 5–20); see also Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 161–80 (=GA 79: 5–21).
29 On the notion of "poetic dwelling," see Heidegger's insights on Hölderlin's poetry in *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry* and *Poetry, Language, Thought*.
30 Later on we will nuance, or rather complicate, this preliminary definition.
31 Heidegger, *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, 15–20 (=GA 79: 15–21).
32 Cf. Mattéi, *Heidegger et Hölderlin*, 137–88. We find Mattéi's musical analogy (a chord or several-note combination with one of the notes playing a leading harmonic role) particularly inspiring. On the Hölderlinian sources of Heidegger's Fourfold, see ibid. 87–188.
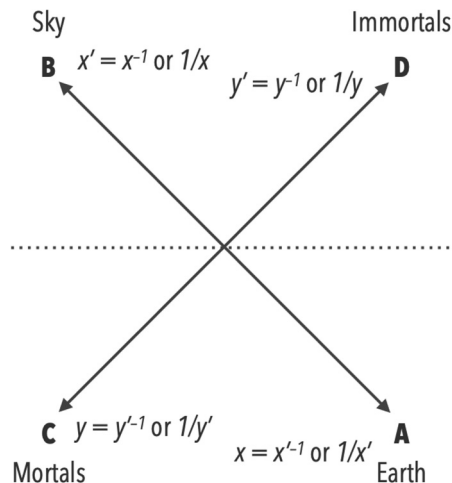
(i) Heidegger's Fourfold is formed by two intersecting binary "axes"[33] (A|B, C|D) whose terms are in a relation of reciprocity or inverse proportion.[34] This does not only mean that such terms belong together and cannot be isolated from one another; it also means that they do not exactly relate in terms of complementarity as the two halves of one thing. In other words, Heidegger hints at something qualitative and dynamic rather than quantitative and static. Heidegger's recourse to the expression "mirroring reciprocity" (*Spiegel-Spiel*, lit. "mirror game")[35] to qualify the type of relation existing between the Fourfold's components is particularly significant in this regard, as what one sees in a mirror is, precisely, one's (laterally) *inverted* reflection. Furthermore, each of the two aforementioned axes can be said to echo the aforementioned earth| world binary:

> (A|B) The earth below is dense; the sky above is light and it illuminates the earth. The stars in the firmament are the guiding lights for the sailing of the earth's seas, and the heavens are home to many law-giving gods in different cultures. Yet earth and sky compete with, and turn around, one another in a sort of dynamic disequilibrium, as not only their qualities but also their movements oppose each other: the earth's layers move slowly through the ages while the fast winds erode the earth's surface, and if everything on earth lives and dies, the heavens seemingly remain still.

> (C|D) As for the mortals and the immortals, their qualities are similar to those of earth and sky: placed below/above, being dense (corporeal)/light (incorporeal), transitory/permanent, guided/guiding. And it seems reasonable to trace Heidegger's intuition on their relationship back to Heraclitus DK B62, to which Heidegger and Fink would dedicate several sessions of their seminar on the Greek philosopher:[36] "Immortal mortals, mortal immortals: [these (=the 'immortals')] living their death [i.e. that of the 'mortals'], [those (=the 'mortals')] dying their life [i.e. that of the 'immortals']."[37] Gigon and Guthrie believed that Heraclitus espoused in this fragment the Pythagorean thesis of the immortality of the soul, but there is no such thing in Heraclitus. What Heraclitus suggests, instead, is that the immortals live through us, since the ever-living forces of the earth operate in us, who inevitably die and *vice versa*, that we, mortals, are nothing compared to the life the

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33 Cf. the use of this term in Harman, "Dwelling in the Fourfold," 296. We shall return in short to Harman's interpretation of Heidegger's Fourfold.

34 Something like this then:

For x^{-1} or $1/x$ is how *reciprocity* is expressed in mathematical terms. Cf. Viveiros de Castro's mathematical "meta-fantasy" (in *Radical Dualism*, esp. 19–22) on "dual" (=binary) organisations and the "multiplicative inverse" role of each social moiety in them. Bateson's *Naven* and Lévi-Strauss's "Reciprocity and Hierarchy" must be seen as the forerunners of binary thinking in anthropology. Very likely Heidegger would have been reluctant to the mathematical formalisation of his thought, but we find it befitting to emphasise its parallelism with contemporary anthropological theorising. It would be possible to ask, then, whether Badiou is right in his complain (in *Being and Event*, 123–9, and elsewhere) that Heidegger's philosophy eludes mathematisation due to its poematic nature.

35 Heidegger, *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, 17–20, 44–6, 70 (=GA 79: 18–21, 46–8, 74).

36 Heidegger and Fink, *Heraclitus Seminar 1966/67*, 84–121 (=*Heraklit: Seminar Wintersemester 1966/67*, 137–219).

37 "Ἀθάνατοι θνητοί, θνητοὶ ἀθάνατοι, ζῶντες τὸν ἐκείνων θάνατον, τὸν δὲ ἐκείνων βίον τεθνεῶτες" (our translation). Cf. Wagner's reference to Heraclitus DK B62 in *Coyote Anthropology*, 5, apropos the dynamic *cum* paradoxical geometry (which resembles that of a Möbius strip or a Klein bottle) of chiasmatic structures.

immortals bring us, and indeed nothing without it. We are, before them, what earth is to world – receptive of their light – while they shine through, and are witnessed by, us.

Hence Heidegger's Fourfold can be seen as a twofold permutation: earth|sky + mortals|immortals of his earlier earth|world binary.

This adds to Harman's hypothesis that Heidegger's Fourfold stands at the "intersection" of two "dualisms" characteristic of Heidegger's philosophy.[38] First, the (recurrent)[39] tension in it between "veiling and unveiling, absence and presence, concealing and unconcealing, sheltering and clearing," etc.,[40] which stands too, argues Harman, behind the world-revealing qualities of the Fourfold.[41] Second, the (growing) opposition (in Heidegger's works) between what Harman calls the "specific" being of anything and its being "something at all"[42] – not so much "in general," he highlights, as in its "enduring unit," i.e. regardless of "the multitude of profiles that it exhibits at various times"[43] – which permits us to see anything, Harman goes on to say, beyond its concreteness.[44] It is, moreover, from the potential subtraction of anything from its presentness that (just like Derrida draws the major premise of his own deconstructionist philosophy)[45] Harman draws the inspiration for his "Object-Oriented Ontology" (hereinafter OOO); for, in Harman's view, when things are not seen in their concreteness they come to be seen as refusing any concrete delimitation, i.e. *qua* withdrawing objects. It is doubtful whether this is so or whether, as Heidegger suggests, they can then be viewed relationally (or symbolically, as per the etymology of the term symbol, which denotes the act of "drawing" [βάλλω] things "together" [σύν-]),[46] that is, as crossroads, so to speak, of the Fourfold's mirroring quadrants (or functors). But we have discussed at some length Harman's OOO in connection to Heidegger's thought elsewhere.[47]

Additionally, our binary inscription of Heidegger's Fourfold as a permutation of his former earth|world binary may help to solve two problems likewise underlined by Harman: on the one hand, the relationship of Heidegger's Fourfold with the rest of his philosophy;[48] on the other hand, the Fourfold's dynamics, or what Harman himself calls its "mechanics,"[49] which, due to the "mirroring reciprocity" of its four functors, must be thought of, *pace* Harman, as being anything but static.[50] Here again contemporary anthropology can be said to provide an excellent model, as, more often than not, the dual or chiasmatic principles behind the elicitation of kinship, myth, and ritual display an ever-shifting or fractally reversive dynamics that encourage permanent "reperception"[51] – that is to say, a binary structure is not so much a "ready-made"[52] as the effect of what Bateson famously called "schismogenesis" (on which see more below).

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38 Harman, "Dwelling in the Fourfold," 292, 295, 298, 301.

39 Harman: "constant," "monotonous" (ibid., 295).

40 Ibid., 295.

41 Inasmuch as it "divides the shimmering façade of an object's present-at-hand surface from the underground rumble of its enigmatic depth" (ibid., 295).

42 Ibid., 296.

43 Harman, *The Quadruple Object*, 143.

44 Harman, "Dwelling in the Fourfold," 296; *The Quadruple Object*, 141–3.

45 Despite Harman's disclaimer (in *Tool Being*, 9) "that he by no means fight[s] under the banner of Derrida."

46 Cf. Harman's distinction (after Rorty) between "Type-A" (=autonomous) and "Type-B" (=relational) "objects" (ibid., 164–80), and his contention that whereas Heidegger interprets his "jug" to be a "Type-B" object, he nonetheless offers something like a conceptual ground for the development of an OOO that would enable us to go back, *contra* Kant, to the things themselves – and thus "a cryptic manifesto for an object-oriented philosophy" (175).

47 Gevorkyan and Segovia, "Post-Heideggerian Drifts."

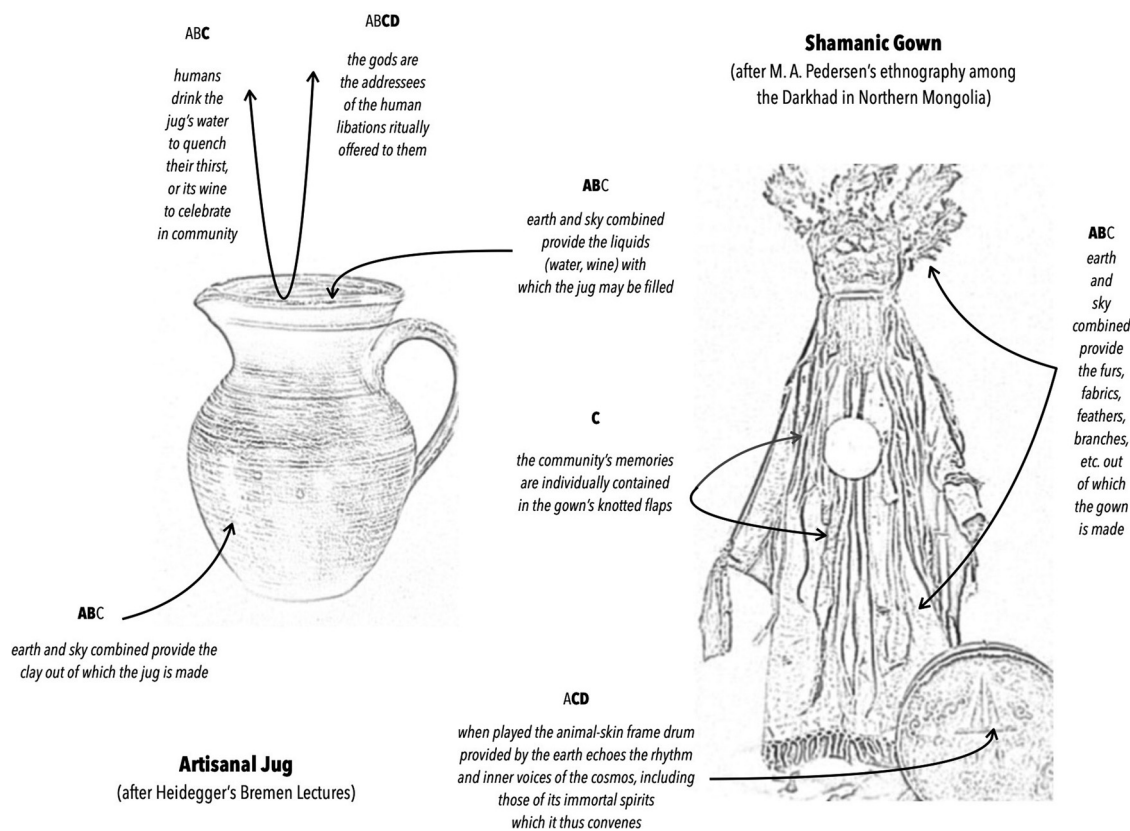**48** Cf. Harman, "Dwelling in the Fourfold," 294.

49 Ibid., 295.

50 Ibid., 298. See further the Conclusion below, where we reinterpret the Fourfold as a conceptual metaphor for the joint dynamics of *Abgrund* and *Grund*.

51 See e.g. Wagner, *An Anthropology of the Subject*, 31–47. Cf. too the notions of "dynamic disequilibrium" (Lévi-Strauss) and "reciprocity of perspectives" (Wagner) in the next section.

52 Wagner, *Symbols That Stand for Themselves,* 8.

Lastly, all this does not only make Heidegger's Fourfold "less inscrutable" and "less boring," as Harman wanted.[53] It does so while keeping with a line of thought that, in order to transcend objectual presentness, does not fall into objectual absentness.[54]

(ii) Indeed recent investigations into the "life of things" – to borrow from Fernando Santos-Granero[55] – confirm the appropriateness of Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of a jug as a "thing" that happens to bring together "earth," "sky," "mortals," and "immortals," and thereby the applicability of Heidegger's Fourfold to the phenomenological study of extra-modern ontologies – which, unlike Harman's OOO, are, to put it mildly, seldom subtractive. Compare in this sense Pedersen's analysis[56] of the way in which a Darkhad shamanic gown brings together "space" and "time," i.e. the cosmos in all its material complexity (of which the shaman's frame drum registers the rhythm and the inner voices, one may add), and the episodic history of the community in which the shaman belongs. In short, it is possible to interpret the Darkhad shamanic gown in terms of Heidegger's jug and *vice versa*. Thus, in the diagram below, each of the components of the "Fourfold" (A, B, C, D) is variously related to the materials and functions of the two objects (we use bold characters to emphasise those components that are more salient in each case):

ABC

humans drink the jug's water to quench their thirst, or its wine to celebrate in community

AB**CD**

the gods are the addressees of the human libations ritually offered to them

ABC

earth and sky combined provide the liquids (water, wine) with which the jug may be filled

C

the community's memories are individually contained in the gown's knotted flaps

ABC

earth and sky combined provide the clay out of which the jug is made

Artisanal Jug
(after Heidegger's Bremen Lectures)

A**CD**

when played the animal-skin frame drum provided by the earth echoes the rhythm and inner voices of the cosmos, including those of its immortal spirits which it thus convenes

Shamanic Gown
(after M. A. Pedersen's ethnography among the Darkhad in Northern Mongolia)

ABC

earth and sky combined provide the furs, fabrics, feathers, branches, etc. out of which the gown is made

Arguably, then, Heidegger's Fourfold may be said to supply a *figured bass* – or, if you prefer a visual metaphor to an acoustic one, a *stereoscopic image* – for the comparative study of extra-modern cosmologies regardless of their specificity. Think, for example, how a Khorchin relates to a tree as a hierophany through which "earth" and "sky," i.e. the lower and upper regions of the cosmos, communicate and bring "mortals"

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53 Harman, "Dwelling with the Fourfold," 298.

54 *Contra* Harman, who seems only capable of thinking either on a thing's concrete (read: ontic) presentness or its (negative) lack of it (its non-onticity as a thing's vanishing point).

55 Santos-Granero (ed.), *The Occult Life of Things*; but see also Henare et al. (eds.), *Thinking Through Things*.

56 Pedersen, "Talismans of Thought."

and "immortals" together. In her study on the Daur, Caroline Humphrey reports the following story, which she was told by one of her Khorchin informants:

> [my informant's] father moved to live in a new place. This was a sandy, stony region, but there was a single tree growing there with thick green leaves. His father thought, 'That beautiful tree is worthy to be worshipped,' and he moved some large stones the size of a man's head to the foot of the tree and started to worship it.[57]

A single tree in a sandy, stony land is, of course, something exceptional – a mark of the otherwise. But the tree's exceptionality hints at something else:[58] the lonely tree is a manifestation (and again a symbol) of the earth's (A) ever-living (i.e. immortal) fertility (D), which the tree makes manifest despite all but would not be possible without the sky and its favourable weather phenomena (B), and without which no mortal (C) would be able to dwell in that place. Consider too the ceremony of the Hako among the Pawnee, as described by Lévi-Strauss after Alice Fletcher's ethnography:

> The invocation which accompanies the crossing of a stream of water is divided in several parts, which correspond, respectively, to the moment when the travellers put their feet in water, the moment when they move them, and the moment when the water completely covers their feet. The invocation to the wind separates the moment when only the wet parts of the body feel cool: "Now, we are ready to move forward in safety" [...] As the informant explains: "We must address with song every object we meet, because Tira'wa (the supreme spirit) is in all things, everything we come to as we travel can give us help."[59]

A given centre thus brings all things together, and it is by relating to them with due respect that mortals (C) aspire to be helped by the immortals (D) in their crossing of the stream of river, with the lower, earthly waters (A) and the upper wind (B) setting the scenario for it.

In a nutshell, there is *no* (human) world at the expense of the Fourfold, insofar as any (human) world consists of a certain *combination* of dense facts (A, what there is), more ethereal ideals (B, what could be), death's inevitability (C, we *qua* mortals), and yet life's sustained recurrence (D, or life's immortal forces), whose reciprocity is – we should like to venture – what the Fourfold stands for as a *conceptual metaphor*. One that thereby *superimposes* two binary articulations turning them into two intersecting *axes*: that of the *real* and the *possible* (A, B), on the one hand, and that of the *given* and the *giving* (C, D), on the other.

"Four," moreover, is the *minimum* number any multiplicity must assume as its underlying *structure* so as not to dissolve into a chaotic assemblage, into a closed bidirectional circuit undergoverned by the law of complementarity[60] or into a hierarchical set. As Félix Guattari has it, "[a]xiomatics with two terms [...] [often] result in an 'depotentialized' representation" because of their closed-circuit dialectics, "whilst dialectics with three terms lead to pyramidal [...] determinations [...] It is only with $3 + n$ entities that one can establish [...] a trans-entitarian (matricial) generativity without any essential priority of one essence over another."[61] Therefore, Heidegger's Fourfold does *not* provide a "ground" or "fundament" in the traditional philosophical sense of these terms, but rather – to paraphrase Wagner's remarks apropos his "obviation" schema of myth – a *cognitive device* "depicting the implications and interrelationships of a set of things" (namely, the functors A, B, C, and D) "that are themselves relations" (A|B, C|D), so that what is thus

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57 Humphrey, *Shamans and Elders*, 59.

58 Even if in an attempt to stress the spontaneity of the gesture – about which she is correct – Humphrey states that "[t]his veneration did not imply anything strange or symbolic about the tree" (ibid.), which, she argues, is shown by the fact that it was only "after" being consecrated that some kind of "spirit" was attributed to the tree (74 no. 93). As Pierre Clastres stresses, however, it is when indigenous people seem to do something just like that, because it seems "obvious" to them in one way or another, that one is "on the path of some particularly interesting piece of information and that it would be wise to pay attention" (*Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians*, 33); for, since Lévi-Strauss at least (but one could just as well invoke here Freud and Jung), we know the symbolic to be unconscious.

59 Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, 10.

60 I.e. lacking both exteriority and reciprocity, unlike the aforementioned chiasmatic, dual, or binary organisations. On their openness to exteriority, see Wagner, *Asiwinarong*.

61 Guattari, *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, 69. We intend to dedicate a future paper to comparing Guattari's "four-functor" diagram(s) with Heidegger's *Geviert*.

structured (and diagrammed)[62] in terms of two intercrossing axes (A|B + C|D) is not the "shape" of something but its "interpretation,"[63] i.e. its *symbolic thinkability*. We shall return to it in the Conclusion to show that our reading of Heidegger's Fourfold does not collide at all with the need to read Heidegger's philosophy in *non-foundational* terms. For Heidegger himself suggests in the *Beiträge* (§112 *in fine*) that if anything can (still) "occur as" (in lieu of be presumed to exist beforehand as) a "*grounding* ground" (emphasis original) it is only by assuming an "in-between" (rather than "*a priori*") condition in respect to that which is (i.e. the "beings themselves") in contradistinction to the aprioristic notion of "ground" prevalent in the history of metaphysics (and thus in the history of Western thought).[64] Now, what we have called (borrowing freely from Guattari) the Fourfold's "trans-entitarian generativity" seems to meet the requisites of that in-betweenness quite straightforwardly, first, because each of its vectors *only* makes sense in correlation with the others and *none* of them preexists their relation, and, second, because the Fourfold is neither external nor prior to what it shelters.

(iii) But Heidegger's philosophy is not only non-foundational. It is also *non-dichotomous*. Thus, as we have seen, for Heidegger "earth" and "world" do not form "an empty unity [*leeren Einheit*] of opposites unconcerned with one another;"[65] nor is their "strife" (*Streit*) a "rift" (*Riß*) of mutually exclusive opposites; instead their relation is one of mutual dependence and belligerent "intimacy" (*Innigkeit*).[66] We read this in *The Origin of the Work of Art*, where Heidegger expressly reuses Hölderlin's term *Innigkeit*.[67] Similarly, in the *Beiträge* (§5), Heidegger highlights that "beyng [*das Seyn*] is not something 'earlier' – existing in itself, for itself," i.e. prior to the "beings" (*das Seiende*) that it brings to the fore.[68] On the contrary, he says, "the event [*das Ereignis*]," whose thinking (in both the objective and the subjective sense of the genitive)[69] is the task of any post-metaphysical thought, "is the temporal-spatial simultaneity [*Gleichzeitigkeit*] for beyng and beings."[70] In both cases, Heidegger does not frame in dichotomous terms what ought to be distinguished: "earth" and "world," "beyng," and "beings." But then, can Heidegger's interplay of "earth" and "world," "earth" and "sky," and "mortals" and "immortals" be legitimately qualified as *binary*? It can, provided one does *not* take the word "binary" as a synonym of confrontational in the sense formerly adduced of the "rift," i.e. in *dichotomous* terms. One and many, same and other, God and world, being and beings, matter and spirit, soul and body, moderns and primitives, nature and culture, rationalism and irrationalism, bourgeoisie and proletariat, patriarchy and matriarchy, global north and global south [...] are among our culture's recurring dichotomous features,[71] and it can be tempting to hoist the flag of universalism against them.[72] Yet, as we have argued elsewhere,[73] universalism has its own problems, beginning with its insensitivity to difference as such. In any event, despite Deleuze and Guattari's influent but misguiding assimilation of the "binary" to the "dichotomous,"[74] binary thinking, as a major province of contemporary

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62 See no. 34 above.

63 Wagner, *Lethal Speech*, 48.

64 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, 174 (=GA 65: 222–3).

65 Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, 26 (=GA 5: 35).

66 Ibid., 38 (51).

67 See Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles*, 144–9. Cf. the fragments of Heraclitus reproduced in no. 22 above, on which, in turn, Hölderlin inspired himself.

68 Cf. our previous remark on the difference between the "*a priori*" (*das Apriori*) and the "in-between" (*das Zwischen*) regarding the possibility of rethinking the notion of ground in non-metaphysical terms. The connection is indicated by Heidegger himself (*Contributions to Philosophy*, 13 [=GA 65: 13]).

69 Notice the subtitle of the *Beiträge*: *Vom Ereignis*, i.e. *from* the event as well as its opening remarks (ibid., 5 [3]).

70 Ibid., 13 (13).

71 That their respective terms need not be approached in a dichotomous manner is on the other hand obvious: think e.g. in how Spinoza, Schelling, Merleau-Ponty or Heidegger himself, to only mention a few names, have problematised some of those apparently insuperable oppositions (namely, God and world, matter and spirit, mind and body, being and beings, respectively).

72 As against the somewhat circular logic of today's identity politics, which, on behalf of an alleged willingness to erase whatever conventional dualisms tends more and more to invent new ones and to substitute opposition for convergence and recognition for distribution. See e.g. Dalgliesh, "Problematising the Political Theory of Identity Politics."

73 Gevorkyan and Segovia, "Paul and the Plea for Contingency in Contemporary Philosophy."

74 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 3–4.

anthropological thought – from Bateson and Lévi-Strauss onwards – has nothing do to with any set of mutually exclusive opposites; it actually resembles Heidegger's aforementioned take on the non-dichotomous "intimacy" of that which is more than one and less than two.[75]

3 Putting Heidegger's binary thought into anthropological perspective

Whether we realise it or not, our experience reports to us numberless dual phenomena – or, anyway, we happen to map them thus: above and below, in and out, in front of and behind, right and left, concave and convex, striated and smooth, absent and present, dark and bright, etc. "The movement of the universe," writes Leroi-Gourhan, "is not only rotary but also alternating and contrasting."[76] Compare this with Lévi-Strauss's famous remark on the binary logic of the "savage" – i.e. untamed – human *mens*: such logic, he stresses, is "like the least common denominator of all thought, a direct expression of the structure of the mind (and behind the mind, probably, the brain) and not an inert production of the action of the environment on an amorphous consciousness."[77]

After all, the development of life on Earth responds to binary choices and patterns: plants *and* animals (i.e. chemical vs mechanical food intake), radial *and* bilateral symmetry among the latter, invertebrates *and* vertebrates with locomotive *or* relational forelimbs, etc.[78] Hence, too, Leroi-Gourhan's assertion that all "reference systems" of "Paleolithic thought," as we find them displayed in what is often if improperly called Paleolithic "art," were "ultimately based on the alternation of opposites – day/night, heat/cold, fire/water, man/woman, and so on."[79] In his "Introduction" to the English edition of Leroi-Gourhan's *Gesture and Speech*, Randall White speaks, in turn, of the "basic binary oppositions" implicit in the "operational sequences" – which are always, he adds, "more-or-less subconscious," "unverbalized," and "unrecognized" – that guided the creation of earliest human "material culture," "social organization," and "cosmology."[80] Leroi-Gourhan talks of "binary complementarity"[81] and explains through it as well, among other things, spatial distributions,[82] social cooperation,[83] and the "dynamic equilibrium" between security and freedom.[84] On his part, Bateson views "schismogenesis" (whether complementary or symmetrical) as the standard process of differentiation resulting from cumulative interaction among human groups.[85] As for Lévi-Strauss, he prefers, instead, to speak of "permanent" or "dynamic disequilibrium"[86] so as to stress its

75 Cf. Wagner, *Coyote Anthropology*, 5–7; Viveiros de Castro, *Radical Dualism*.
76 Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, 334. Night *and* day, north *and* south, winter light *and* summer light, rainy season *and* dry season, coast *and* inland, highlands *and* lowlands, desert *and* forest, are some of its most immediately perceptive contrasts.
77 Cf. Lévi Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, 90. Cf. Wagner: "the reciprocity of perspectives is written into the constitution of the human species as its primal phenomenon – that is, it is not a purely mental or symbolic artifact, but an evolutionary achievement, like the upright posture or the lowered larynx. This is the principle of antitwinning […], the evolutionary fact that the generic human organism is modeled upon itself in two distinctive ways, each one countervening the other. Gender is twinned outward from the basic human form into two distinctive body types called 'male' and 'female,' whereas laterality, the 'sides' of the body or right/left coordinates, is twinned inward to meet at the body's longitudinal centerfold to form the single individual organism" (*The Logic of Invention*, 2).
78 Leroi-Gourhan, *Gesture and Speech*, 25–60.
79 Ibid., 395–6.
80 Ibid., xvii–xviii.
81 Ibid., 396.
82 Ibid., 335.
83 Ibid., 151–7.
84 Ibid., 338.
85 Bateson, *Naven*, 171–97.
86 Lévi-Strauss, *The Story of Lynx*, 63, 230–1, 235, 238–9.

general avoidance of inertia,[87] and finds binary logic at play in most forms of social organisation,[88] including totemic classifications,[89] in funeral and fertility *rites* like those which from Southern Africa, Western Australia, and South Australia reflect a bemusing regularity when it comes to the employment of binary chromatics (e.g. red/white, red/black, 0/white and black),[90] and in the widespread American twin-myths like those of lynx and coyote among the Nimiipuu and their neighbours.[91] Furthermore, Strathern and Viveiros de Castro show that the individuals in Melanesia, Amazonia, and elsewhere are also inherently binary beings, both because their constitutive "plural relations" are "first reconceptualized as dual" in terms of gender[92] and because they remain through their lifetime a composite "singularity of body *and* soul internally constituted by the self/other, consanguine/affine polarity."[93]

But if binary logic is a distinctive feature of extra-modern conceptual worlds, it should not be envisaged as a purely exotic dish. The comparative study of Greek and extra-modern thought is anything but a marginal field of study. Not only anthropologists like Lévi-Strauss, Clastres, Viveiros de Castro, and more recently Schrempp have ventured themselves into it, classicists like Detienne and Redfield have tried their luck in it too. Thus, while in his essay on the tragic qualities of the *Iliad*, Redfield makes extensive use of Lévi-Strauss's nature/culture divide,[94] Detienne applies Lévi-Strauss's *Mythologiques* to the examination of ancient-Greek mythology,[95] Clastres reformulates ethico-ontological Ache concepts with recourse to Heraclitus's philosophy,[96] Viveiros de Castro analyses the Arawete epos in light of the difference between Dionysiac omophagy and Orphic vegetarianism,[97] Schrempp scrutinises Maori cosmology with the help of Zeno's paradoxes,[98] and Lévi-Strauss himself discusses the similarities and differences between Amerindian, Greek, and Roman symbolic twinness.[99] None of this would be possible, though, if it were not for the fact that something like a "semantic space" of "meaningfully (dis)agreement," to borrow from Jeppe Sinding Jensen,[100] extends – as Montaigne suspected in the 16th century and various authors have variously noticed ever since[101] – between worlds that, in spite of their many differences, share the feature of being

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[87] Viveiros de Castro, *The Relative Native*, 119.

[88] Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, 132–63.

[89] Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism*, 89–90.

[90] Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, 64–5.

[91] Lévi-Strauss, *The Story of Lynx*, esp. 231–4.

[92] Strathern, *The Gender of the Gift*, 15.

[93] Viveiros de Castro, *The Relative Native*, 129.

[94] Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad*.

[95] Detienne, *The Greeks and Us*, 5, 21–2, 27–9, 34, 35–8, 58–9, 63, 72.

[96] Clastres, *Chronicle of the Guayaki Indians*, 30–41.

[97] Viveiros de Castro, *From the Enemy's Point of View*, 304–5.

[98] Schrempp, *Magical Arrows*.

[99] Lévi-Strauss, *The Story of Lynx*, 239–41.

[100] Jensen, *What is Religion?* 9–10.

[101] Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, 418–38, esp. 425, where he writes about the Tupinamba who had travelled to France and taken part, as French allies, in the Royal Entry Festival of Henri II in Rouen in 1550: "It irritates me that neither Lycurgus nor Plato had any knowledge of them, for it seems to me that what experience has taught us about those peoples surpasses not only all the descriptions with which poetry has beautifully painted the Age of Gold and all its ingenious fictions about Man's blessed early state, but also the very conceptions and yearnings of philosophy. They [...] could not even believe that societies of men could be maintained with so little artifice, so little in the way of human solder. I would tell Plato that those people have no trade of any kind, no acquaintance with writing, no knowledge of numbers, no terms for governor or political superior, no practice of subordination or of riches or poverty, no contracts, no inheritances, no divided estates, no occupation but leisure, no concern for kinship – except such as is common to them all – no clothing, no agriculture, no metals, no use of wine or corn. Among them you hear no words for treachery, lying, cheating, avarice, envy, backbiting or forgiveness. How remote from such perfection would Plato find that Republic which he thought up – 'viri a diis recentes' [men fresh from the gods]." See further Moderno, "Montaigne et le paradoxe de la barbarie." On how Montaigne's view – which would also be Rousseau's – was conveniently replaced in the 19th century by the economicist view – first launched by Adam Smith in his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* – that extra-moderns lived miserable lives, see Clastres, *Archaeology of Violence*, 246–7 as well as Sahlins's classic *Stone Age Economics*. On extra-modern social formations, Clastres, *Society Against the State*.

eccentric to the universalist logic of (first) Christianity and (then) modernity.[102] To the ears of the modern historian of philosophy, however, any proximity thereof sounds extravagant at best, given the widespread hypothesis regarding what is called within the discipline – under the auspices of an unconscious cultural darwinism – the "transition" from mythical (poetic) to abstract (philosophical and scientific) thought, or the "withdrawal" of myth (wherein extra-modern thought is taken to belong) before reason.[103] One would be inclined to invoke here against it Schelling's monumental philosophy of mythology,[104] or Lawrence Hatab's *Philosophy and Mythology*. But a glimpse at what Barry Sandywell calls Pre-Socratic "reflexivity"[105] should suffice to realise that Anaximander's and Heraclitus's fragments, not less than Parmenides's poem, breath an air which is not exactly that of, say, Carnap's *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* (*The Logical Structure of the World*).

Furthermore, Heidegger himself insists that Greece must not be reductively placed as a mere forerunner of modernity. His effort to approach the early Greek thinkers from their own conceptual angle, no matter how unfamiliar such angle may be now to us, is well known indeed.[106] But here we should like to call the reader's attention to something else, to with, that it was, thanks to what may be called Heraclitus's binary way of reasoning that Heidegger found in the early 1930s a way to respond to the very question that – as he would recall in 1969 – drew him into the study of philosophy: "If being is predicated in manifold meanings [as Aristotle wrote],[107] then what is its leading fundamental meaning? What does Being mean?"[108] Thus, it is drawing on Heraclitus DK B53 ("Strife is father to all, king of all: some, it sets out [ἔδειξε] as gods, others as men, and it makes freemen and slaves alike come forth [ἐποίησε]")[109] that Heidegger risks a first tentative response to this question (which Aristotle had identified with the question of philosophy in *Met*. 3.1, 1003a) in his second lecture course on Plato and the essence of truth (1933–1934). This fragment of Heraclitus, "which [gives] us insight to the *essence of Being*," writes Heidegger, "at the same time also gives us insight to the *essence of truth*."[110] For in it Heraclitus affirms that

> the essence of Being is *struggle* [...] [A] being comes into Being, in and through struggle, when it is set out ἔδειξε. Set out – into where? Into the *visibility* and *perceptibility* of things in general; but this means into *openness* [*Offenheit*], unconcealment, truth [...] so that beings stand in openness, that is, '*are*'.[111]

Therefore, the aorists ἔδειξε ("makes appear" in the sense of "sets out") and ἐποίησε ("makes" in the sense of "lets come forth") are the key elements in Heidegger's analysis of Heraclitus's fragment.

Let us be clear: our intent is not to present the Greeks as extra-moderns, or the extra-moderns as Greeks; that is to say, our purpose is not to equate them. We simply wish to underline that Heraclitus's thought displays binary thinking. Wagner saw it perfectly.[112] Unlike linear logic and Hegelian and Marxist dialectics, says Wagner, we have here "a tension or dialogue-like alternation between two [...] viewpoints that are simultaneously contradictory and supportive of each other," and thus too "a way of thinking [...] [that] operates by exploiting contradictions (or, as Lévi-Strauss would call them, 'oppositions') against a common ground of similarity, rather than by appealing to consistency against a common ground of differences."[113]

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102 On which see Gevorkyan and Segovia, "Paul and the Plea for Contingency in Contemporary Philosophy."

103 Detienne, *The Greeks and Us*, 26–8. See further Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*; surely there is no need to remind the reader about Cornford's intellectual indebtedness to biological *cum* social darwinism and his personal attachment to some of its representatives in early 20th-century England. On thought, meaning, and poetics, see Segovia, "Metaphor and the Analytic-Philosophy Cuisine."

104 Schelling, *Samtliche Werke*, vols. 11 (complete) and 12: 133–674.

105 Sandywell, *Logological Investigations*.

106 See, e.g. his courses and lectures on Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides.

107 Aristotle, *Met*. 7.1, 1028a: τὸ ὄν λεγεται πολλαχῶς ("being can be said in many ways").

108 Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, 74 (=GA 14: 93).

109 "Πόλεμος πάντων μὲν πατήρ ἐστι, πάντων δὲ βασιλεύς, καὶ τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς ἔδειξε τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους, τοὺς μὲν δούλους ἐποίησε τοὺς δὲ ἐλευθέρους" (our translation).

110 Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 92 (=GA 36/37: 117).

111 Ibid.

112 See once more Wagner, *Coyote Anthropology*, 5.

113 Wagner, *The Invention of Culture*, 52.

4 Re-tuning in and singing back to the earth's song

Perhaps, though, the most immediate, phenomenologically speaking, binary we, mortals are faced with – and one of the most meaningful ones for that matter – is the binary life|death. Mortals are those who are, while living, aware that they die. Because not all those who die are mortals; not even those who may present they are about to die, or, more precisely, that they are about to what we, mortals, call to die. Furthermore, only we, mortals, due to our (distinctively assumed) mortal-ness and to our (likewise distinctive) meditative-ness, are capable of dwelling, that is to say, of living poetically among the living knowing that we now are, but one day will no longer be, living among the living – and that all that live die. For, as Pindar says, "things need someone who chants them" and who thereby confers them being "so as not to lapse into oblivion."[114] Hence the final verses of Hölderlin's hymn *Remembrance*: "what remains is founded by the poets,"[115] to whose "care," writes Heidegger, the "being" of that which "is" is "entrusted," so as to "be secured against being carried away."[116] Hence too Hölderlin's reminder: "this you have all forgotten, that the first-fruits are not for mortals, that they belong to the gods,"[117] as singing to what perishes means to look at it *sub specie æternitatis*, i.e. from the point of view of the *thinkable* "immortality" that is *virtually* present in it.[118] Now, to offer the first fruits to the gods is, it can be argued, the same as to sing to all things by default before doing anything else with them, which, needless to say, makes it impossible to appropriate them in the first place; and to sing to them is, by the law of what Wagner calls "reciprocity of perspectives" and "figure-ground reversal,"[119] the same (only that viewed from the opposite end) as to hear their own song: their hope, so to speak, to be sheltered by and remembered through us. Thus, Rilke's verses, which Heidegger himself quotes:[120] "Earth, isn't it this your will: invisibly/to rise within us?" (invisibly means here: immaterially, or transformed into poetry).

Now, one of the problems with the modern *Ge-stell* is that it turns that dual articulation opaque and the earth's song inaudible. Heidegger puts it thus (in one of his courses on Heraclitus):

> We do not listen because we have ears: rather, we have and can have ears because we listen. However, we humans are only able to listen – for example, to the thunder of the heavens, to the rustling of the woods, to the flowing of a spring, to the tones of the harp, to the clattering of motors, and to the noise of the city – insofar we belong, or do not belong, to all of this. We have ears because we can listen in a hearkening way, and through such hearkening are allowed to listen to the song of the earth [*das Lied der Erde*], its shudders and shakes, a song that nevertheless remains untouched by the colossal noise that the human is now causing upon earth's battered surface.[121]

For, as Heidegger says elsewhere, by "positioning," "ordering," "requisitioning," and "conscripting" whatever there is, modern technology frames reality as a "standing reserve" (*Bestand*) in which all things are placed "at the ready" to be appropriated, investigated, classified, experimented with, manipulated,

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114 Snell, *The Discovery of the Mind*, 78.

115 Quoted in Heidegger, *Elucidations on Hölderlin's Poetry*, 58 (=GA 4: 41).

116 Ibid., 58-59 (=GA 4: 41).

117 Ibid., 55 (=GA 4: 37). The reminder opens as follows: "You *spoke* to the divinity, but this you have all forgotten," etc. (emphasis added). The subtle contrast that Hölderlin makes here between *speaking* to the gods and *offering* them the first fruits is indicative, we think, of the difference between Christianity, with its emphasis on an inner relation with a god that is taken to be a person and to whom no sacrifice is made, for it is him who sacrifices his own son, and the post-Christian "remembrance" or "rethinking" (*Andenken*) of the nature of the pre- and extra-Christian gods. Cf. Heidegger's straightforward rejection of the Christian god in his *Contributions to Philosophy*, 319 (=GA 65: 403).

118 Cf. Deleuze's distinction (in *What Is Philosophy?*, 164–173, 176, 178, 188, 193, 197, 229–30 no. 5) between the virtual "percepts" and "affects" that must be extracted from any actual or "lived perceptions" and "affections" in order to produce an enduring work of art in which the *being* of something is made to appear.

119 "The world as we know it is an entirely ergative creation, in which the active and the passive exchange roles, and in the act of exchanging roles account for the phenomenon we call 'perception.' Hence the [necessary] chiasmatic corollary to [Wittgenstein's] Proposition 2.1 [in the *Tractatus*: 'We picture facts to ourselves'], [i.e.] 'Facts picture us to themselves'" (Wagner, *The Logic of Invention*, 23).

120 In *Off the Beaten Track*, 239 (=GA 5: 319).

121 Heidegger, *Heraclitus*, 189 (=GA 55: 247).

modified, exchanged, destroyed, and replaced by something else when needed. A single example taken from Heidegger's second Bremen lecture will suffice to illustrate it:

> The hydroelectric plant is placed in the river. It imposes upon it for water pressure, which sets the turbines turning, the turning of which drives the machines, the gearing of which imposes upon the electrical current through which the long-distance power centers and their electrical grid are positioned for the conducting of electricity. The power station in the Rhine river, the dam, the turbines, the generators, the switchboards, the electrical grid – all this and more is there only insofar as it stands in place and at the ready, not in order to presence, but to be positioned [...]. [Hence it can said that] [t]he hydroelectric plant is not built in the Rhine river, but rather the river is built into the power plant and is what it is there due to the power plant's essence.[122]

How, then, can one re-tune in and sing back to the earth's song (which is a poetic metaphor in the same way that the Fourfold is a conceptual metaphor)? And what role does it play in it what Hölderlin writes, and Heidegger quotes, about the "first fruits" and the "gods," behind which it is not difficult to sense, in turn, the presence of Heraclitus's chiasmatic reasoning in DK B62: "Immortal mortals, mortal immortals [...]" Whatever its role – allow us to begin with this second question – one thing should be clear by now: the "immortal," here, cannot be thought in typically Christian terms, i.e. as that which literally escapes death, since what lasts poetically does it *despite* dying; let alone can it be identified with a supernatural being, or person, capable of bestowing immortality at will. Thought in Greek manner, the "immortals," i.e. the "gods," are the names we give (a) to the ever-living forces that push things to shine forth into unhidden-ness (e.g. Poseidon, or the untamed force of the sea whose waves splash against the cliff thus making life's strength patent and the temple built on the rocks appear, by contrast, in its welcoming quietness) and (b) to the ways we have of sheltering what thus shines forth within our heart (e.g. Artemis, or the kindness of heart one feels, say, before a fleeting deer in the midst of the forest).[123]

Heidegger himself was so careful as to remark that if there is a chance for us to rethink the gods it cannot be against the backdrop of the Christian God.[124] As Andrew Mitchell remarks, for Heidegger – as can be deduced e.g. from *The Letter on Humanism*[125] – "[t]he truth of being allows for, or [...] 'enables,' the holy, which allows for (enables) godhood, which in turn allows for (enables) the God(s)."[126] Yet "whatever appears in the holy," Mitchell goes on to say, "does so as hale – for otherwise it could not appear."[127] In turn, the milieu of the holy is the "godhood," and, as Heidegger himself states in his Bremen lectures and elsewhere, the gods are its "messengers."[128] This visibly matches our description above, according to which divine is what shines forth. Yet only very few contemporary authors seem ready to accept Heidegger's challenge to rethink the gods afresh – or willing to do so. Moreover, it is possible to say that this, indeed, is a pending subject in today's Heidegger scholarship. Among those, nonetheless, who have taken the risk to explore it, we would like to mention Richard Polt, Richard Rojcewicz, and Susanne Claxton, who, in contrast to Duane Armitage's view of Heidegger as a "theist,"[129] and to David Crownfield's interpretation of the "otherness" characteristic of Heidegger's "last god" in light of Kierkegaard's and Barth's Christian

122 Heidegger, *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, 27–8 (=GA 79: 28–9).

123 On the Greek gods see Otto, *Theophanie*.

124 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, 319 (=GA 65: 403). Compare in this sense Walter Otto's contention (in *Theophanie*) that the Greeks did not "believe" in their gods; Károly Kerényi's remark (in "Theos und Mythos") that, before the arrival of Christianity, the term θεός, which we habitually translate as "god," was mostly used in Greece as an exclamation before the apparition (or shining forth) of something; Feyerabend's claim (in *Three Dialogues on Knowledge*, 111) that the Greek gods were "part of the phenomenal world;" and Heidegger's own comments (in *Heraclitus*, 71) on Heraclitus's notion of "ever-living" (ἀείζωον, in DK B53) in connection to other similar terms in Homer and Pindar, all of which he proposes to interpret in evenemential terms.

125 Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 239–76 (=GA 9: 313–64).

126 Mitchell, *The Fourfold*, 192.

127 Ibid., 199.

128 Heidegger, *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, 16 (=GA 79: 17); *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 147 (=GA 7: 151).

129 Armmitage, *Heidegger and the Death of God*, 83.

notion of "divine otherness,"[130] opportunely notice that, in order to understand, and to move along with, Heidegger's non-theistic thinking,[131] it is necessary to think otherwise.

Hence Polt, upon reflecting on Heidegger statement that "the gods *are not*,"[132] writes:

> we will risk an illustration. A tribe celebrates the New Year with a day of dancing and feasting; on this day, they plant a tree in the center of their village and sacrifice a goat at the base of the tree. If we think of gods as beings, we will ask whether or how they are present in this ritual, and how the participants in the ritual represent them. But if the gods are really at work here, they may be at work not as beings at all, but as sources of the *import* of beings: the day and the sacrifice, the tree and the goat, make sense in terms of the gods. The meaning of things is permeated by the gods; the sacrifice does not reveal any god as a being, but the gods allow the sacrifice to reveal *itself,* to make a difference to this tribe.[133]

This puts Heidegger thinking in dialogue with indigenous thought – a dialogue to whose relevance and suitability we shall return in short. One could object that, for Heidegger, the gods are not as determinate as they are for extra-modern peoples. For Heidegger explicitly states that, after the "death of God," any approach to the gods must refrain from any "calculative determination."[134] Hence, it could be argued, any poly-theism, like any "mono-theism," "pan-theism," and "a-theism" for that matter, in short any "theism" must, as Heidegger himself stresses, "wither away."[135] Yet, at the same time, Heidegger claims that for "earth and world to meet anew" the "gods" that once "were" must return "transformed," and that it is in the "intimation" of their renewed advent that "the last god" *essentially* occurs[136] – such "last god" being for Heidegger less a final figure, i.e. an "end" proper, than the inception of an "other beginning" ("the other beginning of the immeasurable possibilities of our history").[137] Therefore, it is fair to say that if, despite their non-full coincidence, some relation, nonetheless, must exist between our old (read: pre-Christian) and our new (read: post-Christian) gods – which cannot coincide due to our experience of the "death" of a(ny) metaphysically construed "God"[138] – some relation must also exist then between the old (extra-Christian) gods of the extra-moderns – who have not experienced any "death of God" because they did not have any "God" like that which has died in the West – and any new gods we ourselves may want to fancy, even if they will never fully coincide either. For, unlike the metaphysically construed God whose "death" we have experienced, none of those gods can be said to respond to the prerogatives of a "calculative" reason. They are phenomenologically based instead – i.e. faithful to the *auto-poietic* shining forth of the earth, or φύσις: the fertile earth who is sometimes happy (in the spring and the summer) and sometimes sad (in the fall and the winter), among the Greek; or the "polyglot" forest whose songs announce the earth's seasonal changes, its abundance, and its perils, among the Yanomami.[139]

On his part, Rojcewicz speaks of the "look of Being [...] that requires a disclosive looking on the part of humans"[140] and then goes on to underline that "we are moving [here] in the realm of a thought that has been turned back to a premetaphysical outlook, [...] [as it] accords the priority not to the human grasping look but to the 'look of Being'" – a thought that, moreover, "takes the gods to be the prime movers in the disclosure of [the] truth [of Being],"[141] since, "[f]or Heidegger, the gods are, primarily, the looking ones;

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130 Crownfield, "The Last God," 218.

131 Cf. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy* (§256), 325–6 (=GA 65: 411).

132 Ibid., 192, 346 (emphasis added).

133 Polt, *The Emergency of Being*, 212.

134 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy* (§256), 325–6 (=GA 65: 411).

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid., 324–5 (409–10) (emphasis original).

137 Ibid., 326 (411). On Heidegger's "last god" in the *Beiträge* and the famous *Der Spiegel* interview of September 23, 1966/1976, see further Gevorkyan and Segovia, "El último destello de φύσις."

138 Notice Heidegger's disclaimer apropos the "last god:" "The god wholly other than past ones and especially other than the Christian one" (ibid., 319 [403]).

139 Albert, "The Polyglot Forest."

140 Rojcewicz, *The Gods and Technology*, 55–6.

141 Ibid., 90.

θεοί are θεάοντες ([...] 'ones who look')."[142] Therefore, he concludes, "if [...] [another] epoch in the history of Being dawns, if there comes to pass another beginning, [...] if the gods become again what they are supposed to be, namely, lookers," we might also be capable of fulfilling our *role* as those who "look after" them, even if, "(on the whole) people today do not yet experience themselves as needed to look after"[143] anything. We find this a very fine way of interpreting Heidegger's contention regarding our need to be "*at the disposal of the gods.*"[144]

Lastly, Claxton underlines that

> in attempting to think about the divinities, to speculate upon the nature of the reality that we point to in speaking of them, it is best to conceive of them [...] as *affective aspects of being* [...] that may be known by various names, [...] such as courage, passion, wisdom, mercy, fear, love, strife, and so on.[145]

In this way, she emphasises, "their operation within the *Fourfold*"[146] can be properly understood, in the sense that "[o]nly through [us] mortals" *qua* potential namers of being's affective aspects "do the divinities have their share of earth and sky."[147]

Notice that, depending on the lens through which they happen to be approached, the gods may appear as the ever-living forces that make things shine forth into unhidden-ness (as we have suggested); as the addressees of the virtual ever-livingness of that which shines forth, when that which shines forth is sung and remembered (as we have also suggested); as the affective (Claxton) and axiological (Polt) aspects of being, or, put otherwise, as the ways in which we affectively and evaluatively shelter that which shines forth (as we have said too); and as the looking ones who await our response (Rojcewicz). These various interpretations of what the gods are prove complementary, rather than alternative, to one another. Furthermore, insofar as they are all centred on that which shines forth in auto-poietic terms, instead of being framed and put at the ready by the modern *Ge-stell*, they prove that the question of the gods is essential for recovering the earth's song.

Hence in a recent intervention of his at the Heidegger Circle Forum,[148] Richard Polt contends that "openness to 'the gods' is probably crucial if we are to have hope that the *Ge-stell* will not have the last word in the Anthropocene."[149] He cast doubts, though, on the possibility, and the desirability, of reaching some kind of "unanimity" thereof and the implications that result from its absence:

> the only way to create large-scale religious unanimity [would be] through some sort of Inquisition or through the meeting of fraud and foolishness. A more genuine "return of the gods" for our time would have to take (and does take) many forms, depending on what individuals and communities are ready for: green Evangelicalism, neo-Shintoism, modern Sufism, Eco-Buddhism, etc. But of course, these movements have limited influence and are mutually incompatible. So there is an understandable tendency to look past them and unite people through lower considerations: what do we all want? What do we all need? And what is the most efficient way to get these things? [Yet] [w]hen these are the only questions we ask, [...] we are back in the grip of the *Ge-stell*.[150]

Our recourse to comparative anthropology aims precisely at responding to this problem. For, as we have suggested, it is possible to compare different modalities of poetising the earth in a manner respectful to its shining forth. Needless to say, by stating this we attempt less to furnishing ideas that may help different people come together than to favour cross-examination as a precondition for mutual learning.

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142 Ibid., 233 no. 3.

143 Ibid., 176.

144 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy* (§5), 16 (=GA 65: 18).

145 Claxton, *Heidegger's Gods* 59 (emphasis original).

146 Ibid., 59.

147 Ibid., 61.

148 The Heidegger Circle is a US-based academic community for the study of Heidegger's work and thought, similar to but at the same time different and independent from the Martin Heidegger Society in Europe.

149 https://heidegger-circle.org/forums/topic/deterritorialising-heidegger/, #2.

150 Ibid.

We are therefore sympathetic to Nicholas Davey's "poetic universals, which though by no means identical across all historical communities are sufficiently general to become the basis for comparison and consideration."[151] We are also sympathetic, then, to Alejandro Vallega's solicitation of a "plural ontology."[152] In fact, *ontologies* in the plural may well just be the word we need, as it is no longer possible to view reality as a single world with many interpretations diverging from one another. This, indeed, is the presupposition that the so-called "ontological turn" in anthropology has managed to subvert over the past decades. As Paolo Heywood underlines, the latter "continues a long tradition in anthropology of aiming to take difference seriously and understand it as best we can on its own terms."[153] Unlike modern relativists, proponents of the ontological turn sustain that there is not one reality and many cultural interpretations of it, but as many realities as cultural views on what, consequently, cannot be described anymore as a universe but as a pluriverse. For, as Wagner highlighted as early as 1967, if

> projection [...] is the means by which men [...] extend the realm of the 'known' by applying the range of their symbolization to the data and impressions of the 'unknown' [...] the practice of extending the realm of the 'known' by applying one's symbolizations to the 'unknown' can easily become a means of finding what one wants to find.[154]

In this respect, "[t]he so-called ontological turn," writes Viveiros de Castro, "is nothing more than a change in the disciplinary language-game that forbids, by declaring it an 'illegal move,' such an analytical facility from the anthropologist's part;"[155] for the practice of anthropology, and then too anthropology as a practice (which can never be merely descriptive but is always theoretical for that very reason), implies "sticking one's neck out through the looking-glass of ontological difference."[156] Otherwise, we would be condemned to "only see *ourselves*."[157]

Still, if cultural cross-examination is not just possible but can also be rigorous it is because there are ways to *bridge* difference [...] *without* suppressing it. Otherwise, anthropology would no longer be a practicable practice. Comparison has, of course, its limits, since experiences and their corresponding ontologies can be deemed similar at most; as Lévi-Strauss has it, "resemblance has no reality in itself; it is only a particular instance of difference, that in which difference tends toward zero."[158] But then again comparison, and translation, are not necessarily a sham. Mario Blaser is right when he says that "[t]ranslation as controlled equivocation is premised on the counterintuitive notion that what needs to be kept in the foreground when translating two different terms is, precisely, their difference,"[159] and that this, in fact, is the only way to pay justice to difference without collapsing the possibility of translation and *vice versa*. But we would like to add that this, in turn, implies acknowledging, methodologically speaking, the existence, and the viability, of a category that has to fall, of necessity, between sameness *and* otherness, unity *and* multiplicity. For, if the world were a collection of copies of a number of paradigmatic identities (i.e. pure sameness), comparison and translation would be superfluous; if it were a collection of indiscernible differences (i.e. pure otherness), comparison and translation would be impossible instead. It is here, we claim, that the notion of *variation* proves crucial to deal with what is simultaneously one and multiple without sacrificing its two differing, yet indissociable, qualities (one, multiple).

We have already examined three *variations* of the Fourfold among the Darkhad, the Khorchin, and the Pawnee. Their respective ontologies (what things are) and cosmologies (how do they relate to one another)

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151 Davey, "Towards a Community of the Plural," 95.

152 Vallega, "Philosophy in the Plural," 125.

153 Heywood, "Ontological Turn." See further Holbraad and Pedersen, *The Ontological Turn*, as well as Charbonier et al.'s collective volume, *Comparative Metaphysics*.

154 Wagner, *The Curse of Souw*, xviii–xix.

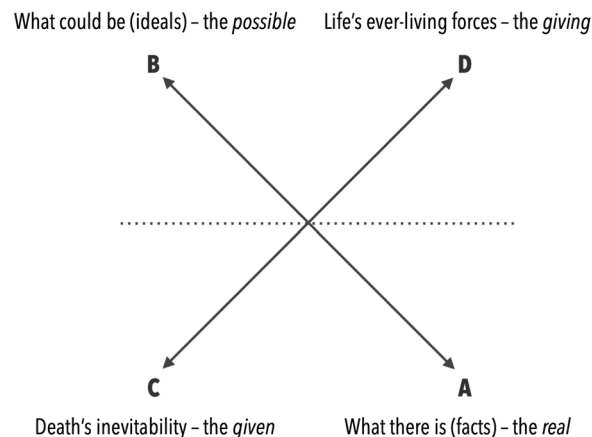**155** Viveiros de Castro, "Who Is Afraid of the Ontological Wolf?"

156 Ibid.

157 Ibid.

158 Lévi-Strauss, *The Naked Man*, 38.

159 Blaser, "Is Another Cosmopolitics Possible?" 565. The expression "controlled equivocation" is Viveiros de Castro's in "Perspectival Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Equivocation."

differ considerably. Yet it is possible to interpret them, as we have argued, as being variously *translucent* to the interplay of earth, sky, mortals, and immortals. It is Heidegger's *Fourfold* in particular then, not Heidegger's philosophy in general, that we deem *compatible* with the plural ontologies that contemporary ethnography informs us about. On the other hand, this is not the first time in which Heidegger's thought and anthropology are brought together. James Weiner did it about a decade ago.[160] Yet our way of melding them differs from Weiner's in that he applies Heidegger's phenomenology to anthropology to show that humans are always in the world "interpretationally," i.e. "bring[ing] closure and [...] meaning to the[ir] open-ended traffic [...] with other beings,"[161] while we, instead, want to underscore the manner in which Heidegger's thought may teach us something about the *structure* of meaning as it can be interpreted and diagrammed. For, if Viveiros de Castro is right in that "[d]efining an *image* of savage thought with the help of Kant, Heidegger, or Wittgenstein is entirely possible,"[162] it is then possible to ask how that "image" may look like and whether Heidegger's Fourfold may be seen as a suitable candidate thereof. To be sure, there are other aspects of Heidegger's thought that could likewise benefit from a cross comparison with indigenous conceptual worlds, e.g. Heidegger's view on the poetic essence and ontologically disclosive qualities of language, his definition of man as the shepherd of being, and his poetics of dwelling. Yanomami *hereamuu* speeches[163] and Walrpiri ethical-environmental practices[164] could be fruitfully compared to these, yet given the length of this article it seems reasonable to leave such comparison for another occasion. Suffice it to say then that, in its quality as a schematic conceptual metaphor, and due to its versatility, the Fourfold serves that purpose better than any other aspect of Heidegger's philosophy. Furthermore, it tells us something about the *form* in which the earth comes to be worlded independently from its *content*, i.e. independently from how the earth may be specifically worlded in each case: by bringing together in their *mirroring reciprocity*, as we have formerly explained, life, death, what there is, and what could be – the *giving*, the *given*, the *real*, and the *possible*.

What could be (ideals) – the *possible*   Life's ever-living forces – the *giving*

B   D

C   A

Death's inevitability – the *given*   What there is (facts) – the *real*

5 Conclusion

We should like to put an end to this essay by calling the reader's attention to three interrelated points.

The first point is the prominence gained by the notion of "worlding" in the philosophical debate over the past few years, against the backdrop of the ecological devastation brought about by the Anthropocene.

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160 Weiner, *Tree Leaf Talk*.

161 Ibid., 11.

162 Viveiros de Castro, *Cannibal Metaphysics*, 92 (emphasis added).

163 On which see Kopenawa and Albert, *The Falling Sky*, 299, 302, 304–5.

164 On which see Poirier's in *A World of Relationships*; Glowczewski, *Du rêve à la loi chez les aborigènes*, and in English, by the same author, *Desert Dreamers*.

Thus, for example, Donna Haraway emphasises "sympoiesis" as conceptual catalyst for the exercise of other sensitive forms of relationality in a "damaged planet."[165] This entails, as Elizabeth Povinelli remarks, challenging the "arrangements" of "Life" and "Non-Life" on which the late-liberal power/knowledge regime stands as a necessary condition for exploring what she calls the "otherwise."[166] Lastly, Hilan Bensusan has recently made the point that restoring life back to reality instead of subjecting it to our own utility amounts not only to extend life's protagonism but also to re-introduce the "political" in the sphere of the so-called "natural."[167] We mention this because re-tuning in and singing back to the earth's song should not be seen as a bucolic motto. It would be important, we think, to re-position Heidegger's thinking of being *vis-à-vis* these and other similar theoretical initiatives, so as to encourage new problem-oriented rather than scholastic ways of engaging today with Heidegger's thought.[168]

Our proposal should be clear then and by mentioning it we move on to our second point: in lieu of adding to the "aporeticism"[169] and the "neo-existentialism"[170] we feel to be predominant in today's Heidegger scholarship, we suggest that it is possible and desirable (in order to overcome once and for all the temptation to make of being a new *deus absconditus* and of the human a new *fallen* creature) to place Heidegger's philosophy – in particular his ruminations on the earth's song and the Fourfold as poetic and conceptual metaphors of being *qua* φύσις[171] – in dialogue with contemporary anthropology.

Third, even if we fully agree with Reiner Schürmann's contention that Heidegger forces one to opt between (a) the thinking of φύσις understood as the spontaneous "bringing forth" of "that which emerges out of itself" and (b) any meta-physical (or pointing-beyond-φύσις) "*pros hen* economy" of thought folded around a particular governing "principle" or ἀρχή (e.g. "the suprasensory World, the Ideas, God, the moral Law, the authority of Reason, Progress, the Happiness of the greatest number, Culture, Civilization," etc.) which may frame, order, and thus constrain φύσις's emergence,[172] still we do not see that to avoid such (metaphysical) drift all "principles" ought to "wither away" from thought[173] – and thought unfold itself, as it were, around an "an-archic"[174] "*Abgrund*."[175] For in §242 of the *Beiträge* Heidegger states quite clearly that he takes the *Abgrund* to be nothing less but also nothing more than (i) "the originary unity of space and time" (in its eventuating and eliciting ontological role, one may add)[176] and (ii) "the originary essential occurrence [i.e. the 'opening,' due to that role][177] *of* [any possible] ground [*Grund*]."[178] Schürmann is right, then, when he says that it is at the "thresholds between [cultural] epochs" that the *Abgrund* can be perceived as such,[179] as it is only then that space and time allow for new configurations of being and new constellations of meaning to take shape by dissolving that which is constituted (the real, the given)

165 See Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*; and now too Tsing et al. (eds.), *Arts of Living on a Damage Planet*.

166 See Povinelli, *Geontologies*; but also Escobar, *Designs for the Pluriverse*, whose assessment of indigenous practices of "worlding" and of the social–political premises needed for them to have a chance to develop we find inspiring in this context.

167 See Bensusan, *Linhas de animismo futuro*. Cf. Segovia, "El nuevo animismo."

168 We intend to further develop this argument in a forthcoming monograph provisionally titled *Dionysus and Apollo in the Anthropocene: A Post-Heideggerian Proposal*.

169 Being must remain "indeterminable" and "indecidable," lest it be "forced into the *Gestell* of a [cognitive] contract" and its "gift" be turned into "exchange" (Haas, "The Ambiguity of Being," 18).

170 The "human being" is a "catastrophe" due not only to its promptness to "fallenness" and "inauthenticity" but also to the fact that "belongingness to Being" entails "unhomeliness" and inevitably ends in "tragedy" (Campbell, "The Catastrophic Essence of the Human Being in Heidegger's Readings of *Antigone*," 85, 96).

171 An identification which only once (in his *Black Notebooks*) seems Heidegger willing to supersede (see Heidegger, *GA 94*, 241).

172 Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting*, 88.

173 Ibid., 11.

174 Ibid., 37.

175 Ibid., 318 no. 17.

176 Cf. Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, 14 (=GA 14: 18–9). Notice too what we have earlier said about the formula found in §5 of the *Beiträge* regarding the "temporal-spatial simultaneity [*Gleichzeitigkeit*] for beyng and beings."

177 Ibid.

178 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, 299 (emphasis added) (=GA 65: 379).

179 Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting*, 37.

into a new constituent (emergent) process (open as such to the action of the giving within the horizon of the possible) – call it, once more, the Fourfold, which consequently works neither as an *Abrund* nor as a *Grund* but as the conceptual metaphor of their *joint dynamics*. But acknowledging this cannot then be the same as to dispense with any ground, for there is no world in the lack of ground or ἀρχή (although it would be better perhaps to speak of ἀρχαί in the plural); just like *mutatis mutandis* one cannot recuse the original, pre-Aristotelian, meaning of the term ἀρχή ("opening") because of its Aristotelian connotations (that which rules and "dominates"), as Schürmann proposes despite noticing the difference between both.[180] Acknowledging that the opening is always above and beyond the opened – how could it be otherwise? – demands, instead, not to close – which is what *foundationalisms* and *fundamentalisms* do – the oft-diverging possibilities that every single opening entails, including those that lead to eventual *disruption*. But this, precisely, is what Wagner patiently and fruitfully studied among the Usen Barok, for whom, he writes, "that which enables human capability [e.g. to build some form of social order order and tests its limits [...] also stands outside of it," for which reason "it cannot [...] amount, despite Durkheim's assertions to the contrary, to society's representation of itself"[181]: in other words, for the Usen Barok being and meaning *qua* events remain an Enigma,[182] so that in their case Dionysus's *Abgrund* overturns Apollo's *Grund*. Yet they – not less than the Greeks – affirm the two gods, since, to put it the other way round, for them that which stands outside of any human order, and tests its limits, enables any human order, as well – call it, once more, *reciprocity of perspectives*.

With all these, then, we intend to "deterritorialise" Heidegger, i.e. to re-position Heidegger's thought in a theoretical context open to, but not limited by, Heidegger's own concerns, in order, first, to continue thinking with Heidegger on problems that are worth considering as such from *other* possible angles as well; and in order, second, to avoid any dogmatic "confinement" of Heidegger's thinking; for to think with Heidegger should not only mean – we believe – to be able to discuss what Heidegger himself wrote and thought, but also, and more importantly perhaps, to go on thinking beyond its limits – or to venture oneself into the bush beyond Heidegger's own village, to use an ethnographic metaphor that invites to methodological caution, as to view the bush as the outside of the village is just one among other not less interesting possibilities, including that of the Mekeo, who view the village as the outside of the bush[183] – i.e. any philosophical enclosure, one may freely infer, as belonging to the *limes* of a theoretical katzenjammer.

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180 Ibid., 97. For a criticism of the post-Aristotelian use of the term ἀρχή and its assimilation to *imperium*, see Gevorkyan and Segovia, "Paul and the Plea for Contingency in Contemporary Philosophy;" we provide therein extensive additional reasons for the rejection of any anarchism in the domain of theory.

181 Wagner, *Asiwinarong*, xiv.

182 Cf. ibid., xi, xiii.

183 See further Mosko, *Quadripartite Structures*.

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