

HEIDEGGER'S THINKING OF EARTH IN "THE ORIGIN OF THE WORK OF
ART": THE SELF-WITHDRAWAL OF BEING AND THE OTHER BEGINNING

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis aims to explicate the claim that in Heidegger's thinking *technē* as art emerges as capable of disclosing the fundamental movement of being, namely self-withdrawal, through a certain elaboration of earth. To this end it will be argued that the elaboration of earth in the artwork is what makes it possible for art to aid in the process of the overcoming of Western metaphysics. In connection with this I will attempt to show how *technē* has a determinant role in the course of Western metaphysics, which starts with Greek thinking and culminates in the age of modern technology. Therefore the issue of *technē* in Heidegger's thinking emerges as the basic axis of this thesis. Thus two of Heidegger's most influential texts, namely "The Origin of the Work of Art" (1936) and "The Question Concerning Technology" (1953) will be the primary sources for this thesis

Keywords: *technē*, art, *Ge-stell*, history of being, other beginning.

ÖZ

“SANAT ESERİNİN KÖKENİ”NDE HEIDEGGER’IN YERYÜZÜ DÜŞÜNCESİ: VARLIĞIN KENDİ-GERİYEÇEKİMİ VE ÖTEKİ BAŞLANGIÇ

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Bu tezin amacı, Heidegger’in düşüncesinde, sanat olarak *tehnē*nin, yeryüzünü (earth) belirli bir elaborasyonu ile varlığın esas devinimi olan kendi-geriyeçekimini açığa vurmaya muktedir olarak ortaya çıktığı iddiasını serimlemektir. Bu amaç ile, yeryüzünün bu biçimde ortaya konmasının sanatın batı metafiziğinin aşılması sürecine katkıda bulunmasını mümkün kıldığı tartışılacaktır. Bu doğrultuda, *tekne*’nin Batı metafiziğinin Yunan düşüncesinden başlayarak modern teknoloji çağında neticelenen süreci içerisinde belirleyici bir rolü olduğu gösterilmeye çalışılacaktır. Dolayısı ile bu tezin temel izleği Heidegger’in düşüncesindeki *tekne* meselesi olarak belirlemektedir. Bu sebepten ötürü Heidegger’in “Sanat Eserinin Kökeni” (1936) ve “Teknik Sorusu Üzerine” (1953) başlıklı iki önemli metni bu tezin ana kaynaklarını oluşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *tekne*, sanat, *Ge-stell*, varlık tarihi, öteki başlangıç.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AM** Harries, Karsten, *Art Matters: A Critical Commentary on Heidegger's "The Origin of the Work of Art"*. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- BA** Hayes, Josh Michael, "Being-affected: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Pathology of Truth", in Daniel Dahlstrom (ed.), *Interpreting Heidegger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- DA** Brogan, Walter "Double Archē: Heidegger's Reading of Aristotle's Kinetic Ontology", *Angelaki* vol. II: 3, 2006; 85-92.
- DH** Caputo, John "Demythologizing Heidegger: *Alētheia* and the History of Being", *Review of Metaphysics*, vol 41:3, 1988; 519-46.
- E** Vallega-Neu, Daniela, "Ereignis: The Event of Appropriation", in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.
- ECP** Heidegger, Martin, "On the Essence of Truth", in William McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- EP** Heidegger, Martin, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking", in David F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.
- ET** Heidegger, Martin, "On the Essence of Truth", in William McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- FS** Heidegger, Martin, *Four Seminars*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.
- GA 5** Heidegger, Martin, *Holzwege, Gesamtausgabe 5*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1977.
- GA 7** Heidegger, Martin, *Vorträge und Aufsätze, Gesamtausgabe 7*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2000.
- GA 9** Heidegger Martin, *Wegmarken, Gesamtausgabe 9*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976.
- GE** Ruin, Hans "Ge-stell: Enframing as the Essence of Technology", in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.

- GT** Rojcewicz, Richard, *The Gods and Technology: A Reading of Heidegger*. Albany: SUNY, 2006.
- H** Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time*. New York: Harper and Row, 2008.
- HA** Brogan, Walter, *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2005.
- HAW** Sinclair, Mark, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art: Poiesis in Being*. London: Palgrave, 2006.
- HB** Warnek, Peter, “The History of Being”, in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.
- HH** Dahlstrom, Daniel, “Being at the Beginning: Heidegger’s Interpretation of Heraclitus”, in Daniel Dahlstrom (ed.), *Interpreting Heidegger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- HP** Fried, Gregory, *Heidegger’s Polemos: From Being to Politics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.
- ID** Heidegger, Martin, *Identity and Difference*. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.
- IHS** Heidegger, Martin, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle: Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation”, *Man and World*, vol. 25, 1992; 355-393.
- LG** Haar, Michel, “Limits and Grounds of History: The Nonhistorical”, *Epochē*, vol. 1, 1993; 1-11.
- LT** De Boer, Karin, *Thinking in the Light of Time: Heidegger’s Encounter with Hegel*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2000.
- M** Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.
- NE** Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- NH** De Beistegui, Miguel, *The New Heidegger*. London: Continuum, 2005.
- OWA** Heidegger, Martin, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking”, in David F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.
- P** Aristotle, *Physics*, in J. Barnes (ed.), *Complete Works of Aristotle*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.

- PH** Figal, Günter, “Phenomenology: Heidegger after Husserl and the Greeks”, in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.
- PT** Brogan, Walter, “The Intractable Interrelationship of *Physis* and *Techne*”, in Drew A. Hyland and John Panteleimon Manoussakis (eds.), *Heidegger and the Greeks: Interpretive Essays*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.
- QCT** Heidegger, Martin, “The Question Concerning Technology”, in David F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.
- QL** Bernasconi, Robert, *The Question of Language in Heidegger’s History of Being*. New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1985.
- SE** Haar, Michel, *The Song of the Earth: Heidegger and the Grounds of the History of Being*. Indiana University Press.
- T** Heidegger, Martin, “The Turning”, in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. New York: Harper & Row Publishing, 1977.
- TB** Heidegger, Martin, “Time and Being” in *On Time and Being*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- WWA** Rehberg, Andrea, “The World and the Work of Art”, *Epochē*, vol. 14, Issue 1, 2009; 131-42.
- ZS** Heidegger, Martin, *Zur Sache des Denkens*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1988.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis aims to explicate the claim that in Heidegger's thinking, *technē* as art emerges as capable of disclosing the fundamental movement of being, namely self-withdrawal, through a certain elaboration of earth. To this end it will be argued that the elaboration of earth in the artwork is what makes it possible for art to aid in the process of the overcoming of metaphysics¹. Therefore the issue of *technē* in Heidegger's thinking emerges as the basic axis of this thesis. Thus two of Heidegger's most influential texts, namely "The Origin of the Work of Art"² (1936) and "The Question Concerning Technology"³ (1953) will be the primary sources for this thesis. These texts deal with two different senses of *technē*, the former with *technē* as art and the latter with *technē* as manufacturing or producing.

Furthermore, I think that these two texts offer an interpretation that can help us to form a coherent account of the critical place of *technē* in the history of Western metaphysics, which starts with the inaugural thinking of the ancient Greeks and culminates in what Heidegger calls *Ge-stell*. It will be argued that for Heidegger *technē* constitutes Western metaphysics as a whole in its singularity. Therefore one of the assumptions of this thesis is that to enter into Heidegger's thought by concentrating on the issue of *technē* would be fruitful not only for comprehending his understanding of modern technology and of art in their relation to Heidegger's entire *oeuvre*, but also to grasp his understanding of Western metaphysics. This in turn will enable us to comprehend Heidegger's understanding of the other beginning and how it differs from the first beginning in ancient Greek thought and from its advancement

¹ How this overcoming is understood will be briefly described below in this chapter.

² Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", in David F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008. Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege, Gesamtausgabe 5*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1977.

³ Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" in David F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008. Martin Heidegger, *Vorträge und Aufsätze, Gesamtausgabe 7*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2000.

throughout history. Moreover, in order to grasp how being is a fundamental movement of self-withdrawal, Heidegger's understanding of the history of being also has to be taken into account. Furthermore, it must be recalled that the problematic of the other beginning is intimately related to Heidegger's understanding of *Ereignis*, i.e., the event of appropriation. Thus Heidegger's thinking of *Ereignis* in relation to his understanding of the history of being must also be examined in order to have a proper sense of the other beginning so that the role of art and the significance of earth with respect to the other beginning can properly be shown.

To accomplish these aims of this thesis, in the second chapter I will start by showing how earth can be interpreted as an articulation of the self-withholding of being. To do so I will first try to show how Heidegger's thinking of earth depends on his appropriative interpretation of Aristotle's conceptualization of *phusis*. Subsequently it will be shown that earth refers to what Heidegger calls "the hidden essence" of Aristotle's conception of *phusis*, namely *sterēsis*, i.e., lack, privation ("On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I"⁴ 227). After this it will also be demonstrated how Western metaphysics emerges as a movement of presentification on the basis of a certain technical understanding of being. Consequently, in connection with the relation between earth and *sterēsis*, earth will be interpreted as resistance. More specifically, it will be taken as resistance to the metaphysical movement of presentification and making-available.

As already indicated Heidegger's understanding of the history of being will also be discussed in order to explain that, in his conception of it, the fundamental movement in the history of being is self-withholding. The third chapter will serve this purpose. In the first section of this chapter an account of Heidegger's thinking of *Ereignis* in relation to this fundamental movement in the history of being will be given, based on his text "Time and Being"⁵ (1962). Following from this a certain continuity in the history of Western metaphysics will be investigated with regard to this self-withholding of being and its concealment throughout the history of

⁴ Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις in Aristotle's *Physics* B, I", in William McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

⁵ Martin Heidegger, "Time and Being" in *On Time and Being*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002. Martin Heidegger, *Zur Sache des Denkens*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1988.

metaphysics. In the second section it will also be shown how *Ge-stell* constitutes the completion of metaphysics in relation to the analyses that were carried out in the previous section. Next the relation between the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* and *alētheia* will be examined and it will be discussed, precisely by exposing its kinship with art on the basis of *technē*, how *Ge-stell* hints at the possibility of what Heidegger calls “the un-experienced” site of truth (ET 148). The fourth chapter will be an investigation of how the artwork is capable of instantiating the other beginning by elaborating earth as essentially self-secluding. To this end it will be elucidated how this elaboration of earth enables revealing the truth of being as *a-lētheia*. Thus world and earth will be examined with regard to their roles in the event of truth. Based on this discussion, *a-lētheia*, the strife between world and earth, will be explicated. Moreover, a further analysis of the resistance of earth in relation to the notions of materiality and temporality will be carried out to show how Heidegger’s thinking of earth and its disclosure in the work of art offer non-metaphysical ways of thinking.

However, before proceeding I think that it is necessary to justify the basic assumptions of this thesis. I would like to start by recalling Heidegger’s well-known statement, “[e]very thinker thinks only one thought” (*What Is Called Thinking?*⁶, 1952, 50). In Heidegger’s case this occurs as a single question, namely the question of being⁷. In fact, it can be said that this single question occupies Heidegger’s entire thinking. Actually, this helps us to orientate ourselves in our attempts to understand Heidegger’s thinking. However, any attempt to do so will inevitably and essentially remain incomplete, since this single question takes many forms in different contexts. Furthermore, it can be misleading to foreground one of its forms insofar as this might ignore other occurrences of this question and the interrelations between them. Thus this also problematizes my aim in this thesis, because I will inevitably foreground the problem of *technē* with reference to the “The Origin of the Work of Art” and “The

⁶ Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?* New York: HarperCollins, 2004.

⁷ Although it is true that for Heidegger ‘the matter of thinking’ remains the same, namely being, the question with regard to being changes. Heidegger, in “Seminar in Le Thor” in *Four Seminars*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003, explicitly states that the question of the meaning of being evolved to the question of the truth of being which then led to the question of the topology of being (FS 38f.)

Question Concerning Technology” On the other hand, I think that the issue of *technē* and its relation to the notion of earth can provide a legitimate and fruitful access to Heidegger’s *oeuvre* as a whole, as I have stated above.

First of all, the issue of *technē* does not begin to occupy Heidegger’s thought only in his later writings. On the contrary, the discussion of *technē* commences even before his first *magnum opus*, *Being and Time*⁸ (1927). Hans Ruin⁹ points out that Heidegger’s inquiry into the problem of *technē* even appears in the very early writings, such as the so-called “Natorp Report”¹⁰ (1922), which is a phenomenological interpretation of Aristotle’s philosophy (GE 184). Ruin states that Heidegger’s occupation with the issue of *technē* begins with this early discussion of the Greek notion of *technē* through the interpretation of the sixth book of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*¹¹. These readings not only contributed to Heidegger’s fundamental philosophical direction, which he systematized for the first time in *Being and Time*, but also formed the kernel of Heidegger’s later conception of the essence of technology as *Ge-stell*, which I will discuss later in the third chapter. Ruin’s analysis is important since it shows how Heidegger comes to the conclusion that *technē* does not merely describe a way of making beings appear, but that it designates the basic Greek understanding of being. Ruin states that, for Heidegger, “[...] Aristotle has been guided [...] by an understanding of being as something fabricated, in *poiēsis*, and thus as something placed at hand, as something that has been produced (*Hergestelltsein*).” (GE 185). Furthermore, if we regard “The Question Concerning Technology” as Heidegger’s most explicit discussion of *technē* and its contemporary mode as technology, Ruin’s suggestion also indicates that a continuity in Heidegger’s thought can be found on the basis of the problematic of

⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*. New York: Harper and Row, 2008. Following the convention references will be made to H numbers.

⁹ Hans Ruin, “*Ge-stell*: Enframing as the Essence of Technology”, in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle: Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation”, *Man and World*, vol. 25, 1992; 355-93.

¹¹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

technē. Moreover, at “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking”¹² (1969), Heidegger remarks that Plato’s inauguration of Western metaphysics is a decisive moment in the sense that it opens up certain possibilities for philosophy itself (EP 433). So a particular disposition of philosophy is set out at the beginning of Western metaphysics. Therefore the age of modern technology must be thought in its relation with this early, originary disposition. Consequently, the triumph of the technological way of thinking and philosophy’s dissolution into “technologized sciences” turns out to be the culmination of metaphysics (EP 433-6).

On these grounds it can be maintained that to take the issue of *technē* as a basis will make it possible to see how Western metaphysics, whose advance has led to a complete abandonment of being in the age of modern technology, is essentially technological. On the other hand it will also enable us to configure a certain understanding of the self-overcoming of metaphysics, since – as will be shown in the following chapters, especially in the third chapter – the overturning of metaphysics and the other beginning do not arise from an opposition, but rather from the self-differing of metaphysics, since both the saving power and the other beginning also arise from *technē*. Thus it can be concluded that this kind of understanding of the self-overcoming of metaphysics is made possible by taking *technē* as the fundamental issue with regard to Western metaphysics.

However, one may note that in the following chapters there are hardly any references to Heidegger’s early writings. It can be said that this thesis focuses on the so-called later Heidegger, which refers to the texts after the famous turning (*Kehre*) in Heidegger’s thought. Thus I think that I need to explain the rationale for my selection of texts and what the controversial issue of *Kehre* signifies in the context of this thesis.

The first thing to be said is that Heidegger’s most explicit involvements with the issue of *technē* belong to this so-called later period. Thus the later texts in a sense necessarily form the basic skeleton of this thesis. But what actually interests me in Heidegger’s later texts is that there is a radicalization of the task that he set out in *Being and Time*, namely the *Destruktion* of the history of ontology. In *Being and*

¹² Martin Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking”, in David F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.

Time, Destruktion is said to be accomplished through a confrontation with the history of metaphysics and it aims to reveal how the question of being emerged, and has been transformed and finally has become completely forgotten throughout the history of Western metaphysics. A certain de-structuring is needed because the tradition, before it is exposed to such a confrontation, is self-naturalizing in the sense that what has been delivered or transmitted throughout history remains concealed and unavailable. Hence Heidegger asserts that,

When tradition thus becomes master, it does so in such a way that what it ‘transmits’ is made so inaccessible, proximally and for the most part, that it rather becomes concealed. Tradition takes what has come down to us and delivers it over to self-evidence, it blocks our access to those primordial ‘sources’ from which the categories and concepts handed down to us have been in part quite genuinely drawn. (H 21)

Therefore it can be said that first of all that *Destruktion* is necessary for a genuine understanding of the tradition itself. The tradition that surrounds the question of being must first be made accessible through this face-to-face encounter with it, since it also prevents us from encountering what Heidegger calls the “primordial sources” that which give or enable the tradition itself. So it can be said that one of the fundamental tasks, maybe *the* fundamental task, that Heidegger sets out in *Being and Time* is to uncover the layers which present themselves as self-evident and natural in order to reach an originary determination of being (H 22).

But how is the turning related to the *Destruktion*? The connection lies in the very movement of the turning, which is also a confrontation, i.e., an encounter that is made possible first of all by a distancing of the tradition in the sense of taking a step back from the tradition. But this is by no means a turning away from the tradition. On the contrary, similar to the *Destruktion*, it is a turning that turns towards the tradition itself. Jean-François Mattéi renders this turning as follows “[t]he ‘step back’ does not dismiss the quiet horizon of metaphysics; instead, it aims at giving it a site and at discovering the limits within which metaphysics takes *place*.” (*Heidegger from Metaphysics to Thought*¹³, 66).

To turn to the issue of *Destruktion*, one reason behind this attempt at the *Destruktion* of the history of metaphysics is that any other way that tries to overcome

¹³ Dominique Janicaud and Jean-François Mattéi, *Heidegger from Metaphysics to Thought*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1995.

metaphysics, but which remains external to metaphysics, will inevitably fail, and it will do so for the following reasons. Firstly, it will remain in opposition to metaphysics and will thereby reproduce the same metaphysical structure in the sense that metaphysics itself operates with mutually exclusive and oppositional conceptual pairs, such as *substantia* and *accidens*, subject and object, or infinite and finite, in which the terms are valued asymmetrically. Secondly, the question of being always already emerges within the metaphysical tradition itself. In other words, the question itself has its own history that must be made transparent so that what has been concealed from the first beginning can be encountered. Therefore it can be said that the de-structuring of the history of metaphysics appears as the only possible way to overcome Western metaphysics. The overcoming does not come from an external critique of metaphysics – and even the term ‘overcoming’ is actually misleading – but from a procedure that reveals the decisive determinations that have been brought about throughout the history of metaphysics. Thus it can be concluded that the Heideggerian *Destruktion* must be understood as a counter-turning within metaphysics itself. In connection with this, it should be stated that *Destruktion* and the internal movement of Western metaphysics are in a reciprocal relation, whereby the self-differing within metaphysics makes the *Destruktion* possible in the first place, but by revealing what Western metaphysics essentially is, *Destruktion* makes it possible to apprehend the self-differing of the tradition itself¹⁴. Therefore it can be concluded that there is an intimate relation between *Destruktion* and *Kehre*¹⁵.

In light of this it can be said that the issue of *technē* becomes central with regard to Heidegger’s overall project, namely preparing a way of thinking beyond metaphysics, since from very early on *technē* denotes the dominant determination of being by becoming the paradigmatic understanding of *poiēsis*. Thus the singularity of Western metaphysics lies in the fact that it is essentially technological. Therefore it can be concluded that there is a continuity between the first Greek beginning and the *Ge-stell*. Furthermore, this relation also explains why the issue of *technē* is so very

¹⁴ This issue of the self-overcoming of metaphysics will be discussed in the second chapter – especially in ch.3.2 – with regard to the issue of the culmination of metaphysics in the age of modern technology.

¹⁵ This also shows that it is not very fruitful or adequate to talk about two distinct and discontinuous periods in Heidegger’s thinking.

important. This is because on the basis of their connection it can be argued that not only does the culmination of metaphysics and its singularity lie in *technē*, but the turning within metaphysics also lies in *technē*. This is why at the end of “The Question Concerning Technology” Heidegger states that with the questioning of the essence of modern technology there arises a question concerning the essence of *technē* (QCT 338-40.). In connection with this Heidegger suggests that *technē* as art becomes a fundamental possibility with respect to the self-overcoming of metaphysics (QCT 339-40), since *technē* as art bears a possibility that has been covered over and remained concealed throughout the history of Western metaphysics. Yet both modern technology and art stem from the same root, namely *technē*. Therefore, on the basis of the issue of *technē*, one can talk about a counter-turning in the history of Western metaphysics. At this point I think it would be helpful to recall what Heidegger says in “The Turning”¹⁶ with respect to the danger and the saving power,

The coming to presence of Enframing is the danger. As the danger, Being turns about into the oblivion of its coming to presence, turns away from this coming to presence, and in that way simultaneously turns counter to the truth of its coming to presence. In the danger there holds sway this turning about not yet thought on. In the coming to presence of the danger there *conceals* itself, therefore, the possibility of a turning in which the oblivion belonging to the coming to presence of Being will so turn itself that, with *this* turning, the truth of the coming to presence of Being will expressly turn in—turn homeward—into whatever is. (T 41)

I think that this passage not only explicates how the turning should be understood but also indicates how *technē* and its metaphysical advance culminate in *Ge-stell* that can lead to the turning within metaphysics itself¹⁷. Furthermore, the passage also explicates that the turning must be understood as the movement that makes it possible to disclose the danger in *Ge-stell* as danger. Moreover, this encounter of the danger as the danger is what also enables the disclosing of the saving power that grows side by side with the danger, since by revealing the danger as danger the truth of being turns towards its proper place. Therefore the issue of *technē* has a

¹⁶ Martin Heidegger, “The Turning”, in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. New York: Harper & Row Publishing, 1977.

¹⁷ Ch.3.2. will explicate this issue by showing the relation between ancient *technē* and *Ge-stell*, and how this makes the turning possible from within the tradition itself.

fundamental place in Heidegger's understanding both of the turning and of *Destruktion*.

Furthermore, if one accepts that *Destruktion* is at the same time an immanent critique of the metaphysics of subjectivity, then this also supports the claim that these later texts perform a radicalization of the *Destruktion*, since both in "The Question Concerning Technology" and "The Origin of the Work of Art" there is also a de-structuring of subjective, anthropocentric conceptions. In the former text this occurs as a critique of the instrumental conception of technology since this instrumental determination of technology considers modern technology as a means that can be manipulated in order to fulfil human demands. In the latter text it is carried out as a critique of aesthetics since aesthetics conceives art in the context of aesthetic experience that reduces the artwork to an object of a subjective experience. Thus aesthetics subsumes it under the regime of the subject, since the subject becomes the centre according to which art and its significance is organized. So in these texts Heidegger also carries out the *Destruktion* of the metaphysics of subjectivity with the aim of uncovering the primordial source which made the emergence of metaphysics possible. Therefore I think that moving along the axis of *technē* also makes it possible to see the interrelations between different aspects of Heidegger's thinking.

On these grounds it can be concluded that to foreground the issue of *technē* in Heidegger's thinking is not merely a legitimate but also a productive step for a fuller understanding of Heidegger's thinking. Accordingly, in the following chapters I will attempt to situate Heidegger's thought with regard to the history of metaphysics on the axis of the issue of *technē*. But the issue of *technē* will be taken in the context of modern technology and art with respect to the issues described above. To do so, I will examine how the completion of metaphysics in *Ge-stell* also hints at the possibility of its dissolution, which can eventually lead to what Heidegger calls the truth of being as *a-lētheia*, or the un-experienced domain of truth. Moreover, the problematic of *technē* as art will precisely be discussed with regards to its possibility of becoming the site of such a disclosure. This is why "The Question Concerning Technology" and "The Origin of the Work of Art" appear as the primary sources of this thesis. Having demonstrated the importance and the role of *technē* in

Heidegger's thinking and having presented the general outline of the thesis, the discussion proper can begin.

Chapter 2

The Work of Art and *Poiēsis*

This chapter aims at understanding the relationship between the work of art and *poiēsis* as Heidegger unfolds it in “The Origin of the Work of Art”. However, the main motivation here is not to form a merely adequate account of Heidegger’s thought concerning this particular relation. Rather, on the basis of an understanding of Heidegger’s thought concerning this particular issue of *poiēsis*, I aim to set out the problematic of this thesis in the first place. The key problematic of the thesis as a whole revolves around the issue of the ontological import of the artwork in Heidegger’s thinking, as indicated in the introduction. I will particularly try to explicate how the work of art secures a place for the *sterēsis* (privation, deprivation) of being by articulating earth as essentially self-concealing and in turn how this articulation is crucial for the ontological significance of the artwork.

Heidegger’s significant designation that all art is in essence poetry, i.e., poesy, *die Dichtung* (OWA 197-8, GA 5 59) in its broader sense – in the sense of *poiēsis* – will underlie this discussion of the relationship between the work of art and *poiēsis*. So to be able to grasp the affinity between *poiēsis* and the artwork, first of all the notion of *poiēsis* must be clarified and then we can try to grasp the meaning of this designation of art as essentially poetic. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two main parts. In the first part I will attempt to articulate the meaning of *poiēsis* as *technē* and as *phusis*, and in the second part I will try to establish the relation between art and *poiēsis* so that the place of the work of art with respect to *poiēsis* can be clarified. Before proceeding to the discussion of different modes of *poiēsis*, some preliminary remarks will aid in drawing the general outlines of this chapter.

Heidegger translates the Greek *poiēsis* as *Hervorbringen*, i.e., literally bringing-forth, a movement from non-present to present, presencing. Hence *poiēsis* is understood as a broad notion that defines any kind of bringing-forth into presence. Furthermore, Heidegger, even as early as 1922, thinks that *poiēsis* determines the

Greek understanding of being. In his so-called “Natorp Report”¹⁸, Heidegger claims that for Greek thinking “[b]eing means *Being-produced* [in the sense of Latin *producere*]”¹⁹ (IHS 375). Also in “The Question Concerning Technology” he still holds the same view. He cites Plato’s *Symposium*, “[e]very occasion for whatever passes beyond the nonpresent and goes forward into presencing is *poiēsis*, bringing-forth [*Her-vor-bringen*]” (QCT 317). For this reason *poiēsis* has a central place for understanding the ontological significance of the artwork, since *poiēsis* designates the being of beings as a whole. It may even be said that Heidegger’s understanding of *poiēsis* to a certain degree depends on his appropriative interpretation of Aristotle. According to Heidegger, Aristotle understands *poiēsis* as a gathering, i.e., *legein*, *logos*, into a unity so that a being can appear and come into presence as a being. Aristotle differentiates two modes of *poiēsis*, *phusis* and *technē*, which differ with respect to their modes of bringing-forth. However, both of them are modes of *poiēsis* and this is what both *technē* and *phusis* have in common, namely they are both bringing-forth. After having sketched out the general outlines of the issues surrounding *poiēsis*, now I will begin to discuss the two modes of *poiēsis*, namely *phusis* and *technē*, which will aid in setting out the fundamental terms of this thesis and thereby it will also form the necessary background for the explication of the core issue of this thesis.

2.1. *Poiēsis* as *phusis*

Although I said that Aristotle differentiates two modes of *poiēsis* this does not mean that they stand in a binary opposition. Walter Brogan, in his book *Heidegger and Aristotle*²⁰, explains that although there is a tension between *technē* and *phusis*, they are not thought in opposition. Rather, they belong together on the basis of *poiēsis* in so far as they are both modes of *poiēsis*, i.e., bringing-forth. In Aristotle’s philosophy

¹⁸ As indicated in the introduction, Hans Ruin points out Heidegger’s very early interest in the issue of *technē* and suggests that there is a certain continuity in Heidegger’s thinking on the basis of this issue. This point will be examined in detail later on in the second chapter.

¹⁹ This issue of beingness as understood in terms of *poiēsis*, i.e., as something produced will also constitute one of the main trajectories throughout the discussion of the essence of modern technology as *Ge-stell* in the second chapter of this thesis.

²⁰ Walter A. Brogan, *Heidegger and Aristotle: The Twofoldness of Being*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2005.

they are not two distinct and mutually exclusive kinds of being but they are both modes of the revealing of beings (HA 49). Yet this does not mean that they are equal to each other. On the contrary, Aristotle highlights their difference throughout his *Physics*²¹ and the “tension” between them is significant to understand both *phusis* and *technē* properly. However, their difference is made possible through the ground that they share, namely *poiēsis*. Interestingly, the reverse can also be said; in other words, they belong together in so far as they sustain their difference from each other. Perhaps one of the reasons behind Aristotle’s constant reference to *technē* in his articulation of *phusis* is to reveal this difference without ignoring their belonging together. This is not only because they are both grounded in *poiēsis* but also because they need each other to be addressed as what they are in the first place. And this is why the tension between these two modes of bringing-forth is important²². This point will become clear after showing the manner of the belonging together of *phusis* and *technē*. In what follows, I will try to elaborate this relation between *phusis* and *technē*. First I will turn to the issue of *phusis*.

In “On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις in Aristotle’s *Physics* B, I”, Heidegger holds the view that Aristotle’s *Physics* is the first thoughtful and coherent conceptualization of *phusis* in which Greek philosophy reaches its own fulfilment. However, he also adds that “[...] this first thoughtful and unified conceptualization of φύσις is already the last echo of the original (and thus supreme) thoughtful *projection* of the essence of φύσις that we still have preserved for us in the fragments of Anaximander, Heraclitus, and Parmenides.” (ECP 186). For now it suffices to say that this supremacy of pre-Socratic thinking over Aristotle’s conception of *phusis* is related to the fact that for Aristotle *phusis* has to do with a region of being. It is specifically related to a certain mode of being. I will return to this point later on near the end of this chapter. Now, for the purposes of our discussion it would be helpful to pay heed to Aristotle’s conceptualization of *phusis* and how Heidegger appropriates this understanding of *phusis*.

²¹ Aristotle, *Physics*, in J. Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984.

²² Furthermore, it is particularly important not to resolve but to keep this tension in view for the purposes of this study, since in Heidegger’s thinking a certain type of tension plays a crucial role, and this particular type of tension is especially important in “The Origin of the Work of Art”.

According to Aristotle, the problem surrounding *phusis* is that of movement. He says that “[w]e [...] must take for granted that the things that exist by nature [*phusis*] are, either all or some of them, in motion [*kinēsis*]—which is indeed made plain by induction [*epagoge*].” (P 185a12). Heidegger’s own translation of this sentence is radically different: he emphasizes the fact that beings according to *phusis* are determined by movedness, i.e., *kinēsis*, and this is derived from the fact that their “leading towards” (*epagoge*) is towards beings that move and towards their being (ECP 186). Therefore *phusis* is that which leads beings into presence and enables their standing in presence. Thus Heidegger preliminarily calls *phusis aition*, “origin” [*Ur-sache*]²³ (ECP 188-9).

From this Heidegger derives a decisive conclusion, namely being is understood as stable (*sunestota, das Ständige*), that which stands in presence (ECP 189). This will guide and in a sense organize his interpretation of Aristotle’s understanding of *phusis* throughout the text. Yet this stability cannot be understood as being unchangeable since *phusis* is *kinēsis*, i.e., the movedness of natural beings (*phusei onta*). Moreover, *epagoge* indicates that beings according to *phusis* are never static because they are always in movement that is led towards their own being. Therefore *phusis* is determined by *kinēsis*. Hence its standing in presence is not a static moment. Accordingly, Heidegger claims that this standing has two moments, one is the coming into the “there”, emerging, and the other is enduring. Brogan, in his article “Double Archē”²⁴, summarizes this kind of enduring as “[b]eings are to the extent that they are constant (*das Ständige*) and continuous (*Dauernden*), to the extent that they endure in their being.” (DA 86f., *sic.*).

If *phusis* is determined by movedness, then how should this enduring and thereby constancy be understood? And how can these two moments – being constant

²³ Actually, in common usage, the term “*Ursache*” means “cause”, however, Heidegger’s appropriation of the term as *Ur-sache* emphasizes the phenomenological sense of the term as the primal, originary matter (*Sache*) to differentiate it from the modern understanding of cause as efficient cause. But here ‘matter’ should not be thought in the sense of a metaphysical conception of materiality as a passive resource. The issue of materiality will be discussed in ch.4.2.1 with respect to Heidegger’s thinking of earth. Heidegger refuses to translate *aition* as cause, since the Greek notion does not signify an effecting, but rather a being responsible for a being’s coming to presence, an occasioning for its presencing.

²⁴ Walter Brogan, “Double Archē: Heidegger’s Reading of Aristotle’s Kinetic Ontology”, *Angelaki* vol. II: 3, 2006. 85-92.

and emerging – be held together without contradiction, since they are *seemingly* mutually exclusive? They seem to exclude each other because the notion of emergence admits a state of not-being and therefore not-enduring. At this point Heidegger pays special attention to Aristotle’s designation of *phusis* as *archē*. So, as Heidegger points out, Aristotle now retrieves *phusis* as *aition* to *archē* to shed light on the issue of the sense in which *phusis* is both enduring and emergence. According to Heidegger, the meaning of *archē* is twofold. On the one hand, *archē* points to a beginning and in this sense it is an origin and, on the other hand, it signifies a “holding sway over”, ruling or reigning over something. Thus Heidegger calls this *archē* “originating ordering and ordering origin” (ECP 189). In light of this interpretation, *archē* as origin refers to the emerging, coming to presence aspect of *phusis* and *archē* as ordering refers to the stableness of *phusis* as standing in presence. And *phusis* differs from *technē* in the sense that this *archē* is present in beings according to *phusis*. This *archē* belongs to *phusei onta*. This belonging does not just mean that the movement comes from itself (*phusei onta*) but also that it is directed towards itself. Hence Heidegger concludes that,

[...] φύσις is not just the origin and ordering of the movedness of a moving being, but also belongs to this moving being itself in such a way that this being, in itself and from itself and towards itself, orders its own movedness. Hence the ἀρχή is not like the starting point of a push, which pushes the thing away and leaves it to itself. Rather, something determined by φύσις not only stays with itself in its movedness but precisely goes back into itself even as it unfolds in accordance with the movedness (the change). (ECP 195)

From the explications and definitions that have been provided so far, we can say that *phusis* as an originating-ordering (*archē*) is responsible for (*aition*) the emergence of natural beings (*phusei onta*) into presence and its standing in presence and it is that which determines its constant movement towards the being of the natural being (*phusis*). Therefore in *phusis* the emergence, standing and that towards-which the movement is directed are united in the sense that *phusis* as *archē* is the “principle” that governs the movedness of natural beings which carry this *archē* in themselves.

Earlier, at the beginning of the chapter, I tried to emphasize that for Heidegger *poiēsis* as a bringing-forth into presence out of non-presence designates the Greek understanding of being. Here too we see that *phusis* is a mode of presencing as being responsible for the emergence, i.e., coming to presence and

continuing in its presencing of a being. In relation to this Aristotle asserts that each *phusei on*²⁵ is *ousia*, i.e., presencing itself, because *phusis* is a “lying-present” (*hupokeimenon*) and it is in a “lying-present” (P 192b33). Heidegger regards this point as the decisive moment in Aristotle’s interpretation of *phusis*, which designates *phusis* as *ousia*, and therefore as a certain mode of presencing. Heidegger considers this designation as decisive, because it becomes possible for *phusis* to be considered as a mode of being, insofar as this designation conceives *phusis* as a mode of *ousia*. To put it differently, although *phusis* is essentially kinetic – and therefore there is a constant change and becoming in *phusis* – there is, at the same time, constancy in *phusis*. This is because *ousia* is understood as *hupokeimenon*, i.e., “lying-present”, accordingly it becomes possible to understand *phusis* as that which stands, i.e., *sunestota*, *das Ständige*, which designates the Greek understanding of being. For Heidegger, the *sunestota* designates the beingness of beings in the Greek understanding of being as being-present of and by itself, namely presencing or *ousia*. This means that to understand *phusis* as *ousia* is to comprehend *phusis* itself as a certain kind of presencing. This is what makes this designation decisive for Heidegger (ECP 199-200). However, in order to understand how *phusis* can be understood both as essentially kinetic and also as *ousia*, i.e., presencing and standing in presence, needs further explication, because by nature *phusis* also refers to a not being in presence or ceasing to be in presence. With respect to this, the issue of *archē* becomes important, since I think that Heidegger’s interpretation of *archē* as originating-ordering is what makes it possible to think the kinetic essence of *phusis* in terms of *ousia*.

To explicate the relation between *archē* and *ousia*, I will try to show how both of the aspects of *archē*, namely originating and ordering are modes of presencing. As I said above in this section, *archē* as originating refers to emergence, to coming-to-presence. In other words, *archē* as originating refers to the aspect of *phusis* that is responsible for the coming-to-presence of a natural being. Thus it can be maintained that *phusis* is *ousia*, i.e., presencing, since it designates the very event of coming-to-presence, namely *genesis*. On the other hand, *archē* as ordering is the

²⁵ A being whose coming to presence is governed by *phusis*.

element which continually governs the continuous movement of *phusei onta*. Therefore it can be said that *archē* as ordering refers to the *standing* in presence of beings according to *phusis*. Based on this it can be stated that *phusis* as the originating-ordering is a mode of *ousia*. Hence by understanding *phusis* as *archē* it becomes possible to conceive the being of *phusis* as that which is always already in *kinēsis* and as that which stands in its movedness, i.e., *das Ständige, sunestota*. In this sense *phusis* is a constant self-emergence into presence, not merely in the sense that particular natural beings emerge constantly, but also these beings (*phusei onta*) are in a constant movement that is led towards (*epagoge*) their own being (*phusis*). Therefore it can be concluded that *ousia* is the decisive principle that guides Aristotle's interpretation of *phusis*, since it grasps *phusis* as a mode of being without disregarding its kinetic essence, which is made possible by understanding *archē* as originating-ordering.

2.2. *Poiēsis* as *technē*

I will now turn to the discussion of *technē* with respect to the *archē-aition* relation. Heidegger asserts that “[t]he ἀρχή of artifacts is τέχνη” (ECP 192). This means that the originating-ordering of the artefact (*technai on*) is *technē*. The essential difference between *technē* and *phusis* stems from the fact that the *archē* of artefacts is not in themselves but in another. This means that technical beings are incapable of being in movement by themselves, since the originating-ordering principle is outside of them. This is because the *eidos*, i.e., the appearance seen beforehand, the end (*telos*) of an artefact, is in the *technites*, namely the artist or craftsman, and not in the artefact itself. The *technites* is the one who sees, prior to the production, the final appearance. This means that technical beings require an outside *aition* to come into being, unlike *phusei onta* (ECP 192f.). On the other hand, *technē* as the originating-ordering of one particular region of being is also a presencing and it guides the presencing in this region, namely technical beings. Moreover, this is why *technē*, along with *phusis*, is a mode of *poiēsis*. I think that it would be useful at this point to remind ourselves of one of the definitions of *technē* in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*,

Every skill [*technē*] is to do with coming into being, and the exercise of the skill lies in considering how something that is capable of either being or not being, and the

first principle of which is in the producer and not the product, may come into being; for skill is not concerned with things that are or come into being by necessity, or with things that are [...] by nature [*phusis*] (since they have their first principle within themselves) [...] Skill, then, as we have said, is a productive state of involving true reason; and its contrary, lack of skill, is a productive state involving false reason. Both are concerned with what can be otherwise. (NE 1140a)

In “The Intractable Interrelationship of *Phusis* and *Technē*”²⁶, Walter Brogan remarks that for Aristotle this insight into what is “capable of either being or not being” defines the kind of seeing that is *technē*. It is concerned not with a particular being, as is the case with *aisthesis* (sense experience, or perception); rather *technē* relates itself to beings as a whole. Brogan asserts that “[t]he one who has *technē* knows the whole—that is, he knows the *eidōs*, he knows what the being is. He also knows how the being is—the causes that are responsible for its being what it is.” (PT 49). I take this to mean that *eidōs* is the *archē* in *technē* that gathers together all the other *aitia*. *Eidōs* is the principle that makes it possible to produce – in the sense of *poiēsis* – what cannot emerge by itself, namely *technai ontā*. This gathering together of all the *aitia* alludes to another significant aspect of *technē*, namely the relation of *technē* to *logos*. Both Aristotle’s own words and Brogan’s interpretation suggest that the *archē* in *technē* is the *eidōs* that is seen beforehand by the producer, since knowing the *eidōs* is a knowing how to bring something into presence. Thus, as Brogan also emphasizes, it is related to *logos*, *legein*, because it knows the principle concerning the “coming-into-being” as such²⁷.

Heidegger also emphasizes *technē*’s fundamental relation to *logos* as careful consideration. On several occasions Heidegger translates *legein* as a collecting or gathering together of all the *aitia* for a being’s coming to presence. He says that,

[...] to gather means: to bring various dispersed things together into a unity [...] to bring together into a unity and to bring forth this unity as gathered, i.e., above all as present [...] to reveal what was formerly hidden, to let it be manifest in its presencing. (ECP 213)

²⁶ Walter A. Brogan, “The Intractable Interrelationship of *Phusis* and *Technē*”, in Drew A. Hyland and John Panteleimon Manoussakis (eds.), *Heidegger and the Greeks: Interpretive Essays*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.

²⁷In *Metaphysics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, Aristotle defines *technē* as a mode of *epistēmē* that is concerned with first principles (980b-982a) and these principles, in turn, are related to a certain “formula”, i.e., *logos* (983a).

He says this in the context of his discussion of *phusis*, yet it also holds true for *technē* as long as it is also a mode of *legein*. This means that *eidos* is this gathering or drawing together of all the elements required for a ‘technical’ being’s coming to presence. In this sense it can be said that *eidos* guides *technē* as its *archē*, since through the *eidos* the producer (*technites*) gathers all the other *aitia* in a unified manner.

However, because this *eidos*, or the *archē* of its movement, is not in the thing produced, Heidegger points out that in Aristotle’s thought the movement or becoming in *technē* is not directed towards *technē* itself, unlike in *phusis*, which, as I tried to underline before in this section, refers to a becoming which stems from itself and is directed towards itself at the same time. Heidegger clarifies this point by examining Aristotle’s example from the art of medicine, namely in the case of a doctor who is trying to heal him or herself. In this examination Heidegger differentiates two movements and thus two *archai* in the art of medicine. The first *archē* is that of regaining health that directs any and every medical treatment. However, here, although the regaining of health is achieved through a treatment, the *archē* does not come from the treatment itself, but it happens as a movement guided by *phusis* in a natural being, i.e., the body in this case. So this means that *technē* brings forth a movement which is not directed towards *technē* but rather towards something other, i.e., *phusis*. The body gains its health not because the doctor has the skill but because s/he is a natural being. On the other hand, the treatment itself, i.e., the *technē*, is not there because of the doctor’s natural being, *technē* itself does not grow out of itself by itself, rather it is learned. Thus *technē* neither comes from itself nor is directed towards itself (ECP 196).

However, Heidegger warns us against the danger of reducing *phusis* to a mode of *technē* as a self-making. Heidegger insists on the distinction between *technē* and *phusis*: *phusis* is not self-making *technē*. This is due to the fact that the movement in *phusis* belongs to the essence of *phusis* both in the sense that it comes *from phusis* and is directed *towards phusis* itself. With this warning, Heidegger suggests a phenomenological approach to Aristotle’s interpretation of *phusis* which seeks to understand *phusis* from itself and not within an analogy that takes something other than *phusis* as its framework (ECP 223). Therefore it can be concluded that *phusis*

and *technē* are essentially different from each other. In relation to this point Brogan's suggestion seems important. He says that for Heidegger the failure in thinking the ontological difference throughout the history of metaphysics is partly due to the fact that beings as a whole are understood in terms of *technē* alone. Thus it seems that Brogan argues that it is important to keep *phusis* and *technē* separate without annihilating the possibility of their essential belonging together. In fact, this attempt at keeping them separate without cutting off their fundamental ties is also similar to how the ontological difference should be thought, because according to it being is not a being amongst other beings but it is always the being of a being. The issue of the ontological difference and its relation to *technē* will be discussed in the following chapters both in the contexts of modern technology and art. However, with this analysis, we have also come to a point where we can start to think how *technē* and *phusis* are related to each other in a fundamental way. To be able to show this relationality I will now again turn to the discussion of *phusis* and will attempt to establish the connection between *phusis* and *technē*.

2.3. *Phusis* as *morphē* and *hule*

I have shown how *phusis* as *kinēsis* is understood as *ousia* on the basis of *archē* without any contradiction and emphasized, in ch.2.1 above, that the notion of *ousia* guides the whole interpretation of *phusis*. After showing the relation between *kinēsis* and *ousia*, Heidegger proceeds to the relation between *phusis* as presencing in relation to Aristotle's conception of *morphē* and *hule* and their relation to *energeia* and *dunamis*.

Heidegger finds it remarkable that for Aristotle *phusis* indicates both *morphē* and *hule* (ECP 206-8). For Heidegger, this designation surely states the togetherness of *morphē* and *hule*. However, what makes this designation remarkable for Heidegger is that it speaks of *morphē* and *hule* not as beings but as the manner of their being. In this respect, *hule* is not simply the 'matter' and *morphē* is not the 'form' in the traditional sense. Rather, in Aristotle's thought, the mode of being of *hule* is *dunamis*. Heidegger renders this *dunamis* as "appropriate for", as the orderable, and *morphē* as placing into appearance of what is orderable into a certain shape (*eidōs*). Yet Aristotle asserts that "[f]orm [*morphē*] indeed is nature rather than

the matter [*hule*]; for a thing is more properly said to be what it is when it exists in actuality [*energeia*] than when it exists potentially [*dunamis*].” (P 193b7). Heidegger’s own translation appears in English as follows,

[...] this (namely, μορφή as the placing into the appearance) is φύσις to a higher degree than the orderable is [*hule*]. For each individual thing is addressed (as properly being) when it ‘is’ in the mode of having-itself-in-its-end [*energeia*] rather than when it is (only) in the state of appropriateness for [*dunamis*]. (ECP 215)

Here we see that Aristotle understands the relation between *morphē* and *hule* as analogous to the relation between *energeia* and *dunamis*. But at this stage it is of importance to bear in mind that *ousia* guides Aristotle’s interpretation of *phusis*, since it will explain why *morphē*, i.e., placing into the appearance, is *phusis* to a higher degree than *hule*. The reason behind the priority of *morphē* over *hule* is twofold and both of its aspects stem from the relation between *morphē* and *ousia*. Actually, I think that Heidegger’s own translation of *morphē* as “placing into the appearance” hints at this twofoldness, since there are two moments in *morphē* as placing into the appearance. Obviously, the one is the movement of *placing* and the other is that this placing movement is towards an *appearance*. Although it can be said that for Heidegger both moments constitute a mode of presencing, each of them signifies this presencing in different senses.

The first aspect is that of placing which specifically foregrounds the movedness of *phusis*. The movement of placing describes a process of transforming the sheer being ‘appropriate for’ into having-itself-in-its-end (*energeia*). In this sense, placing defines the movement of *genesis*, which is the ontological movement, i.e., the movement of coming-to-presence. At this juncture it is worth recalling again Brogan’s above-cited article in which he summarizes this kind of movement as follows, “[g]enesis as *morphē* is the placing into the aspect [*eidos*] such that what comes to be is of the same aspect as that from which it comes to be, but in such a way that what comes to be was not and now is.” (DA 91). Thus it can be claimed that the *placing* of *morphē* precisely describes the movement of self-emergence in *phusis*. Therefore, if we recall the centrality of *ousia* (presencing) in Aristotle’s understanding of *phusis*, we come to see that the placing of *morphē* refers to presencing in the sense of emergence or originating, which was discussed in ch.2.1 in relation to the notion of *archē*.

The second aspect is that the movement of *morphē* is directed towards a certain appearance (*eidos*). The emergence of a being from being appropriate for (*dunamis*) into having-itself-in-itself (*energeia*) can take place if and only if, and this is why *morphē* is twofold, *hule* is placed in a certain appearance. In other words, as long as a being is in a certain shape, in the sense of *eidos*, it is in the mode of *energeia*. Therefore to be in appearance or to remain in an appearance refers to the constancy aspect of *ousia*, which was also described in ch.2.1 in relation to *archē*. Accordingly, it can be stated the second aspect of *morphē* refers to a process of standing in presence, i.e., constancy (*sunestota*).

Furthermore, standing in an appearance also entails that a being can be addressed in *logos*, since *eidos* offers itself to *logos*, and it becomes possible to be addressed and to be grasped through this *eidos* in a discourse about that particular being. And if we recall that for Heidegger *logos*, i.e., *legein*, indicates a process of bringing something into presence by gathering various things into a unity, then it can be concluded that *morphē* as a *placing* into the *appearance* is a *presencing*, i.e., *ousia* (ECP 213). The reason is that *morphē* as a *placing* refers to the movement of emergence, an irruption that constitutes the movement of coming-to-presence in *phusis*. On the other hand, the second aspect of *morphē*, namely being directed towards an appearance and sustaining that appearance, indicates the process of remaining in presence, namely constancy. So for Heidegger the reason behind the hierarchy between *morphē* and *hule* stems from the fact that *morphē* ‘is’ a particular mode of *ousia*.

Accordingly, Heidegger concludes that *morphē* as *placing* into the *appearance* is “[...] χίνησις itself, the changing of the appropriate as a breaking out of its appropriateness” (ECP 219). So the point can be summarized as follows: *morphē* as a *placing* into the *appearance* is the setting itself into its own end of *phusis* or turning its own ‘sheer’ hidden “appropriateness for” into the *ergon* of being in presence.

However, this point still seems to be unclear and will remain so as long as one does not grasp how *energeia* and *dunamis* are understood in relation to *phusis*, since, as it stands now, it seems that *morphē* as *energeia* signifies the moment of a final state of actualization of what is merely in the state of possibility. Furthermore, this kind of interpretation operates in terms of the law of the excluded middle,

because the conceptual pairs of *energeia-dunamis* and *morphē-hule* seem to be mutually exclusive in this understanding. In turn, this leads to a contradiction with regard to Aristotle's understanding of *phusis*, since *phusis* does not designate the moment of a one-time divine creation that actualizes all beings all at once *ex nihilo*. On the contrary, *phusis* is the constant movement of self-emergence which oscillates between *dunamis* and *energeia*. To understand the relation between *energeia* and *dunamis* in terms of *morphē*, let us try to understand this passage,

The movedness of movement is ἐνέργεια ἀτελής, the standing-in-the-work that has not yet come into its end. But according to what we said earlier, ἔργον, work, means neither making nor the artefact made, but that which is to be pro-duced, brought into presencing. In itself, ἐνέργεια ἀτελής is already a being-on-the-way that, as such and as a process, places forth what is to be pro-duced. The being-on-the-way in φύσις is μορφή (self-placing). (ECP 222f.)

Here, first of all, Heidegger draws attention to the qualification that Aristotle makes regarding the characteristic of the *energeia* aspect of *phusis*. It is not being in completion in the sense of complete actualization, rather it denotes a state of incompleteness (*ateles*). However, this incompleteness is neither a defect nor a transitory incompleteness that will eventually reach completion. On the contrary, *energeia ateles* is the impossibility of such a completion. This is because *energeia ateles* defines the constant movement that is being led towards the being of beings according to nature. But because there is always a passing-away in this movement – actually, this is also why there is a constant movement in *phusis* – the manner of this movement is marked with a fundamental privation, namely the privation of a complete actualization. I think that this is why Heidegger calls *energeia ateles* the being-on-the-way. It is the constant movement of self-placing into the appearance, a constant working, in the sense of *energeia*, that brings forth beings into presence, but that can never be fully complete and hence its mode of being is a constant movement towards itself, namely being-on-the-way towards itself.

Thus it can be said that *morphē* as the self-placing into the appearance of *phusis* is a constant *genesis* which has not come to its end but which is continually “standing-in-the-work”. Hence Heidegger designates *morphē* as “the being-on-the-way” in *phusis*. With this point it becomes clearer why *morphē* is *phusis* to a higher degree, since *morphē*, both as “placing into the appearance” and as “the being-on-the-way”, properly characterizes the *poiēsis* that belongs to *phusis*. *Morphē* is a mode

of presencing, since it brings forth what is appropriate into presencing by placing it into an *eidōs* and as a “being-on-the-way” it also describes the continual *kinēsis* that defines the mode of being of *phusis*, the ontological movement, i.e., *genesis*. Consequently, *morphē* is a mode of presencing, and thus a kind of *ousia* and therefore *morphē* is the primary guiding principle of *phusis*.

Furthermore, the constant movement in *phusis* also hints at a non-coincidence between *phusis* and *phusei ontā* themselves. This is because, as I have just attempted to show, the movedness that prevails in a natural being is *energeia ateleis*. In turn it was also shown that this kind of movement is a being-on-the-way towards its own being, which is a constant movement, and since there is always a passing-away, there can be no completion. I take this to indicate that there is always a kind of deferral in *phusis* in the sense that even though a natural being (*phusei on*) is always in accordance with *phusis* – in other words its movement is guided by *phusis* and *phusis* always lies in a natural being – it can never coincide with *phusis* itself, because there is always also a passing-away in its movement. In its very movement of becoming-present there is also a movement of not-becoming-present. Moreover, in concert with the placing orderable into appearance, and thereby bringing it into appearance, there is a not-becoming-present. This point about ‘not-becoming-present’ brings us to a crucial point with regard to Heidegger’s appropriation of Aristotle’s conceptualization of *phusis* and its importance for this thesis. The key to understanding this issue lies in the relation between *hulē* and *dunamis* and also in their relation to *morphē*. I will now attempt to explicate this issue.

To proceed to the crux of our discussion, it can be said that the possibility of *genesis* as a movement from not-being-present to being-in-presence is co-constituted by *hulē*, because it refers to what is in state of *dunamis*, in the sense that it is that which is appropriate to be placed in a certain appearance, it is the precondition for any concrete and distinct appearance. *Hulē* is *dunamis* as the sheer appropriateness in the sense of being ‘not yet’ in presence but capable of being brought into presence in a definite shape, since it is the capacity which makes it possible to be ordered in a certain appearance (*eidōs*). Therefore *morphē* as placing into the appearance depends on this capacity of *hulē*, namely the ability to receive a certain appearance or being appropriate for that appearance.

In light of this it can be stated that both *energeia ateles* and the sheer appropriateness of *hule* indicate that a certain kind of privation of being-present prevails in the presencing of *phusis*. *Energeia ateles* refers to a constant gap between the beingness of a natural being and the natural being itself in the sense that the natural being is always in movement towards its own being and yet never coincides with it. Hence movedness is described as incomplete and thus in *phusis* there is constant movement. As was indicated above, this incomplete nature of the movement in *phusis* is directly related to the *huletic* aspect of *phusis*, which is a certain type of *dunamis*. This is because *hule* as *dunamis* refers to a state of not-being-present, and even if *hule* is placed into a certain appearance a further possibility is held back and stays as not-yet-present, and furthermore the coming-to-presence of a possible shape involves the passing-away of the previous one. In connection with this, if we recall that *phusis* is a movement of placing-into-the-appearance (*morphē*), then it must be noted that *morphē* also refers to a movement of withholding from presence, since with each coming-to-presence of a natural being in a certain appearance the other possibilities are held back. Hence in the mode of presencing of *phusis* there is always a fundamental withholding; in other words, the movedness of *phusis* is co-constituted by this withholding or not-being-present, or what Aristotle calls *sterēsis* (P 193b19).

At this point it should be stated clearly that all the analyses that have been carried out so far lead up to this designation, which is to say that there is a fundamental withholding in *phusis*, namely *sterēsis*. Furthermore, this designation is not only the key point with respect to Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle's understanding of *phusis*, as will be shown below, but it also touches upon the basic problematic of this thesis, as I have also indicated above. This withholding emerges as a not-coming-to-presence as *present* and this is what Aristotle calls *sterēsis*, i.e., a certain type of privation. For the remaining part of this section I will first explicate this issue of *sterēsis* and show how this issue is central to Heidegger's appropriation of *phusis*. On the basis of this in the following sections I will show how this issue of *sterēsis* will be problematized throughout this thesis.

First of all, Heidegger shows that *sterēsis* is actually a kind of *morpē* and he thinks that Aristotle's interpretation of *phusis* reaches its culmination with this designation. Furthermore, it has been shown that there is a fundamental withholding

in *phusis*, namely *sterēsis*. By explicating the huletic aspect of *phusis* in terms of *dunamis* it has been indicated that this withholding emerges in concert with placing the orderable into a certain appearance. Here Heidegger refers to Aristotle, saying that *phusis* as the placing-into-the-appearance (*morphē*) does not only describe the coming-to-presence and standing-in-present (*sunestota*) but also describes the privation of presence as a certain kind of appearance (*eidōs*) (P 193b19). This means that in *morphē* as placing into appearance a certain privation also occurs. Consequently, this understanding makes it possible to think the being of the movedness of *phusis* without violating the law of contradiction.

At this point Brogan's characterization of *sterēsis* as the "not" that belongs to natural beings (DA 91) becomes important because it indicates the decisive moment in Heidegger's interpretation of *phusis*. Heidegger does not interpret this move as a mere solution for the seemingly contradictory position of Aristotle's thought regarding *phusis*, namely how emergence, which signifies finitude and not-being-in-presence, and constancy can be thought together as essential characteristics of *phusis*, if *phusis* is thought to be a mode of *ousia*. Rather – and I think that this is the decisive designation of his appropriation of *phusis* – Heidegger thinks that "[...] in στέρησις is hidden the essence of φύσις." (ECP 227). This is because *phusis* as self-emergence into appearance also denotes a passing-away out of presence. Therefore *phusis* as *genesis* has two movements, i.e., coming-to-presence and passing-away, or absencing. However, this absencing is not thought as mere dis-appearance – Aristotle's statement indicates the other extreme. It says that *sterēsis* is also an *eidōs*, that it is indeed an appearance. Furthermore, this means that according to this interpretation *morphē* does not cease to be the movement of placing into the appearance. On the contrary, it becomes "the presencing of an absencing" (ECP 227). In light of this, if *sterēsis* is the hidden essence of *phusis*, which is the manner in which natural beings *are*, then *sterēsis* is also the essential manner in which the being of these beings presences. In turn these two points, namely that *sterēsis* is both an *eidōs* and *morphē*, and is at the same time the presencing of an absencing, entail that *sterēsis* is also a type of *ousia* and therefore a mode of being.

However, I think that Heidegger's interpretation says much more than just delineating *sterēsis* as another type of *ousia*. He claims that *sterēsis* is the "hidden

essence of *phusis*". I think the significance of Heidegger's interpretation hinges on the word "hidden", although the meaning of "hidden" is by no means obvious here. But it is possible to understand this sentence as claiming that even in the thought of Aristotle itself *sterēsis* was not thought explicitly as the essence of *phusis*, rather its primordial status with regard to *phusis* was left unthought. However, Heidegger's phenomenological reading of Aristotle's text revealed this primordial belonging of *sterēsis* to *phusis*²⁸. In a sense, Heidegger's interpretation is a *thinking into* that unearths and discloses what was "hidden" and "appropriate for" in Aristotle's thought. I think that this designation of *sterēsis* as the essence of *phusis* is highly significant for an understanding of Heidegger's thought, since with this interpretation it becomes possible to see how a fundamental self-withholding, namely a retreat that withholds itself from presence, constitutes the fundamental movement of being²⁹.

2.4. *Poiēsis* as *phusis* and *technē*

In light of these points the difference between *phusis* and *technē* becomes clearer. The ontological movement of *genesis* does not belong to *technē* itself in the way that it belongs to *phusis*. *Technē* does not have the character of this constant "being-on-the-way" towards itself. On the other hand, *technē* is directly related to this aspect of *phusis* which is the capacity to be otherwise, something that Brogan calls the negativity of beings according to *phusis*, namely to be capable of being addressed as not itself and of becoming something other than itself (PT 47).

Phusis has the capacity to change and it is perpetually in a state of change (*metabolē*). The huletic aspect of *phusis* shows that it is capable of being affected (*pathein*). It is a possibility (*dunamis*) of *phusis* to be capable of change. *Morphē* also depends on this aspect of *phusis*. As a placing into the appearance *morphē* is bounded by the "appropriateness for" of *hule* and its capacity to be affected. Thus the mode of being of *phusis* is a state of "being-on-the-way" because there is always a

²⁸ Günter Figal's remarks on Heidegger's phenomenology and his phenomenological readings shed light on this issue in his article titled "Phenomenology: Heidegger after Husserl and the Greeks". He holds the view that Heidegger's phenomenological interpretations are neither arbitrary nor a simple discovery. Figal claims that "[...] as an interpretation [...], it can uncover only what is contained in the texts that have been handed down. However, only it, as an interpretation, uncovers this. In the ancient texts there was nothing intended that was then lost and covered over." (PH 41).

²⁹ This point will be discussed in detail in ch.3 in relation to the history of being, technology and art.

reserve of what is appropriate and orderable in a certain shape, but not yet in presence. And when this or that possibility is actualized, these or those other possibilities will cease to be. And this is why *sterēsis* too is an appearance and *morphē* as a placing into appearance is at the same time the presenting of an absencing since while a certain shape is placed into appearance all the other possible shapes are withheld in that shape. Thus the self-withholding essence of *phusis* also comes to presence in that very shape.

However, *technē* is deprived of such capacity of *metabolē*, since it does not stand in its own end and technical beings are “deprived of their telos” (DA 89). However, *technē* is directly related to this capacity of *phusis*. The orderable in *phusis*, i.e., *hule*, is taken up by *technē* and used in such a way that “the appropriateness” is brought forth in presence through a certain *eidos* in a concrete being. The stone, for instance, is appropriate for a sculpture, a cathedral or a simple daily tool and *technē* depends on this capacity of *phusis*, i.e., being orderable.

Interestingly, Brogan radicalizes Heidegger’s insistence on the distinction between *technē* and *phusis* by claiming that *genesis* properly belongs to *phusis* and not to *technē*. What is even more surprising is that Brogan asserts that *technē* prevents *genesis* by disrupting the natural movement in *phusis*. Nevertheless, in this disruptiveness there is also a significant attentiveness to the essence of *phusis*, namely *sterēsis* (DA 89f.). *Technē* depends on the capacity of *phusis* to become something other than itself. Furthermore, in this interruption there lies the knowledge of the *technites*, i.e., *technē*, which is concerned with beings as a whole and as such and thus it can be said that *technē* is precisely related to the fundamental movement that characterizes *phusis*, namely coming to presence, *genesis*.

Let me briefly summarize what has been said so far. The main issue in Aristotle’s conception of *phusis* is to think the kinetic nature of *phusis* in terms of *ousia* without contradiction. With respect to this, for Heidegger, *morphē* has a crucial role in Aristotle’s conceptualization of *phusis*, since *morphē* as placing the orderable (*hule*) into the appearance is what makes it possible to think both the coming-to-presence of *phusis* by itself and at the same time the standing-in-presence of *phusis*. As a result these designations lead Heidegger to conclude that in Aristotle’s thinking of *phusis* the absencing, i.e., *sterēsis*, designates the essential movement of *phusis*.

Based on this it has also been shown how *technē* itself is related to this self-withholding aspect of *phusis*. In what follows I will show how the essential belonging of *phusis* and *technē* is disclosed in the artwork in a radical manner in order to show how through this belonging together of *phusis* and *technē* art emerges as a site that secures a place for *sterēsis*, which will also prepare for the final formulation of the main problematic of this thesis in an explicit manner.

2.5. The artwork as the disclosure of the relation between *technē* and *phusis*

Although there are several texts with which one could start to enquire into Heidegger's thinking on art, such as "Art and Space"³⁰ and *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*³¹, "The Origin of the Work of Art" is the only place in which Heidegger deals with art in general. This is why this text, along with "The Question Concerning Technology", constitutes the focal point of this thesis, as was explained in the introduction. In the art essay Heidegger asserts that the essence of art is poetry (OWA 197). This assertion will be the guiding thread of this section. Yet here poetry will be taken in its broad sense of *poiēsis*, namely *poiēsis* as a bringing-forth. Thus I will bracket the issue of poetry as a specific art form, its relation to the essence of art, and its status among other art forms. Moreover, it can be said that art is not only significant because it is a mode of *technē* but also because it has an essential relation to *poiēsis* as bringing-forth. Furthermore, as I indicated near the beginning of this chapter, because *poiēsis* defines the manner in which being is understood from the outset of metaphysics, it becomes necessary to inquire into the relation between art and *poiēsis* in order to understand the ontological importance of the artwork. In what follows I will attempt to delineate this primordial relation between art and *poiēsis* that will lead to a proper determination of the relation between *technē* and *phusis*. However, the main aim behind the explication of this relation is to show how the artwork becomes a site in which the hidden essence of *phusis* is revealed by revealing the essential belonging together of *phusis* and *technē*.

³⁰ Martin Heidegger, "Art and Space", in Günter Figal (ed.), *The Heidegger Reader*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.

³¹ Martin Heidegger, *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*. Amherst: Humanity Books, 2000.

In “The Origin of the Work of Art”, Heidegger draws the reader’s attention to an inevitable circularity. As the title suggests, the essay seeks to find the origin of the work of art and to understand what that origin essentially is. But all three elements which are generally considered to be inseparable from the realm of art, namely art, the artist, and the artwork, seem to be the origin of one another in different ways. At this point Heidegger suggests that the artwork should be the point of departure of the inquiry, since the work of art is the place where all the elements that co-constitute the phenomenon of art actually unfold (OWA 143f.) Hence he asserts “let us go to the actual work and ask the work what and how it is.” (OWA 144). This phenomenological move neither denies that there is any actual circularity concerning art nor solves the problem of circularity. It does not even consider this circularity as a problem to be solved. Rather, it embraces the circularity as an essential relationality that prevails in art. As a result, this makes it possible to think art without imposing any pre-constructed framework that is alien to it. Hence the work of art becomes the centre of Heidegger’s questioning of art. Having delineated the general context, now I will try to show how the work of art discloses the relation between *phusis* and *technē* by elaborating the “earth” in a certain manner.

Through a kind of phenomenological reduction, Heidegger comes to the conclusion that two elements equiprimordially (*gleichursprünglich*) constitute the work of art, namely world and earth. Before coming to this conclusion, Heidegger first notes that the work of art is mostly understood in terms of the thing conceptions that have been dominant throughout Western metaphysics. Therefore he questions the three main thing conceptions, namely *hupokeimenon-sumbebekota*, *aisthesis*, i.e., the thing as the unity of the manifold of sensible intuitions, and form-matter. Heidegger lays stress on this third conception. The reason is that this notion dominates the current understanding of the artwork in aesthetics, which is supposed to be the proper discipline that studies the phenomenon of art. Furthermore, in this conception there lies the possibility of a tracing back of these conceptions to a more originary source. Heidegger’s *de-structuring* of this conception uncovers this primordial source, namely world and earth (OWA 146-61).

However, this section particularly aims to unfold the significance of earth in relation to the disclosure of the essential belonging-together of *phusis* and *technē* in

the artwork. Therefore, in this section I will limit myself to a discussion of earth, and the relation between earth and *sterēsis*³². Nevertheless, a preliminary description of the relation between world and earth is needed. First it should be noted that these two elements gain their essential characteristics in relation to each other in the artwork. The work of art emerges as the process of setting up the relation between world and earth. Moreover, in and through this relation both of these two elements reach their essential characteristics. Heidegger describes this relation as strife (*der Streit*) in which the elements “[...] raise each other into the self-assertion of their essential natures.” (OWA 174, GA 5 38). So these terms do not first exist as individual and separate entities whose relation is then established by the work of art. Rather, the relationality between them is originary and out of this relation they emerge as what they are. It can be said that world is a contextual whole that constitutes the web of meaningful relations that makes possible the relationality between Dasein and other beings, including those who also exist in the mode of Dasein. It is in this sense that world is the openness in which beings as a whole are revealed in a certain manner (OWA 166-7). Each great work of art opens up such a site which reveals this contextual-meaningful relationality in each historical epoch (OWA 167, 170). This definition of world is similar to the one that Heidegger explicates in his first *magnum opus*, *Being and Time*³³. Here too world is understood as a contextual-referential whole that is generative of meaning. Dasein is always already in this meaningful relational whole; its mode of being is defined as “being-in-the-world”. However, in *Being and Time*, equipment (*das Zeug*) itself is said to be capable of revealing a world. Yet, in “The Origin of the Work of Art”, Heidegger explicitly ascribes such capacity to the work of art and not to equipment. But equipment is capable of disclosing the world when it becomes *useless* and steps out of inconspicuousness into conspicuousness and thereby leads to a break in the referential totality so that it reveals a world (BT H 67-76). What I am trying to say here is that although there is a shift from equipment to the work of art with respect to the disclosure of a world, in both cases world is disclosed as a result of breaking off from the ordinary state of

³² The relation between world and earth will be discussed in a more detailed manner in ch.4.1 with respect to the notion of *alethēia*.

³³ For a further and detailed account of world, see §§14-24, H 63-113.

affairs. Yet this does not amount to saying that between both texts Heidegger's thinking of world remains unchanged, which is clearly not the case.

In contrast to his characterization of world, Heidegger describes earth as “[...] that whence the arising brings back and shelters everything that arises as such. In the things that arise, earth occurs essentially as the sheltering agent [*das Bergende*].” (OWA 168 GA 5 31). Here the term “*das Bergende*”, coming from the verb *bergen*, is noteworthy. *Bergen* literally means “to hold”, “to retrieve”, and “to rescue”. So while it describes a process of securing, and protecting, it also alludes to a covering, concealing process. It shelters by holding back. Furthermore, Heidegger explicitly notes that there is a parallel, maybe even a continuity, between his notion of earth and the Greek notion of *phusis*. Here I am specifically referring to the following passage, “Tree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinctive shapes and thus come to appear as what they are. The Greeks early called this emerging and rising in itself and in all things *phusis*.” (OWA 168).

The movement of earth is similar to that of *phusis*. In relation to this I think that earth shares the two moments of the movement of *phusis*, namely the emerging in itself and, at the same time, the concealing in what emerges, i.e., *sterēsis* in *phusis*. If we recall the point about the status of *sterēsis* as the hidden essence of *phusis*, then earth can be interpreted as naming especially the self-withholding essence of *phusis*. Earth as the sheltering agent is beyond the reach of any possibility of penetration. It simply withholds itself from any kind of disclosure that does not reveal earth as self-secluding. Michel Haar³⁴ describes this aspect of earth as not allowing any explication or exposition (SE 57). Accordingly, I think that this not-allowing can also be read as an event or process in the sense that earth does not simply and passively remain closed off, rather it resists any attempts that try to break into this enclosedness. Hence Heidegger uses the expression “*zerschellen*”, which is rendered as “to shatter” in the English translation (OWA 172, GA 5 36). I take this resistance to be the essential characteristic of earth. However, it would also be a mistake to think of earth as an active agency, which would substantialize earth by ascribing

³⁴ Michel Haar, *The Song of the Earth: Heidegger and the Grounds of the History of Being*. Indiana University Press.

some sort of subjective characteristics to it. In turn, this would reanimate the very schema of thinking that Heidegger tries to overcome.

Near the beginning of this section I said that earth gains its proper characteristic in and through the work of art. So the question is how the artwork is capable of bringing earth into its ownmost essence. However, it is not unproblematic to interpret earth as the self-concealing and to say that the essence of earth is indeed disclosed or unconcealed in and through the work of art. In the following I will explain in what manner earth is revealed as essentially self-secluding in the artwork. Moreover, this explanation will also help to articulate how the work of art discloses the essential belonging together of *phusis* and *technē*, and the significance of earth in this belonging together. Actually, the following quote is central in order to understand the web of relations that have been described above. Heidegger says, “[t]he work lets earth be an earth.” (OWA 172). Here the significant term is “letting be”, the work of the artwork is described not as a doing or making, rather it suggests almost the other extreme³⁵. It is a releasing of earth so that earth becomes what it is. This is the only possible way to reveal earth properly, any other attempt at disclosing it will be futile, since earth is irreducible to any terms or conceptions that are alien to it. When the attempt is made to subsume earth under rational or calculative conceptions it does not show itself at all (OWA 172). Accordingly, what is specifically meant by the resistance of earth is this movement of holding-back from any kind of representational type of thinking and from any kind of presentification. Earth can only be revealed as something essentially self-secluding and irreducible. The letting-be of the artwork is capable of this kind of revealing, as I have been discussing (OWA 173). Thus it can be suggested that the work of art itself also shelters earth and does not let earth sink into a simple concealedness or disappearance. This also leads to the conclusion that it is the artwork that puts forth earth into presence as something not-present, since earth is disclosed as the irreducible self-withholding as such.

Now the relation between earth and *sterēsis* should have become clear. Earth, as it is disclosed in the artwork, is the very movement of self-withholding itself. Self-

³⁵This “letting be” will be discussed further in the conclusion of this thesis.

withdrawal is revealed as the essential characteristic of earth through the artwork. Therefore I think that earth names the fundamental movement of the presencing that occurs in *phusis*, namely absencing, *sterēsis*. This is because the *sterēsis* of *phusis* also names the resistance to presentification, and in the presencing of *phusis* there is always an absencing, as I have attempted to explicate in the previous section. Moreover, this means that the work of art becomes the “presencing of an absencing”, since the artwork places this self-withdrawal of earth into an appearance. It is through the work of art that earth does not simply disappear, on the contrary, earth appears, in other words, presences as essentially self-secluding. Here it is important to notice that there is a certain parallel between the artwork and *morphē*, because *morphē* is the movement of placing-into-appearance, namely placing the orderable (*hule*) into a certain shape (*eidos*). In addition, we also saw that in this placing there is also an absencing, since while *hule* is placed into one possible shape all the other possibilities are withheld in that very shape. Thus it can be said that the artwork becomes a dramatization of this movement in *phusis* by revealing earth as essentially self-withholding.

Furthermore, this articulation of earth reveals the relation between *technē* and *phusis*, since *technē* as art becomes the disclosure of the essence of *phusis* by revealing earth. *Phusis* needs *technē* as art in order to be held in the open. Yet in this account it seems that *phusis* and *technē* are not co-dependent, but that only *phusis* depends on *technē* in order to manifest its essence. However, there are two aspects that demonstrate how earth is co-constitutive of the work of art and therefore how *technē* as art depends on the self-withholding essence of *phusis*. The first one is that the artwork is not an external force that bestows the proper essence on earth. Rather, it is co-constituted by the very process of earth’s self-withholding. In other words, the work of art also becomes what it is by revealing this resistential essence of earth. The second aspect that shows the dependence of *technē* on *phusis* is that the artwork depends on the capacity of earth to receive the intervention of the *technites*, i.e., the artist. However, the artwork does not allow “[...] the material to disappear, but rather causes it to come forth [as itself] for the very first time.” (OWA 171). Here Heidegger contrasts the artwork with a mere artefact and with equipment, which is also brought forth through *technē*. For instance, in the production of a shoe, the

shoemaker also depends on the capacity of the material to be affected and to become other than itself. However, in equipment the capacity of receiving a certain shape is not revealed as essentially belonging to *phusis* itself. In other words, the product itself is incapable of revealing this relation between *technē* and *phusis*, unlike, for instance, a painting by Van Gogh, such as “A Pair of Shoes”. Furthermore, in equipment the material itself disappears in its usefulness in the sense that far from being revealed as essentially self-withholding, it is disclosed as something ready-to-hand. On the other hand, the work of art radicalizes and discloses this dependence of *technē* on *phusis* by letting its work-material come to the fore for the first time. Moreover, the above-cited passage also confirms the claim that the work of art is the presencing of an absencing. Being essentially self-secluding the fundamental movement of earth is towards hiding itself, not-coming-to-presence as *present*, and *technē* as art reveals precisely this fundamental movement as the essence of earth. The work of art discloses the ‘appropriateness for’ of its material for a certain shape (*eidos*), but concomitantly it also brings forth the material’s self-withholding essence by revealing earth as essentially self-secluding. By doing so, the artwork also becomes a site where the relation between the disclosiveness of *technē* and the self-withholding of *phusis* is staged as an intensified tension. *Phusis* and *technē* are not unified in the sense that the difference between the two is eliminated. On the contrary, their difference is revealed by the very process of disclosing the resistential essence of earth. It can be said that the artwork itself is this very tensional relation. It is not a pre-existing stage on to which *phusis* and *technē* enter externally and separately and for which the work of art then establishes their relation by providing a ground. Rather, the artwork is an event in which the relation between *phusis* and *technē* unfolds and reveals itself. Furthermore, precisely because of this, the work of art is the site where *phusis* and *technē* also gain their essential characteristics in relation to one another, since they act upon one another as two counter-movements in the work of art. Thus the relation between *phusis* and *technē* can be defined as a strife in which the elements disclose one another by revealing each other’s limits. Therefore this kind of relation does not refer to a synthesis of the terms at a higher stage in which their difference is cancelled out. Rather, the differentiation of the terms is actually unfolded in and through this polemical – in the sense of *polemos* –

relation. Yet because these elements gain their essential characteristics in their counter-acting on each other, their essential inseparability is also disclosed through this relation and this relation is set to work in the artwork. Therefore it can be concluded that the work of art discloses the essential belonging together of *phusis* and *technē*. This also means that *technē* as art reveals *poiēsis* as such. This is not only because the artwork discloses two modes of *poiēsis* with regard to their proper modes of bringing-forth, but also because the artwork discloses the primordial conflict in *poiēsis* itself, namely the tension between non-presence and presence, by revealing the self-withholding of earth.

Near the beginning of this chapter I underlined the importance of this tension. Now it can be qualified further In light of the analyses that have been carried out so far. Unless one understands the work of art as the happening of this tension between *phusis* and *technē*, it is impossible to see their essential belonging together. They will remain simply external to each other. Such thinking can at best try to formulate a model to establish the relation between these two external entities that will inevitably fall into the metaphysics of substantiality. However, Heidegger's thinking suggests the primordially of the relation itself, in other words, through the relation itself the related elements emerge as what they are. This mode of thinking saves us from the burden of attempting to establish an impossible relation between two separate and essentially external entities, and it also offers a way of thinking that does not substantialize or reify the phenomenon one is trying to think.

I have tried to show how the work of art discloses self-withholding or resistance as the essence of earth. At this point it becomes important to recall Heidegger's reading of Aristotle's understanding of *phusis* as the last echo of a supreme thinking, which refers to pre-Socratic thought, because to grasp the difference between Aristotle's understanding of *phusis* and that of the pre-Socratics, especially Heraclitus, will aid us in setting out the main problematic of this thesis. As I will now show, the aim is not to find out whether Aristotle's or Heraclitus' understanding of *phusis* has more influence on Heidegger's interpretation of *phusis*. Rather, the aim is to clarify what Heidegger's interpretation of *phusis*, which designates *sterēsis* as the essence of *phusis*, implies.

In Aristotle's thinking *phusis* does not mean being but rather is related to a certain mode of being, or a way of coming to being of a certain type of being. Daniel Dahlstrom's analysis, which he carries out in his article "Being at the Beginning: Heidegger's Interpretation of Heraclitus"³⁶, can shed light on the issue. He claims that, according to Heidegger, Heraclitus – whose thinking is considered to belong to the supreme thinking by Heidegger – neither considers *phusis* as a being nor as the totality of all beings, but rather as being (*Sein*) itself (HH 139). Accordingly, it can be said that Heidegger interprets Heraclitus' understanding of *phusis* as not referring to one particular region, but rather as referring to the very movement of coming to presence of all that is. I think that the reason behind what Heidegger calls the supremacy of pre-Socratic thinking lies in this understanding of *phusis* as the very movement of being itself. Mark Sinclair³⁷ also points out that Heidegger attempts to retrieve an originary meaning of *phusis* as "[...] the event of presence which allows each and every being to show itself [...]" (HAW 145).

However, in Aristotle's interpretation what is unfolded is that *sterēsis* or self-withholding occurs as a mode of presencing (*ousia*) and hence I think that Aristotle's thinking grasps the finitude in presencing itself. Following from this it can be said that there is a certain tension between Aristotle's understanding of *phusis* and Heraclitus', because while the movement of *phusis* refers to the very movement of being in Heraclitus, on the other hand, *sterēsis*, as essentially belonging to *phusis*, emerges as a mode of presencing. Therefore it can be concluded that for Heidegger the issue is to understand *sterēsis* as belonging to being itself, not only to one way of being. Therefore Heraclitus' interpretation of *phusis* as describing the very movement of being itself becomes important, while Aristotle's conceptualization becomes significant because of his designation of *sterēsis* as a mode of presencing.

Another point with regard to the difference between Aristotle and Heraclitus is the issue of the ontological difference. Dahlstrom clearly asserts that for Heidegger Heraclitus' understanding of *phusis* is not the being of beings, while the difference between being and a being is more of an issue for Aristotle (HH 139). On the other

³⁶ Daniel Dahlstrom, "Being at the Beginning: Heidegger's Interpretation of Heraclitus", in Daniel Dahlstrom (ed.), *Interpreting Heidegger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

³⁷ Mark Sinclair, *Heidegger, Aristotle and the Work of Art: Poiesis in Being* London: Palgrave, 2006.

hand, Gregory Fried, in his book *Heidegger's Polemos*³⁸, offers an account of Heidegger's relation to Heraclitus on the basis of Heidegger's interpretations of Fragment 53, the fragment on *polemos*, i.e., strife. Fried claims that Heidegger's notions of strife (*der Streit*) and confrontation (*die Auseinandersetzung*) are based on Heidegger's interpretation of the Heraclitean notion of *polemos* and take a fundamental place in Heidegger's thinking. Fried asserts that *polemos* understood as strife or confrontation indicates a process of differentiation (HP 15-18, 30-34).

In light of this it can be held that Heraclitus' thinking is also important for thinking the difference between being and beings, since it grasps the very movement of differentiation itself through the notion of *polemos*. But Fried's analysis becomes much more interesting and illuminating when he says that this notion of confrontation (*Auseinandersetzung*) "[...] extends beyond beings, to the thinking of Dasein, and finally to the history of Being itself [...]" (HP 39). As a result, if we accept that Heidegger's thinking of strife and *Auseinandersetzung* is based on his reading of Heraclitus, then we can say that *polemos* describes the very movement within the history of being in which the *difference* between the giving and being is unfolded. Therefore it can be said that Heidegger also finds elements of the thinking of difference in Heraclitus' thought. Yet both Dahlstrom's and Fried's views show that Heidegger's relation both to Aristotle and to Heraclitus is not a simple matter. But to decide which one of the relations is more important for Heidegger's thinking is beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, the aim of this thesis is not to offer an account of the history of Heidegger's intellectual development. Nevertheless, Fried's account supports my claim that a certain type of tension prevails in Heidegger's thinking as a whole. This tension, namely strife, at the same time holds the elements together and sets them apart. This makes it possible to think a belonging-together in which the difference between the elements itself is disclosed. I have tried to describe how this differentiation takes place in the strife between world and earth as well as in *phusis* and *technē*. This comparison between Aristotle and Heraclitus with the help of some especially relevant secondary literature helped us to come to grips with the

³⁸ Gregory Fried, *Heidegger's Polemos: From Being to Politics*. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2000.

issue at stake. Now I will draw out the problematic of this thesis by means of a further discussion based on the analyses so far.

I will suggest that the issue for Heidegger is to think this primordial movement of *phusis*, which can be defined as a self-withholding, *sterēsis*, or resistance, that belongs to being itself, and to think the ontological difference in relation to this fundamental movement. However, I do not think that the issue of the ontological difference is limited to the difference between being (*Sein*) and *a* being (*Seiendes*). It is also related to the issue of the history of being with respect to the difference between the epochal names of being and those names giving themselves³⁹. Furthermore, in “On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις”, Heidegger counts history and art as events that happen of and by themselves (ECP 201). This can be interpreted as an extension of this self-emergence without any agency to realms which are conventionally considered as human being’s ‘ownmost’ achievements, such as art and history, and we can also add technology to this list. This is not to say that human being does not belong to these areas essentially. Rather, the point is that s/he is not the subject behind these activities. Furthermore, this attempt can also be read as an endeavour to think human being outside of subjectivistic and anthropocentric conceptions. Therefore Heidegger’s attempt to retrieve the originary meaning of *phusis* can be read as part of his ongoing project of the destruction (*Destruktion*) of metaphysics that culminates in the age of modern technology.

In light of this it can be said that the resistential essence of earth becomes a fundamental issue in Heidegger’s thinking as a whole. Accordingly, the problem of *technē* as art has a pre-eminent place with respect to this issue, since Heidegger offers art as a space in which this resistential essence can reveal itself. Therefore this thesis, by elaborating earth as resistance, seeks to unfold how the work of art can take part in the self-overcoming of metaphysics. To achieve this I will attempt to articulate the importance and centrality of this resistance in Heidegger’s thinking. Accordingly, I will also contextualize this issue of resistance in terms of the history of being and modern technology in order to show how this multifaceted self-withdrawal takes place on different occasions.

³⁹ This point will be clarified in the next chapter on the basis of Heidegger’s notion of *Ereignis*.

Chapter 3

Being, Truth and Resistance

In the previous chapter I have attempted to show how Heidegger's notion of earth can be interpreted as constituting a very significant place in his thinking as an elaboration of the self-withdrawal of being. In relation to this I have also tried to articulate how the artwork gains an ontological importance in this context by showing how art is capable of disclosing the essential characteristic of earth, namely self-seclusion. In light of this it has been shown that this thesis aims at explicating in what ways the work of art articulates this self-withdrawal of being, and how this articulation can take place in the self-overcoming of metaphysics. In other words, the main problematic of this thesis is to explicate how the artwork's disclosure of the self-withdrawal of being can actuate a turning within metaphysics, specifically by examining the continuity between ancient *technē* and *Ge-stell* (see ch.3.2). In connection with this, the issue of the self-withdrawal of being becomes central for understanding both the continuity within metaphysics and the possibility of the self-overcoming of metaphysics. After having delineated the general framework and the main problematic of this thesis, in this chapter I will discuss the role of the self-withholding element in Heidegger's understanding of the history of being. Therefore, in the following, I will not attempt to give an exhaustive account of the history of being in Heidegger's thought, even if this were possible. Rather, the aim is to elaborate how this self-withdrawal of being has a pre-eminent role in Heidegger's understanding of the history of being

To understand the centrality of the self-withholding in the history of being is necessary for the purposes of this thesis, since this will show how both the history of being and of metaphysics are constituted by a fundamental self-withholding. Moreover, a discussion of the relation between the self-withdrawal of being and the history of being will aid in understanding the issue of modern technology and the *Ge-stell*, i.e., enframing, in its relation both to the history of being and to that of metaphysics. Thus, after the discussion of the history of being, in the second section

of this chapter I will turn to the problem of modern technology and the issue of the completion of metaphysics in the age of modern technology. This will clarify how Western metaphysics is interpreted like a single event, in the sense of being internally coherent and continuous, in Heidegger's thought by showing the relation between the very first Greek determination of being as presencing and the essence of modern technology, namely *Ge-stell*. Accordingly, in the second section of this chapter I will examine Heidegger's notion of *Ge-stell* in its relation to the history of metaphysics and to the issue of truth as *alētheia*. Furthermore, this chapter as a whole will also help us to grasp how the artwork – as an articulation of the self-withdrawal of being via disclosing the earth as self-secluding – can become the site in which the process of the overcoming of metaphysics can be seen to take place.

3.1. The history of being

In the previous chapter I emphasized that for Heidegger being is understood in terms of presencing from the outset of metaphysics. In "Time and Being", too, Heidegger emphasizes the significance of the issue of presencing. Yet here he tries to show a more originary way in which being happens and which makes it possible to determine being as presencing in the first place. At this point it must be noted that Heidegger explicitly avoids saying that "being is" to describe this happening. I think that one of the reasons behind this avoidance is that "being is" is reminiscent of a type of thinking that understands being from beings, yet for Heidegger, being *is* not a being amongst other beings (H 4). Another reason is that it reduces being to a constant presence, in other words, "being is" reduces being to the modality of the present insofar as the beingness of being is expressed with the present participle "is" (TB 10-1). So "being is" is a mode of thinking being that reduces the event of presencing (*Anwesenung*) of being to the mere status of being present (*Gegenwart*). Instead, Heidegger makes use of a German idiom, namely "*Es gibt Sein*", i.e., literally "it gives" being, in order to define the unique way in which being happens (TB 5, ZS 5). After these preliminary remarks, I will now move on to the discussion of the "It gives".

3.1.1. The general structure of the “It gives”

In “Time and Being”, Heidegger shows how this happening of being is itself historical (*geschichtlich*) (TB 8, ZS 8). But it would be a tremendous mistake to think this historicity in terms of a chronological anthropocentric conception of history⁴⁰. By contrast, it can be said that Heidegger attempts to think the history of being in a way that takes its direction from the way or the manner in which being happens (TB 8). So the task is to think and determine history or historicity itself from out of being’s way of happening and not the other way around. In his article titled “The History of Being”⁴¹, Peter Warnek renders this thought as a responding and an attending to being’s manner of happening “in its utter singularity” (HB 155). To put it differently, the happening of being is idiosyncratic, unique and this is why the history of being cannot be thought in terms of any other history. Therefore only the way in which being happens can guide a thinking of the history of being.

At this point I would like to point out that in many of Heidegger’s texts there is a similar way of proceeding that takes its orientation from the matter at stake, in other words, what is to be thought is allowed to guide the manner of thinking. I consider this kind of procedure as phenomenological in the sense that it lets the phenomenon appear as itself from itself. And even in such a late text as “Time and Being”, which is a lecture delivered in 1962, one finds this basic element of the phenomenological method in Heidegger’s thinking. We see the same phenomenological move at the beginning of “The Origin of the Work of Art” when Heidegger says that the questioning will take its departure from the artwork itself.

Furthermore, if to think being from out of the giving of “It gives” is an attempt at thinking the historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) of being in its own terms and

⁴⁰ Heidegger explicitly asserts that the history of being is not like any other human history (TB 8). Heidegger makes a distinction between history as *Historie* and as *Geschichte*. The former refers to the inquiry that takes factual events, which occurred in the human sphere, as its object, and this type of history necessarily works with a chronological understanding of time. On the other hand, *Geschichte*, as its root *schicken* suggests, is related to what Heidegger calls the sending or the destining of being and it does not refer to a sequential order of time.

⁴¹ Peter Warnek, “The History of Being”, in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.

according to its unique way of happening, then this attempt can also be regarded as an important component of Heidegger's endeavour to prepare a way of thinking beyond metaphysics at the end of metaphysics⁴², since it is an attempt to think being beyond the metaphysics of subjectivity. I think that the following passage will clarify what has been said in this section so far and it will also give the direction to the rest of the section,

To think Being itself explicitly requires disregarding Being to the extent that it is only grounded and interpreted in terms of beings and for beings as their ground, as in all metaphysics. To think Being explicitly requires us to relinquish Being as the ground of beings in favor of the giving which prevails concealed in unconcealment, that is, in favor of the It gives. As the gift [*Gabe*] of this It gives, Being belongs to giving [*Geben*] [...] As allowing-to-presence [*Anwesenlassen*], it belongs to unconcealing; as the gift of unconcealing it is retained in the giving [...] There is, It gives Being [*Sein gibt Es*] as the unconcealing of presencing. (TB 6, ZS 6f.)

This passage actually foreshadows the manner of the happening of being, though in a very concise and implicit manner. According to this passage, the giving itself holds sway in the unconcealment of being, yet it remains concealed. Furthermore, the relation between the giving and being is also articulated in this passage. Accordingly, being belongs to the giving as the gift. In turn, this means that the giving itself remains concealed in order to let the unconcealment of being take place. However, the "It", or in German the "*Es*", of the giving must not be understood in terms of substantiality. Heidegger underlines that the "It" is just a grammatical subject which actually points to the lack of a substantial entity (TB 18). In relation to this point Daniela Vallega-Neu, in "*Ereignis: the Event of Appropriation*"⁴³ states that there is "no thing", no substantial entity that accomplishes the giving in the "It gives" (E 151). I take this to mean that the giving is an event that is primordial, and being emerges as the gift of this process insofar as it is unconcealed on the basis of the self-withholding of the giving. Having shown the general structure of the "It gives", which is the primordial event that gives being, now I will discuss how Heidegger qualifies this giving, and the relation between the historicity of being and the self-withdrawal that takes place in the giving.

⁴² This theme of the overcoming of metaphysics will also be discussed with regard to Heidegger's notion of *Ereignis* below in 3.1.3.

⁴³ Daniela Vallega-Neu, "*Ereignis: The Event of Appropriation*", in Bret W. Davis (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*. Durham: Acumen, 2010.

3.1.2. Self-withdrawal and the history of being

Near the beginning of this chapter it was noted that the issue of presencing, as determining being, still holds its importance in “Time and Being”. Heidegger’s analysis of presencing as the fundamental determination of being from the beginning of metaphysics gains a further significance in the context of the history of being. This is because this designation of being as presencing makes it possible to conceive both the singularity of the history of metaphysics and of being itself. On the basis of this delineation Heidegger speaks of a continuity within the history of metaphysics⁴⁴, as will be explained in ch.3.2.

Furthermore, the commencement of the history of metaphysics is first of all conditioned by this self-withholding of the giving, since by holding itself back it allows being to emerge as presencing, and then being becomes available to be thought in a certain manner. Thus, for Heidegger, this giving is a process of allowing-to-presence (*Anwesenlassen*) that discloses being as presence (*Anwesen*)⁴⁵. Heidegger calls this giving a sending (*Schicken*). In relation to this Heidegger thinks the history of being as a destining (*Geschick*) of being in which the sending and the “It” that sends both withdraw themselves, and hence the gift can be received in a discernible manner (TB 9 f.). The history of being is a destining in the sense that by sending being and letting being be revealed in a particular way it also inaugurates a certain way in which being can be revealed. To explicate this point, Heidegger states,

When Plato represents Being as *idea* [...], when Aristotle represents it as *energeia*, Kant as position, Hegel as the absolute concept, Nietzsche as the will to power, these are not doctrines advanced by chance, but rather words of Being as answers to a claim [*Zuspruch*] which speaks in the sending concealing itself, in the “there is, It gives, Being”. Always retained in the withdrawing sending, Being is unconcealed for thinking with its epochal abundance of transmutations. (TB 9, ZS 9f.)

I take this to mean that in the sending of being certain ways of responding to the disclosure of being are also projected, and that since being is given as discernible it becomes possible for being to be addressed in a specific manner, such as *idea* or the

⁴⁴ “An attempt to think about the abundance of Being’s transformations secures its first foothold [...] when we think Being in the sense of presencing.” (TB 6, translation modified).

⁴⁵ It must be noted that the lecture “Time and Being” is devoted to the relation between time and being. Heidegger’s designation of being as presencing and the giving as allowing-to-presence is a crucial move to show how being and time essentially belong together. However, in this section I will limit the discussion to the giving of being.

absolute concept. In accordance with this it can be said that the very first determination of being as presencing actuates a certain direction in the history of metaphysics in the sense that certain epochal transmutations become available, and hence we can speak about the singularity of the history of metaphysics. Although the issue of the continuity between the first beginning and the essence of modern technology will be discussed later on (see ch.3.2.1), for now it should be noted that nevertheless there is an affinity between this very first determination of being as presencing – in which the absencing, *sterēsis* or resistance still resonate – and the age of modern technology in which a complete presentification takes place.

If we return to our discussion of the history of being, we see that the movement in the history of being has two moments, firstly, the self-withholding of the giving and the “It” that gives, and secondly, the unconcealment of being. In relation to this Heidegger clearly explains that the term *epochē* does not mean a period of time in the history of being, but rather that it refers to the self-withholding as the primordial event that occurs in each and every epoch of the history of being (TB 9). I think that this explicates the centrality of the self-withdrawal as generative of the history of being. For Heidegger, this self-withholding (*An-sich-halten*) is the fundamental movement (*Grundzug*) in the event of giving (*Gabe*) (TB 9, ZS 9). In relation to this, in “Limits and Grounds of History: The Nonhistorical”⁴⁶, Michel Haar remarks that “[e]very epoch of History is *epochē*, which means a “holding itself back,” “self-suspension” or “withdrawal” of being, which goes hand in hand with its manifestation” (LG 3). So it can be stated that *epochē* does not only refer to the historical determinations, or openings of being, but also, and more importantly, refers to the self-withholding of being as primordial. Based on these points I think that these two moments, namely the self-withdrawal and the unconcealment of being that constitute the history of being, can be understood as two counter-acting movements. Accordingly, this giving should be understood in terms of Heidegger’s notion of strife, since in it too there are two counter-movements that are yet inseparable and conditioning one another. The gift, i.e., being and the “It” that gives, are at the same

⁴⁶ Michel Haar, “Limits and Grounds of History: The Nonhistorical”, *Epochē*, vol. 1, 1993; 1-11.

time held together and apart in the giving⁴⁷. To the extent that this giving holds itself apart from its gift, being becomes available for thinking. In this sense the process of giving is the happening of the strife between the self-concealing of the “It gives” and unconcealment of being in a particular manner.

Moreover, because in this giving the “It gives” withholds itself in favour of its gift, the “It gives” remains unthought. Hence Heidegger says that “[i]n the beginning of Western thinking, Being is thought, but not the “It gives” as such.” (TB 8). In turn, this means that there is not only a fundamental self-withholding in the history of being, but also that the history of being as co-constituted by this self-withdrawal is concealed throughout Western metaphysics. Therefore it is very important to understand that there is a double concealment, or a concealment of the concealing in the history of Western metaphysics⁴⁸. At this point I would like to draw on Karin de Boer’s study titled *Thinking in Light of Time*⁴⁹. In this study she asserts that the determination of being as presencing transforms itself into a determination of being as constant presence and thereby the self-withholding, non-appearing – she calls it “absence” as opposed to presence – characteristic of every sending is expelled from the happening of being (LT 182). In light of this it can be said that the uniqueness and singularity of the history of Western metaphysics does not only lie in the destining of being as presence but also lies in how the fundamental movement of every sending is concealed. I think that this is why for Heidegger the history of metaphysics is the history of the self-withdrawal of sending and therefore inevitably leads to the oblivion of being (*Seinsvergessenheit*) (TB 41, ZS 44). This is because while the designation of being as presencing culminates in the total presentification of all that is, the fundamental movement of the sending of being also gets more and

⁴⁷ Furthermore, not to think the giving itself as a strife would turn this giving into a substantial entity that is separate both from the “It” that gives and from the gift, namely being. Moreover, this issue of strife will appear again during the discussion of the event of appropriation as the relation between *Ereignis* and *Enteignis*.

⁴⁸ This issue of double concealment is an important element in understanding Heidegger’s sense of the history of metaphysics and it will also be discussed in its relation to modern technology later on in this chapter.

⁴⁹ Karin de Boer, *Thinking in the Light of Time: Heidegger’s Encounter with Hegel*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2000.

more covered over⁵⁰. So far, I have tried to describe what Heidegger calls the giving and have shown that it is a process, or an event which can be characterized as a strife between the self-withholding of the “It gives” and the disclosure of the gift, i.e., being. In addition, this analysis of the event of giving has also prepared the way for a conception of the history of metaphysics as a singular event (see ch.3.1.1).

Bearing these analyses in mind I will now attempt to explicate the core issue with respect to the giving of being, namely *Ereignis*, i.e., the event of appropriation, also translated as enowning. The issue of *Ereignis* is crucial for Heidegger’s understanding of the history of being, because it does not merely describe the event of the giving of being but also designates the manner of this giving. More crucially, I hope that the following discussion of *Ereignis* will also clarify the significance of the problematic of self-withholding with regard to the history of metaphysics and the possibility of the self-overcoming of metaphysics. This is because, according to Heidegger, *Ereignis* can be regarded as constituting the possibility of the overcoming of metaphysics by articulating the self-withholding of being.

3.1.3. *Ereignis* and the history of being

In “Time and Being” Heidegger delineates the event of giving as *Ereignis* (TB 19). In this event being is appropriated in the sense that being as a gift becomes available or appropriate for being revealed in a certain manner, as I have tried to describe above. I think that it would be useful, at this point, to remind ourselves of the primary aim that Heidegger expressed at the beginning of “Time and Being”. He asked that being should be thought from out of the giving of the *Es gibt* in order to think being as being and not in terms of beings as their ground. So by determining the event of giving as *Ereignis*, Heidegger offers us a way of thinking being⁵¹ itself as the event of appropriation (TB 21).

⁵⁰This makes more sense when one considers the position of *Ge-stell* in the history of metaphysics, since *Ge-stell* marks the epoch of the complete presentification of beings as a whole and concomitantly the complete concealment of the self-withholding characteristic of being. In the following section, I will try to explicate how this concealment of the concealing takes places through *Ge-stell*, i.e., the essence of modern technology, with reference to Heidegger’s understanding of truth as *alētheia*, and the history of being and metaphysics.

⁵¹ I believe that here Heidegger does not use being in the sense of its epochal determinations, but rather that it refers to being as such, in other words, the very event of coming-to-presence itself, because if here being is taken in the sense of an epochal determination, then it means that *Ereignis* is another name in the history of being. However, for Heidegger *Ereignis* is not another name for being.

However, Heidegger makes a significant distinction between his notion of being as the event of appropriation and the previous names of being, such as *idea*, *energeia*, or will to power etc. He claims that the event of appropriation is not a unifying concept under which being is subsumed, unlike the previous formations of being (TB 21). In connection with this Heidegger also explains that *Ereignis* is not another naming or determination of being in the history of being (TB 40f., ZS 43). Robert Bernasconi⁵² interprets this point to mean that *Ereignis* as a word emerges out of “[...] the experience of *the lack of a word for being*” (QL 86). Furthermore, Heidegger states that the event of appropriation does not allow its essential and proper characteristic (*Eigenstes*) to come to presence, into unconcealment. It withdraws itself from unconcealment. Therefore Heidegger says that there belongs an expropriation (*Enteignis*) to the event of appropriation (TB 22f., ZS 23). This means that there is a reserve in the event of appropriation that does not become available; in other words, there is also an event of making-unavailable in *Ereignis*. I think that what Bernasconi calls the “lack” is this unavailability, or self-withdrawal, and his interpretation suggests that it is the necessary condition of *Ereignis*, since *Ereignis* itself arises out of an experience of this self-withdrawal as such. The event of appropriation shows itself as a lack of a word or name for being, since it does not make itself available for a discernible name to which being can be reduced. Based on this it can be said that in the sending of being and in the discernible or epochal names for being there remains an unavailable reserve that cannot be appropriated, and the thought of *Ereignis* engages with this unavailability as such. Therefore Heidegger claims that the concealment that characterizes the history of metaphysics shows itself *as* concealment only in the thinking of *Ereignis* (TB 41).

At this juncture it is of the utmost importance to understand *Ereignis* as the event in which the self-withholding that constitutes Western metaphysics reveals itself *as concealing*, because by disclosing the fundamental movement of the history of metaphysics as concealing it becomes possible for *Ereignis* to indicate the event of

On the contrary, *Ereignis* instantiates itself as the namelessness of being, which will be discussed a little later in this section.

⁵² Robert Bernasconi, *The Question of Language in Heidegger's History of Being*. New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1985.

the giving of being as a strife between concealment and unconcealment. Furthermore, this is why *Ereignis* does not designate a name for being in its discernibility. Rather, it is a thinking of being from out of the giving itself, and therefore it describes the event of this giving in which the “It gives” is disclosed as self-concealing. Accordingly, I think that *Ereignis* constitutes a break in the history of metaphysics or, more precisely, *Ereignis* alludes to a turning point in the history of metaphysics. This is because *Ereignis* engages with the fundamental movement of the history of being and discloses this movement as the primordial self-withholding, *epochē* or resistance of being in the sense of the movement of making-unavailable (as will be shown in the following section) that has been covered over step-by-step throughout Western metaphysics. This brings us to the issue of the relation between the self-withholding and the historicity of being. In the following part of this section this crucial relation between the self-withdrawal and historicity will be addressed to show how the self-withholding element – as making-unavailable, i.e., resistance – is generative of the history of being and of metaphysics. In turn, this will help us to understand how *Ereignis* can bear the possibility of the self-overcoming of metaphysics by elaborating the self-withdrawal of being.

If we recall that each epoch of being is at the same time an *epochē* in the sense of holding back then this means that there is also a reserve that is not historical which co-constitutes the history of being together with the epochal transformations. So it can be said that there is always an *epochē* that is a residue, which cannot be exhausted by the epochal determination of being. In relation to this Heidegger says that the self-withholding element, namely the *Enteignis* in *Ereignis*, is unhistorical (*ungeschichtlich*) (TB 41, ZS 44). Therefore I think that the non-historical aspect of the self-withholding that takes place in *Ereignis* is this inexhaustible and irreducible residue, which does not make itself available for any historical determination. However, this does not mean that this non-historical element is external to the history of being. However, this does not mean that this non-historical element is external to the history of being and does not enter into the historical openings.

In order to understand how this “un-historicity” is related to history, to have a look at Heidegger’s understanding of un-truth as concealing and the relation between

the essence of truth and un-truth would be helpful. In “On the Essence of Truth”⁵³ Heidegger devotes a section to the interpretation of untruth [*Un-Wahrheit*] as concealing (ET 148, GA 9 89, 6. sec., “Untruth as Concealing”). In this section he explains that the un-truth is the concealment of beings as a whole. In this context he speaks of un-truth as that which “[...] is most proper to the essence of truth.” (ET 148)⁵⁴. This is because the concealment (*lēthe*) is the primordial element of the event of truth as unconcealment, i.e., *a-lētheia*. The lethic aspect is prior to any unconcealment. So I think that one should consider the “un” of the un-historical as analogous to Heidegger’s understanding of un-truth, as properly belonging to the historical in the sense that on the basis of this un-historical, the historical disclosure of being can take place. Hence in “Time and Being” Heidegger says that “[a]ppropriation is in itself *expropriation*. This word contains in a manner commensurate with Appropriation the early Greek *lethe* in the sense of concealing.” (TB 41).

Following from this we can summarize three main aspects that designate the relation between the non-historical element, namely *Enteignis*, and the historical element in the event of appropriation. The first is that *Enteignis* as the primal self-withholding is more originary than every historically determined configuration in the history of being. The second is that on the basis of this non-historical, primal self-withholding, a historical openness takes places that renders it possible to disclose being in a historical manner. Thus we can conclude that the event of appropriation can be understood as the strife between *Enteignis*, the expropriation of being, and the appropriation of being that reveals itself in epochal determinations. So the event of appropriation is a constant *polemos*, or a strife through which these two fundamental movements happen concomitantly. These two aspects lead to the third aspect of the relation between the non-historical element and the historical one.

The third and last aspect is that this non-historicity is what makes the other beginning, namely a post-metaphysical thinking, possible by constituting an

⁵³ Martin Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth”, in William McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998; 136-54. Martin Heidegger, *Wegmarken, Gesamtausgabe 9*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976.

⁵⁴ This point about the relation between un-truth and the essence of truth will be taken up again with regard to the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia* below in ch.3.2.1.2.

unavailable reserve within the history of being. I think that Michel Haar's points with regard to the problematic of non-historicity are illuminating in this context. He explains that the non-metaphysical requires a non-historical element so that there is a reserve in being that is not and cannot be assimilated into metaphysics (LG 6). Without this non-historical characteristic it would be impossible to think being beyond metaphysics, since then there would be nothing that cannot be exhausted by metaphysics. The significance of this point stems from the fact that the non-historical element as designating the inexhaustibility of being – resistance in the sense of constituting an unavailable reserve that does not allow metaphysics to insert itself – is what makes the other beginning possible. So it can be said that this unhistorical character is also the condition of possibility of another history. Therefore it can be concluded that what Heidegger calls unhistorical (*ungeschichtlich*) is not external to history, on the contrary, it is generative of history.

To indicate the following issues connected to the relation between the unhistorical element and the historical one, it is noteworthy that in “The Origin of the Work of Art”, Heidegger says that “[u]pon the earth and in it, historical man grounds his dwelling in the world.” (OWA 172). At this point I would like to suggest that there is a parallel between the unhistorical element in the event of appropriation and Heidegger's notion of earth. This is because earth also appears to be the condition of possibility of the world's historical openness as the self-secluding element. In addition, Michel Haar's interpretations in the above-cited article also seem to suggest a similarity between earth and this unhistoricity in *Ereignis*. But he thinks that the earth is to be thought of as a “place” in which history and non-history are intertwined (LG 9)⁵⁵.

In light of this it can be concluded that the essential or fundamental movement (*Grundzug*) of the history of being is this self-withdrawal; and what Heidegger calls *Ereignis* is the happening of the disclosure of this withdrawal as a withdrawal. In this context it is called expropriation, *Enteignis*. Furthermore, on the basis of this withdrawal one can talk about an overcoming of metaphysics and of the other beginning. If we accept that Heidegger's entire *oeuvre* is an attempt at

⁵⁵ This issue will be discussed in detail later on (see ch.4.1.2).

preparing a new path for a thinking beyond metaphysics then the issue of self-withholding – or what I call resistance – shows its significance more pressingly as an important component of Heidegger’s thinking as a whole. After having shown the centrality of self-withdrawal in the history of being and specifically in Heidegger’s notion of *Ereignis*, I will now discuss the relation between *Ereignis* and the essence of modern technology, *Ge-stell*, in general terms in order to establish a basis for the discussion of modern technology in the next section.

Towards the end of “The Principle of Identity”⁵⁶ Heidegger states that the essence of modern technology is a prelude to what he calls the event of appropriation, i.e., *Ereignis* (ID 36f.). This statement reminds us of the conclusion of “The Question Concerning Technology” which speaks of a twofold characteristic of modern technology, namely the danger and the saving power that grow at the same time in *Ge-stell* (QCT 340). Yet how can *Ge-stell* be understood as a “prelude” to the event of appropriation, if *Ge-stell* reduces everything to a mere disposable entity that is constantly available for human use? How can its overarching humanism or anthropocentrism also bear a saving power?

It can preliminarily be said that the all-pervasive disclosure in *Ge-stell* of all that is as calculable and manipulable, namely as *Bestand*, also brings about the complete concealment of the self-withdrawal that prevails in every epochal sending of being. In principle the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* entails that nothing is unavailable. Accordingly, the forgetting of being’s essential movement culminates in the age of modern technology, and this is one of the aspects that make it possible to think *Ge-stell* as the culmination of metaphysics. In connection with this it can be said that what Heidegger calls expropriation, *Enteignis*, occurs in and through the *Ge-stell*.

However, this does not amount to equating *Ge-stell* with *Ereignis*. The mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* is not a revealing of the belonging of this expropriation to the event of appropriation. Rather, through *Ge-stell* this expropriating essence of *Ereignis* happens to the extent that being completely abandons beings. Vallega-Neu’s comment in the above-cited text is instructive. She emphasizes that for a thinking to

⁵⁶ Martin Heidegger, “The Principle of Identity”, in *Identity and Difference*. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.

enter into the event of appropriation this complete abandonment of being and the expropriation must take place (E 149). In connection with this *Ge-stell* is the prelude to *Ereignis* in the sense that this fundamental movement in the history of being takes place in a radical way in the all-encompassing disclosure of *Ge-stell* through which beings as a whole are revealed as endlessly available. If we also recall Bernasconi's statement saying that the *Ereignis* arises out of the experience of a lack, we can say that *Ge-stell* is a prelude to *Ereignis* as long as it brings about this lack more and more pressingly. In the final analysis *Ge-stell* can be regarded as the complete expropriation of being, because it completely obfuscates the essential self-withholding of being.

So far I have discussed the relation between *Ge-stell* and *Ereignis* in a preliminary way and in general terms. I will now move on to the discussion of the position of *Ge-stell* in the history of metaphysics and its relation to truth as *alētheia*. I think that this discussion will also lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the relation between *Ge-stell* and *Ereignis* which will be explicated in the conclusion of the following section. However, before proceeding, one last preliminary explication of the danger and the saving power is needed, which will prepare the necessary background for the discussion proper. According to Heidegger, the extreme danger of *Ge-stell* stems from the double concealment in the sense that *Ge-stell* even conceals that it is a mode of disclosure (which will be discussed in detail below in ch.3.2). In the following section the continuity between ancient *technē* and *Ge-stell*, and the possibility of a turning in the history of Western metaphysics will also be discussed in relation to this issue of double concealment. Therefore the possibility of the saving power will also be examined with regard to the double concealment that prevails in *Ge-stell*.

3.2. The history of metaphysics and *Ge-stell*: the forgetting of concealment

As I pointed out in the introduction, the issue of *technē* has a central importance from very early on in Heidegger's thinking. However, one finds Heidegger's first comprehensive and explicit engagement with the issue of modern technology in a series of lectures given in 1949⁵⁷. A revised version of one of these lectures, namely

⁵⁷ This series is collectively called "*Einblick in Das Was Ist*" ("Insight into What Is") and the four lectures it consists of, delivered on 1 December 1949 in Bremen, are titled "Das Ding", "Das Ge-stell", "Die Gefahr", and "Die Kehre".

“Das Ge-stell” was published as “The Question Concerning Technology” in 1954. The following discussion of Heidegger’s thinking about modern technology will mainly be based on this text.

To begin with, in the technology essay Heidegger starts his inquiry by making a distinction with regard to the objective of the questioning. He states that the questioning after technology is not a questioning of technological apparatuses, i.e., technological beings, but rather that the text seeks to enquire into the essence of technology, which is not itself technological but is the condition of possibility of all technical relations (QCT 311). I think that acknowledging this distinction is a prerequisite for a proper understanding of the text. This distinction is not only important because modern technology and its essence are said to be of a fundamentally different nature – as becomes clear near the end of the text – but it is also significant because this distinction also serves as a starting point for the questioning that engages with the challenging claim concerning the notion of essence that prevails and exhibits itself in the age of modern technology⁵⁸. Another reason for the significance of this differentiation is that it becomes possible to question modern technology from a non-anthropocentric perspective, because the delineation of the essence of technology as nothing technological also means that this essence cannot be exhausted by anthropocentric-instrumentalist accounts of technology. Furthermore, to say that the essence of technology is nothing technological and thereby not a technical being also instantiates the difference between the ontic and the ontological. While the former designates a particular being or realm of beings, the latter indicates the manner in which beings as a whole are disclosed in a particular way, and in this sense *Ge-stell* is the condition of possibility of all technological relations. It is a mode of disclosure that reveals everything that exists in a certain manner. Therefore the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia* must be examined in order to comprehend Heidegger’s understanding of modern technology and of the significance of *Ge-stell* in relation to the history of metaphysics. However, this means that the position of *Ge-stell* in the history of Western metaphysics must be examined before proceeding to an elaboration of the relation between *Ge-stell* and

⁵⁸ This problematic of the challenge with regard to the notion of essence that is raised by *Ge-stell* will be examined in the last section of this chapter.

alētheia. This is because to investigate the position of *Ge-stell* in Western metaphysics will show i) how the singularity of Western metaphysics lies in its being essentially technological and, with respect to this, in what sense *Ge-stell* is the culmination of Western metaphysics, and ii) how this singularity is also co-constituted by a deterioration of *alētheia* in which the lethic essence of *alētheia* is more and more forgotten. This discussion aims to set out the necessary background for an elaboration of the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia*. On the basis of this background I will argue that *Ge-stell* is a moment within the event of truth, i.e., *alētheia*, insofar as it belongs to the essence of truth. Furthermore, after explicating in what sense *Ge-stell* belongs to the event of truth, I will also show, by examining how *Ge-stell* challenges the traditional metaphysical concepts of essence and truth, that although *Ge-stell* is the culmination of Western metaphysics it is also a turning point in the history of metaphysics. This examination will also clarify how the completion of metaphysics should be interpreted in the way that Heidegger indicated. In turn the issue of the challenging and the completion of metaphysics that occurs in *Ge-stell* will be the initial point for the discussion of the relation between *Ge-stell* and art.

3.2.1. *Ge-stell* and the singularity of Western metaphysics: The technological essence of Western metaphysics

3.2.1.1. From *poiēsis* to *Ge-stell*

As I have repeatedly emphasized, the designation of being as *poiēsis* is what makes Western metaphysics a singular event in its entirety, and in this section I will argue that for Heidegger the essence of technology is the final configuration of Western metaphysics, which is destined/sent (*geschickt*) in the first beginning. Thus I will try to explicate the relation between *Ge-stell* and *poiēsis* in order to show how the development of Western metaphysics can be taken as an articulation of the technological essence that culminates in the age of modern technology.

For Heidegger, Western metaphysics is inherently technological or productionist in the sense that the beingness of beings is understood in terms of being-produced, or being-fabricated, i.e., *poiēsis*, from the beginning of metaphysics. However, throughout the history of metaphysics, *technē* and the technical stance towards beings as a whole become more and more determining for the understanding

of *poiēsis*, in other words *technē* becomes the guiding thread for the understanding of the beingness of beings. In relation to this Hans Ruin, in his article “*Ge-stell*: Enframing as the Essence of Technology”, claims that for Heidegger Greek thinking, including that of Aristotle, is guided by an understanding of being as something fabricated, as something that has been produced (*hergestellt*), as having been brought into appearance, and this way of making being appear is the way of *technē* (GE 185). Moreover, Miguel de Beistegui, in his study titled *The New Heidegger*⁵⁹, also suggests that the singularity of Western metaphysics lies in its mode of disclosure of beings as a whole on the basis of a certain understanding of *technē* (NH 103). In connection with this, we can say that *poiēsis* is understood in a technical way from the beginning of metaphysics, and throughout the history of metaphysics this technical disposition is further elaborated such that finally *technē* alone comes to designate bringing-forth into presence. More importantly, it can be concluded that this technical disposition is the element that constitutes Western metaphysics.

Furthermore, if we recall Walter Brogan’s remark which states that Western metaphysics has failed to think the ontological difference partly because beings as a whole are understood solely in terms of *technē*, then this means that the technical understanding of *poiēsis* is itself constitutive of Western metaphysics. In turn, the continual failure throughout the history of metaphysics to think the ontological difference can be understood as a result of the technological understanding of *poiēsis*, i.e., the beingness of beings. This is because the fundamental movement of the happening of being, namely self-withholding, gets more and more concealed throughout Western metaphysics as it is dominated by a technological disposition. Furthermore, this concealment also paves the way for the understanding of the happening of being solely in terms of presence, in other words, the originary absencing that prevails in the event of presencing is forgotten. Thus, in this context it becomes possible to think *Ge-stell* as the culmination of Western metaphysics, since *Ge-stell* occurs as the complete presentification of beings as a whole.

At this juncture, before continuing to the discussion of the position of *Ge-stell* in the history of metaphysics, I would like to return briefly to the issue of the

⁵⁹ Miguel de Beistegui, *The New Heidegger*. London: Continuum, 2005.

difference between *phusis* and *technē*, because the claim that the Greek understanding of being, including that of Aristotle, has been guided by a certain sense of production may lead to an apparent contradiction with the previous analyses that were carried out in the second chapter. Furthermore, by revisiting this issue I hope to clarify further in what sense Western metaphysics is essentially technological. In the second chapter I attempted to show that for Heidegger there is a fundamental difference between *phusis* and *technē* in Aristotle's thought, although they have a primordial kinship as both of them are modes of *poiēsis*. In relation to this to say that in Aristotle's thinking being is understood in terms of production, and even to equate *poiēsis* with production, may be seen as a contradiction. However, here production, i.e., *producere*, specifically means to bring forth, to lead something into presence, i.e., *poiēsis*. Thus production names the common characteristic of *technē* and *phusis*.

Furthermore, the difference between *phusis* and *technē* is not a difference between "technical, un-natural production" and "natural growing" in the modern sense of the terms. The difference between these two modes of production is rather this: *phusis* has the principle for coming into being in itself, and the emergence of a being according to *phusis* and its movement are directed towards its being, namely *phusis*. But since there is always a non-coincidence between a natural being (*phusei on*) and its being (*phusis*), the movement of *phusis* is a constant movement that is described as being-on-the-way by Heidegger (see ch.2.3). It is a constant working (in the sense of *energeia*) that can never fully actualize itself, since there will always a reserve, which resists coming-to-presence by withholding itself, of what is not present and cannot be present. In the context of this thesis this is the key point with regard to *phusis*, namely that in *phusis* this movement of coming into being is also co-constituted by a self-withholding, i.e., *sterēsis*, or what I call resistance to coming-to-presence.

On the other hand, beings according to *technē* depend on something other than themselves to come into being and their movement ends upon their having been produced in the sense that their movement is not *energeia ateles*, and therefore there is no constant movement. The movement in *technē* is not constant and continuous. Having demonstrated that both *phusis* and *technē* designate a certain mode of

production and having addressed the difference between them we can now return to our main discussion, namely the position of *Ge-stell* in the history of metaphysics and the technological essence of metaphysics.

It should be noted that the interpretations of all three commentators cited here (Ruin, de Beistegui, and Brogan) indicate that *poiēsis* in the sense of *phusis* has been somehow subordinated to a technical understanding during the history of Western metaphysics. Furthermore, it can also be inferred that this subordination of *phusis* is a significant element of Western metaphysics as being essentially technological. The dominance of *technē* over *phusis* as the determinant meaning of *poiēsis* constitutes the history of Western metaphysics. Moreover, if we remind ourselves of de Boer's point stating that the history of Western metaphysics is a history of presentification through which the absencing that belongs to the happening of being is more and more "expelled" (LT 182, see ch.3.1.2), then the subordination of *phusis* becomes crucial. I think that the "hidden essence" of *phusis*, namely *sterēsis*, is the focal point of the matter at stake, and it is also this essence that makes this suppression so crucial. However, this also means that to say that *phusis* is completely suppressed from the realm of *poiēsis* would miss the point, since what is suppressed is not *phusis per se*. Rather, what is suppressed or forgotten throughout the history of metaphysics is the self-withholding or the resistential essence of *phusis*. This is because the self-withholding essence constitutes a counter-movement or a resistance to presentification, to making available. Therefore it can be argued that this essence becomes more and more forgotten or suppressed as the presentification of being develops in and through Western metaphysics. Thus I regard the technological essence of Western metaphysics as a continual suppression or forgetting of this essential self-withholding or resistance to the presentification of being. Furthermore, this presentification also means that metaphysics is an attempt at making being available which eventually forgets that there is always an unavailability of being, i.e., a reserve that can never be present and available but that always conceals and withdraws itself. This brings us to the crucial point with regard to the continuity between *poiēsis* as *technē* and *Ge-stell*.

At the beginning of this section it was noted that *Ge-stell* is a mode of revealing and this means that *Ge-stell*, like *poiēsis*, discloses beings as a whole in a

certain manner. However, what distinguishes *Ge-stell* from the previous configurations in the history of metaphysics is the manner in which beings as a whole are disclosed as endlessly available, namely as *Bestand*, i.e., standing-reserve (QCT 332). Here Heidegger observes a fundamental shift in Western metaphysics, since beings as a whole are no longer disclosed as objects in the sense of *Gegenstand*, that which stand over against (a subject), rather they are disclosed merely as *Bestand*, i.e., what is ready to be calculated, planned, mobilized, i.e., to be mastered at will⁶⁰. It is precisely from this that the distinctiveness of *Ge-stell* arises. But I think that it is this distinctiveness or difference that brings the technical essence of Western metaphysics into its fulfilment. The following discussion is intended to substantiate and explicate this point.

According to Heidegger, this shift from *Gegenstand* to *Bestand* can be understood as the moment indicating the completion of Western metaphysics. At this point it should be remembered that the completion of metaphysics also means a gathering of all the previous metaphysical determinations of being in *Ge-stell*. With regard to this gathering it is noteworthy that *Ge-stell* consists of the root *stellen*, i.e., to posit, and the pre-fix *Ge* which denotes a continuity and/or repetition, and a gathering activity. Most of the commentators cited here draw attention to the fact that the culmination of metaphysics is also indicated in this gathering of the previous determinations of being such as *herstellen*, namely to produce in the sense of *poiēsis*, and *vorstellen*, i.e., to represent⁶¹.

Furthermore, *Ge-stell* is a system⁶² that posits or places everything that exists in terms of orderability through which beings are reduced to a mere stock or standing-reserve that is endlessly available. In other words, in *Ge-stell* there is no limit to its mode of disclosure in the sense that there is nothing that is essentially not

⁶⁰ Actually, this issue of mastery is the core of the matter regarding the completion of metaphysics in *Ge-stell*. I will explicate this point a little later in this section.

⁶¹ Miguel de Beistegui gives a helpful list of the different modes of positing activity that resonate in *Ge-stell*. See NH 111f.

⁶² Contrary to the convention of translating *Ge-stell* into English as “Enframing”, de Beistegui offers the word “System” as directly derived from the Greek “*systema*”. Interestingly, he thinks that Heidegger’s own term, i.e., *Ge-stell*, can be understood as a literal translation of this Greek word. He explains that the word consists of the prefix “*sys*” which means together and the verb “*istemi*” that means to place, to stand (NH 111).

orderable. Moreover, for Heidegger, this is what distinguishes *Ge-stell* from *poiēsis*. *Ge-stell* is not a bringing-forth (*herstellen*) as *poiēsis*, rather it is a challenging-forth (*herausfordern*), since *Ge-stell* does not allow any aspect of beings to remain concealed (QCT 320). In this sense in *Ge-stell* there is a totalizing demand that discloses everything that exists as entirely available, usable, manipulable. The meaning of *Ge-stell* and the difference between *Gegenstand* and *Bestand* lie in this demand. The demand in modern technology is not just excessive. Rather, in principle it is essentially endless. Hence it is not a bringing-forth but a challenging-forth, since it coerces and even loots and exploits every aspect of beings⁶³. In relation to this issue this demand of *Ge-stell* manifests itself mainly as the mastery of beings as a whole in the age of modern technology. This mastery mainly shows itself as the mastery over nature in which nature is regarded as a mere resource that can be organized, regulated and exploited without reserve. However, the object of this mastery is not exclusively nature. Rather, all that exists is revealed as available to mastery since in the challenging-forth of *Ge-stell* the very manner of coming-to-presence is reduced to being constantly available, in other words, the event of presencing itself is reduced to a constant orderability. Therefore, on the one hand, there is a continuity between ancient *poiēsis* and *Ge-stell*. On the other hand, *Ge-stell* is fundamentally different from *poiēsis*, because in ancient *poiēsis* to be means to come into presence, into the light from out of concealedness, hiddenness. So it designates a movement from non-present to present.

However, in *Ge-stell* being is reduced to constant presence and availability, thus the movement that designates the coming-to-presence is completely forgotten in the sense that there is no longer even a sense of movement in the understanding of being as constant presence. Actually, the mastery of being is the crux of the issue with respect to *Ge-stell* and its relation to *poiēsis* as *technē*. To explicate the crucial importance of this issue, I will once more draw on Hans Ruin's text in order to shed light on the problematic of the mastery of being. He asserts that "[t]o think the *Ge-stell* in the way indicated by Heidegger is therefore also to bring to awareness the

⁶³ In his book *The Gods and Technology: A Reading of Heidegger*. Albany: SUNY, 2006, Richard Rojcewicz explicates the difference between ancient technology and modern technology precisely by showing how in modern technology everything is transformed into a potential resource that can be exploited.

technological in thinking itself, the inner urge towards mastery [...]” (GE 192). In fact, in Ruin’s analysis what is crucial for this thesis is not the will or the urge towards mastery but the inner affinity of this *urge* to thinking itself. With the help of Ruin’s remark it can be claimed that metaphysical thinking is itself inherently technological since the technical stance towards beings constitutes the mode of thinking that forms the history of Western metaphysics. In my view, this inner affinity between the will to mastery and thinking is what makes metaphysics technological from the outset.

More significantly, the will to mastery indicates a movement in metaphysics that necessitates the emergence of *Ge-stell* as the dominant mode of disclosure. Therefore to think metaphysics on the basis of the will to mastery also explains how *Ge-stell* constitutes the completion of metaphysics, since *Ge-stell*, as a mode of revealing, marks an era in which Western metaphysics arrives at its “uttermost possibility” (EP 433). This is because *Ge-stell* is a mode of disclosure in which the technological essence of metaphysics finalizes itself and the previous modes of disclosure are gathered and revealed as essentially technological. I take the completion of Western metaphysics in the age of modern technology to mean that in and through *Ge-stell* the urge towards mastery finally exhibits itself *as* a will to mastery and as essentially belonging to metaphysics itself. Hence Heidegger thinks that *Ge-stell* belongs to the destining of revealing (QCT 333).

Moreover, if we recall de Boer’s point about the continual suppression of absencing throughout the history of metaphysics, which in turn leads to the reduction of presencing to mere constant presence, then it becomes possible to understand the urge of *Ge-stell* towards a complete unconcealedness of beings as the final phase of this metaphysical movement. Similarly, de Beistegui also claims that the history of Western metaphysics is the event of the “becoming presence (and present) of the event of presence” (NH 119), and this presentification reaches its completion in the age of modern technology. As explained above, this is because *Ge-stell*, by constantly securing and ordering beings as whole by revealing all that is as *Bestand*, reduces the coming-to-presence to constant presence and thereby availability. Concomitantly, this also means that the forgetting of the primordially⁶⁴ of this self-

⁶⁴ The issue of the primordially of the self-withholding was discussed above in ch.3.1.

withholding of being happens to such a degree that it is completely concealed in the total unconcealedness that is brought about in the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell*.

On the other hand, for Heidegger, in each epochal configuration of being there is this kind of concealment, as I have discussed in the previous section with regard to the structure of the history of being (see ch.3.1), since every revealing or disclosure of beings as a whole is at the same time a concealing insofar as it reveals everything that is in one unified manner and conceals any other possibility of revealing of beings as a whole. Furthermore, it was also shown that this concealing is the possibility of any kind of revealing since being, by withholding itself, lets itself be addressed in terms of a particular configuration. Being as the gift of the giving and its reception in thinking is made possible on the ground of this fundamental concealment and the self-withdrawal of being (see ch.3.1).

However, what is distinctive in *Ge-stell* is that it even conceals its essential trait, namely that it is a mode of revealing or disclosure (QCT 333). This is the extreme danger that lies in *Ge-stell*. This *unique* characteristic of *Ge-stell* is extremely important because it is this characteristic that makes it possible for *Ge-stell* to indicate the completion of metaphysics. Insofar as *Ge-stell* reveals beings as a whole as *Bestand* it leads to the ultimate presentification of being, which characterizes one of the constitutive movements in the history of Western metaphysics. In turn, as long as this presentification reaches completion in the sense that the beingness of beings is determined as being constantly present and available, the ultimate forgetting and thereby the concealment of the essential self-withholding, or the *sterēsis* of being, also takes place, which is the other constitutive movement in Western metaphysics. I think that this is why *Ge-stell* is the extreme danger, because this complete forgetting of the essential characteristic of revealing itself may become so entrenched that the possibility “[...] to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth” gets blocked off (QCT 333).

Yet this distinctive characteristic is also what makes *Ge-stell* the “prelude”, as Heidegger claims (ID 36f.), to *Ereignis* and to the other beginning, since, as has been discussed, the other aspect of the complete forgetting of the essential resistance within being is the self-withdrawal of being. If we recall that *Ereignis* can only arise out of the experience of this withdrawal as a withdrawal – or what Bernasconi calls

the experience of the lack for a word for being – then it can be concluded that *Ge-stell* also constitutes the turning-point at the end of metaphysics towards a ‘beyond’ of metaphysics. Furthermore, this possibility is what makes the saving-power grow in concert with the danger in *Ge-stell*. Finally, this self-withholding of being and the complete forgetting of the self-concealing essence of every revealing bring us to a point where the following discussion of the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia* can begin. In the following this relation will be examined in order to show how *Ge-stell* may lead to a radical change in the history of metaphysics in the sense of a counter-turning within it by examining the relation of *Ge-stell* to the essence of truth.

3.2.1.2. *Ge-stell* and the essence of truth

Insofar as *Ge-stell* is a mode of disclosure, the relation between *alētheia* and *Ge-stell* must be examined. The difficulty concerning this relation is that although the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* is fundamentally different from the revealing in the mode of *poiēsis*, it is still a mode of disclosure, i.e., revealing. What makes this relation problematic and as well as complex is that although *Ge-stell* is a mode of revealing, it even conceals its own characteristic. Thus it does not present itself as a mode of revealing, therefore it blocks the possibility to grasp the *alētheic* event that takes place in *Ge-stell*. Furthermore, this examination will also help us to understand in a more comprehensive manner how *Ge-stell* can be interpreted as the completion of Western metaphysics, because the unfolding of the technological essence of metaphysics and the forgetting of the lethic element of un-concealment are two different aspects of the same event that happens throughout the history of Western metaphysics, namely the gradual concealment of the self-withdrawal of being. However, the main aim of the discussion of the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia* is to show how *Ge-stell* bears the possibility of another beginning at the end of metaphysics. Thus this examination has a central importance insofar as it will aid us in articulating how the self-overcoming of metaphysics can take place. In turn, this will put us in a position to discuss the relation between *Ge-stell* and the work of art in the context of the self-overcoming of metaphysics.

In order to configure the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia*, I will first clarify Heidegger’s interpretation of *alētheia*. For Heidegger, *alētheia* is an event of un-concealing in which the lethic aspect is primordial and co-constitutive (together

with the unconcealment) of the happening of truth. Furthermore, it must be said that the event of truth is the happening of the strife between these two co-constitutive counter-movements, namely concealing and revealing. Following from this, there is a certain sense of movement in Heidegger's understanding of *alētheia*. In this sense he understands it as *a-lētheia* in the sense of the privation of a primordial state of affairs. Thus *alētheia* cannot be understood as *veritas*, truth as correctness, *adaequatio*, and not even as a simple state of unconcealedness, since all these would fail to grasp the dynamic nature of the un-concealing event. In other words, the truth of being as *a-lētheia* does not refer to a static mode which completely unveils being. On the contrary, as I said above, it refers to a constant strife between revealing and concealing. Accordingly, Heidegger interprets *alētheia* as an un-covering of the hidden or the concealed and thereby seeks to bring it into openness. However, this un-covering of the concealed is not an eradication of concealment, as if such eradication were possible, but rather disclosing what is concealing itself as concealing. Therefore in *a-lētheia*, or in the unconcealing event, there is always a fundamental and prior concealment of what is unconcealed⁶⁵. In "The Origin of the Work of Art" Heidegger elucidates how an essential concealment prevails in this unconcealing event as follows,

The essence of truth, that is, of unconcealment, is dominated throughout by a denial. Yet this denial is not a defect or a fault, as though truth were an unalloyed unconcealment that has rid itself of everything concealed. If truth could accomplish this, it would no longer be itself. *This denial, in the form of a double concealment, belongs to the essence of truth as unconcealment.* Truth, in its essence, is un-truth. (OWA 179)

However, we saw that *Ge-stell* is fundamentally different in its mode of revealing, since it discloses everything that is as a mere standing-reserve, *Bestand*. This means that *Ge-stell* ignores the fundamental concealment that occurs in each unconcealment. It does not let anything slip away from its constantly totalizing mode of disclosure, since as a mode of disclosure, *Ge-stell* "[...] never simply comes to an end." (QCT 322). Rather, by constantly organizing and securing it seeks to sustain the complete accessibility and orderability of beings as a whole. Therefore it can be said that *Ge-stell* is incapable of admitting finitude in its mode of revealing in the

⁶⁵ Heidegger's understanding of the truth of being as *a-lētheia* will also be discussed further below in ch.4.1.3 in the context of art.

sense that there is no unavailable reserve, no essential concealment into which *Ge-stell* cannot ultimately insert itself. Nothing can remain unavailable or unreachable. There may be things that have not yet become available or have not yet been reached or not yet transformed and secured in its system of orderability, but according to the attitude of *Ge-stell* they eventually will be, and at any rate, beings as a whole are disclosed as essentially orderable and accessible. Hence Heidegger thinks that there are no longer any objects, in the sense of standing over against a subject, in the age of modern technology, because everything is homogeneously revealed as *Bestand*, as was shown in the previous section.

I take this objectlessness to refer to a complete loss of resistance in the sense that even the very restricted resistential aspect of beings that *Gegenstand* still expresses is suspended on the basis of *Bestand*. The object as that which stands over against a subject still implies a certain kind of independence insofar as it opposes the subject, since in this opposition the *Gegenstand* emerges as an obstacle that should be overcome, which indicates a certain unavailability of the object. Thus it can be maintained that *Gegenstand* still constitutes a certain resistance, even if a very restricted one. On the other hand, *Bestand* designates a complete disregard of any opposition whatsoever, since everything that exists is always already revealed as constantly present and available in *Ge-stell*. What is significant in this transition from *Gegenstand* to *Bestand* with regard to the relation between *Ge-stell* and *alētheia* is that this shift also indicates a fundamental transformation in the understanding of truth. I think that the understanding of truth inherent to *Ge-stell* can no longer be defined in terms of correctness or correspondence, because there is no object to represent, and thus there is nothing to correspond to. The other form of understanding of truth as correctness, namely the correspondence of the object to the representation, also becomes impossible for the same reason. In *Ge-stell* the entire dynamic of representation is eliminated, since beings are no longer represented (*vorgestellt*) in the technical sense of the term, rather they are only ordered (*bestellt*). As I have tried to emphasize, *Ge-stell* seeks to enclose everything in a system of orderability, accordingly the truth is reduced to a mere instrumental relation of efficacy that sustains and secures this system in which everything that exists

becomes available. In the age of modern technology the matter at stake is to organize, to regulate beings as a whole in terms of the endless demand of *Ge-stell*.

In connection with this it would be useful to recall Heidegger's remarks in "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking". In this text Heidegger suggests that scientism is also a result of this reduction of truth to an instrument of sustaining the availability of beings as a whole, since when truth is downgraded to a mere matter of organizing, regulating and securing, science becomes the only access to such an 'effective' truth. In relation to this Heidegger thinks that not only does science become the sole access of truth, but also that scientific claims are evaluated on the basis of their effects. More significantly, this means that the truth of scientific claims is also reduced to the efficacy of these effects (EP 435). In light of this I think that correctness or *adaequatio* does no longer define the understanding of truth in the age of modern technology, rather, truth is shrunk to mere regulation and organization. Therefore the transition from *Gegenstand* to *Bestand* or the dissolution of the object can also be taken as the dissolution of the traditional conceptions of truth, since there is no object to represent, or there is no object to conform to our representations or concepts, the truth cannot be thought of as correctness or correspondence. In relation to this I think that this dissolution of truth as correctness that occurs in *Ge-stell* can be understood as the culmination of the forgetting of the lethic essence of *a-lētheia* throughout Western metaphysics. This is because in the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* the essential concealment is completely concealed. As a result I would like to suggest that the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* is the complete denial of the lethic essence of truth, since, as we have seen, in the constant organization and regulation of beings as a whole as *Bestand*, nothing, no aspect of beings, is thought to remain in concealment since concealment itself remains completely concealed.

However, as denial it also constitutes what Heidegger calls "the double concealment" and in this sense *Ge-stell* should be interpreted as essentially belonging to the event of unconcealment. It is a double concealment since it conceals the essential lethic element of unconcealment. The more crucial point is that the double concealment that occurs in and through *Ge-stell* is what makes the essence of technology ambiguous, which "[...] points to the mystery of all revealing, i.e., of

truth.” (QCT 338). Hence I think that *Ge-stell* as the complete forgetting of concealment alludes to this essential mystery of the unconcealing event. The following passage from Heidegger’s “On the Essence of Truth” will help us to clarify this point further,

In letting beings as a whole be [...] it happens that concealing appears as what is first of all concealed. [...] The proper non-essence of truth is the mystery [...] the “non-” of the originary non-essence of truth, as un-truth, points to the still unexperienced domain of the truth of Being (not merely of beings). (ET 148f.)

In the simultaneity of disclosure and concealing, errancy holds sway. [...] Then resolute openness toward the mystery [...] is under way into errancy as such. Then the question of the essence of truth gets asked more originally. (ET 151)

In light of this I think that *Ge-stell* is the most extreme errancy that hints at the possibility of the disclosure of this mystery in a radical way. It is errancy because the non-essence of truth prevails in *Ge-stell* as the un-truth, namely un-unconcealment. It is extreme in the sense of an ultimate point, since the complete forgetting of the lethic essence of truth takes place in *Ge-stell* and in this sense *Ge-stell* is a double concealment. However, in this forgetting or the double concealment there emerges the possibility of disclosing the mystery that essentially belongs to the event of *alētheia*. Insofar as *Ge-stell* is the double concealment, namely the complete concealing of the concealment, it also makes it possible for the non-essence of truth to emerge as the mystery of the truth of being since this double concealment also brings the concealment of being into view in a radical way, by constituting the complete abandonment of being. Thus *Ge-stell* also opens up the possibility of entering a new, as yet unexperienced site of truth as *a-lētheia*⁶⁶.

De Beistegui explains how *Ge-stell* can bear such a possibility precisely in its relation to this non-essence. He claims that this non-essence harbours the sole possibility of experiencing the essence of the truth of being, i.e., *alētheia* (NH 119). I

⁶⁶ This claim may be criticized simply by recalling that *alētheia* is the Greek understanding of truth and therefore it is impossible to speak of an un-experienced domain of truth as *alētheia*. Following from this one may also say that Heidegger’s thought attempts to accomplish a return to the fundamental Greek experience of *alētheia*. However, Heidegger not only thinks that such a return is impossible but also explicitly says that it is not aimed at at all, even if it were possible (OWA 176). Although the fundamental difference between Heidegger’s understanding of *alētheia* will be discussed later on in ch.4.1.3, for now it must be noted that Heidegger’s thinking does not seek a *resurrection* of ancient Greek thinking, on the contrary, it seeks to prepare a way of thinking that has remained concealed since the first Greek inauguration of Western metaphysics.

think that the reason for this is that the truth of being itself happens as non-essence or un-unconcealment in the history of being, because while beings as a whole are disclosed, being itself, or more properly the giving of being, withdraws and conceals itself. Therefore the non-essence or the double concealment becomes the only possible way of entering into the thinking of the essence of *alētheia*. In turn this is why *Ge-stell* is capable of hinting at the non-essence of truth, since *Ge-stell* is also the very happening of this concealment itself in the form of a double concealment.

Interestingly, de Beistegui goes further and asserts that “[...] the essence of technology is the essence of truth itself [...]” (NH 120). I agree that *Ge-stell* is inherently connected to the essence of truth and this is not only because it is a mode of revealing, but also, and more importantly, because it becomes the locus of the essential mystery insofar as it is the happening of the double concealment. However, I do not think that the essence of technology can easily be equated with the essence of truth. Rather, *Ge-stell* must be understood as a possibility that paves the way to the essence of truth and this precisely does not mean that *Ge-stell* is also the essence of truth itself, because *Ge-stell* as a totalizing challenging-forth does not disclose the essential mystery of *alētheia* as a mystery. The relation between the essence of technology and that of truth is parallel to the relation between *Ge-stell* and *Ereignis*, so I think that *Ge-stell* can be interpreted as a “prelude” to an as yet unexperienced domain of truth insofar as the concealment of the concealment defines the fundamental movement of the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell*. In this sense *Ge-stell* is what Heidegger calls the “essential non-essence of truth” (ET 148) because it is the very happening of the concealing of the essential concealment, yet *Ge-stell* itself does not reveal this concealment *as* concealment but it is a harbinger of the possibility of such a revealing.

As a result I think that *Ge-stell* is this non-essence of *alētheia* that essentially belongs to the event of *alētheia* inasmuch as the double concealment, the concealing of the concealment, occurs in and through *Ge-stell*. In other words, it can be claimed that *Ge-stell* is not something external to the event of truth but is itself a moment within the happening of truth as un-concealment. Moreover, I think that this is why it harbours the possibility of the saving power, although it also constitutes the supreme danger (QCT 332f.), since this complete concealment of the concealment itself is

essential for an entry into an originary mode of disclosure. It is essential because concealment is the primordial element of unconcealment. In relation to this I think that in *Ge-stell* what Heidegger calls the expropriation, i.e., *Enteignis*, takes place and in this sense, *Ge-stell* alludes to the essence of truth. Yet *Ge-stell* itself is not the revealing of this expropriation as the self-concealment of being. Thus *Ge-stell* is neither the essence of truth nor *Ereignis*, but it is the essential passage to these sites. I would like to emphasize again that *Ge-stell* only bears this possibility as the extreme errancy or as the concealment of the essential concealing that belongs to *alētheia* itself. This is how it prepares the way for the possibility of disclosing the mystery of all revealing as a mystery, but it is not the disclosure of this mystery itself.

However, what is more crucial is that *Ge-stell* bears this possibility as long as it challenges the traditional concepts of truth and essence. It can even be said that the question concerning the essence of technology already stems from the inaptitude of the traditional concept of essence to grasp the essence that permeates modern technology. Furthermore, this means that as a mode of revealing the claim that *Ge-stell* makes upon thinking is what leads to a movement beyond metaphysics. It is of the utmost importance to understand *Ge-stell* as a claim, since otherwise, as Heidegger implies, it is impossible to inhabit the possibility that the essence of technology opens up. Following from this I think that Heidegger calls *Ge-stell* a destining like every other way of revealing (QCT 330), not only because it starts a way in which beings as a whole are disclosed in a certain manner but also because it prepares a new way of revealing insofar as a radical transformation in the history of metaphysics is also prepared through *Ge-stell*⁶⁷. That is why Heidegger says that “[...] it is technology itself that makes the demand on us to think in another way what is usually understood by “essence”.” (QCT 335).

Robert Bernasconi regards this point about the inappropriateness of the traditional notion of essence as the main thesis of Heidegger’s essay (QL 70). In relation to his point I will suggest that this claim is the hinge that holds together the essay as a whole. This is because with this claim it becomes possible to think that it is *Ge-stell* itself that disrupts the tradition from within, since it is also the culmination

⁶⁷ Therefore Heidegger’s essay “The Question Concerning Technology” should be understood as an attempt at responding to this claim that reaches out from *Ge-stell* itself.

of that very tradition. This once again shows that *Ge-stell* is utterly crucial in order to understand Heidegger's interpretation of the internal dynamic of Western metaphysics. Heidegger's above-quoted claim implies that the culmination of metaphysics is far from being an indication of a static finalization. Rather, it indicates a dynamic process of the overcoming of metaphysics. Furthermore, it also shows that the overcoming of metaphysics is a self-overcoming, since with the upsurge of *Ge-stell*, the tradition also brings about its own dissolution. So it can be said that *Ge-stell* as a challenging-forth also challenges the tradition itself by demanding to think anew what essence is. By doing so it prepares the way for the self-overcoming of metaphysics. Moreover, I think that this is also why the essence of technology is "in a lofty sense ambiguous" (QCT 338), because *Ge-stell* on the one hand constitutes the culmination and completion of metaphysics as the happening of the utmost forgetting of the essential self-withholding of being. On the other hand, this culmination also challenges traditional notions and calls for a new kind of thinking that is non-metaphysical, because metaphysical thinking remains impotent in the face of the claim that comes from the essence of modern technology. Now let me try to explicate this issue of ambiguity of the essence of technology and try to show how this ambiguous nature of *Ge-stell* points to art as the site of the other beginning.

3.2.1.3. The ambiguity of *Ge-stell* and the gesture towards art

As long as *Ge-stell* constitutes a double concealment in which the non-essence of truth prevails, and as long as it disrupts the metaphysical tradition, at the end of metaphysics the saving power in *Ge-stell* grows as well as the danger. In relation to this to understand the ambiguity that prevails in the essence of technology becomes important, since this ambiguity is itself what makes *Ge-stell* a turning point in the history of Western metaphysics.

For Heidegger, with the upsurge of *Ge-stell* the essence can no longer be understood in the traditional sense of an unchanging permanent *quidditas*, i.e., the whatness of a thing. The essence that prevails in *Ge-stell* is the manner in which something essentially unfolds (*west*). Here Heidegger stresses the verbal sense of "*wesen*", i.e., essencing in the sense of enduring and unfolding. However, he immediately renounces the metaphysical sense of a permanent, atemporal enduring.

Yet, on the other hand he claims that “[t]he way in which technology unfolds [*wes*, i.e., essences] lets itself be seen only on the basis of that permanent enduring in which enframing propriates [*ereignet*] as a destining of revealing.” (QCT 336, GA 7 32). Furthermore, he borrows a term from Goethe to describe the way *Ge-stell* essences, namely *fortgewähren*, which is translated as “to grant continuously” and he adds that as the essence of technology, *Ge-stell* is also a granting (QCT 336f.).

I take these designations to mean that the essence of technology is capable of granting another way of revealing, and I believe that the possibility of this granting depends on two interrelated aspects of *Ge-stell*. The first one is that *Ge-stell*, precisely by disrupting the tradition and calling for a questioning of the metaphysical notion of essence, demands a non-metaphysical mode of revealing. Yet at the same time this disruption does not occur as an opposition, since the essence in the sense of *wesen* and *fortgewähren* emerges from the traditional concept of *essentia* itself. In relation to this point Bernasconi asserts that the new meaning of essence as essencing, i.e., *wesen*, arises out of the traditional concept of essence as *essentia* itself (QL 75). This supports the claim that the dissolution of the tradition and the possibility of another beginning is not external to the tradition itself, rather it arises out of the tradition as a movement, or better, a leap beyond itself. In relation to this I think that the way *Ge-stell* essences is a continuous granting in the sense that by constituting the dissolution of Western metaphysics *Ge-stell* makes it possible to inaugurate a new way of revealing. Here this dissolution, as also indicated earlier in this section, should be understood as the possibility of paving the way for the other beginning that has been increasingly covered over under the ossified layers of metaphysics since its first beginnings. Therefore it does not mean a simple disposal of the tradition, if such a disposal were even possible. On the contrary, the dissolution that pervades in *Ge-stell* is made possible by questioning traditional metaphysical determinations such as essence and truth. In this sense it can be understood as the Heideggerian *Destruktion* of the tradition from within. I think that Heidegger expresses this point when he says that the essencing of *Ge-stell* allows itself to be seen on the basis of permanent enduring. Thus *Ge-stell* can be considered as the turning point where the self-overcoming of metaphysics begins to take place. This issue of dissolution or the *Destruktion* of metaphysics brings us to the second

aspect of *Ge-stell*, namely the self-withholding of being as the non-metaphysical element that makes the other beginning possible. In order to explicate this second aspect it will be fruitful to have a brief look at Heidegger's understanding of the history of being with respect to *Ge-stell*.

As explained in the first section of this chapter, each epoch of the history of being is at the same time an *epochē* in the sense of a withholding. More precisely, it is this self-withholding element in the history of being that makes the transfigurations within the history of being possible. I have also tried to show how the possibility of the overcoming of metaphysics hinges on this self-withdrawal, since this self-withdrawal, as the reserve that metaphysics cannot exhaust, also holds the possibility of a non-metaphysical thinking and thereby the possibility of the other beginning. Now, in *Ge-stell* the complete self-withdrawal of being takes place in connection with the double concealment. As I explained above, this then means that *Ge-stell* can also be interpreted as a ground⁶⁸ for the other beginning. Insofar as *Ge-stell* is the happening of this self-withholding it is also the site in which the non-metaphysical element comes to happen. In this sense also *Ge-stell* is a destining of revealing. Yet the question in what sense and in what manner *Ge-stell* grants this other beginning is the gist of the matter at stake, namely the gesture towards art in *Ge-stell*.

Actually, towards the end of "The Question Concerning Technology", Heidegger gives us the guiding thread for a discussion of this gesture when he says that "[y]et the more questioningly we ponder the essence of technology, the more mysterious the essence of art becomes." (QCT 341). Here Heidegger proposes art as the saving power itself. However, this does not mean that art is *opposed* to *Ge-stell*. On the contrary, as a result of the challenging claim of *Ge-stell* with regard to the essence itself the issue of the essence of art emerges. The ambiguity of the essence of technology also lies in the fact that it points to its ancient root, i.e., *technē*, and by

⁶⁸ Yet this ground should not be understood in substantial terms because it is not something that lies beneath in the sense of *hupokeimenon*. *Ge-stell* becomes a ground for the other beginning as the site where the complete self-withdrawal of being takes place. Thus it refers to absentiality inasmuch as there is a self-withdrawal, namely the *sterēsis* of being. Therefore it cannot indicate a traditional, substantial ground, on the contrary, it refers to the impossibility of such a ground.

doing so the other possibility in *technē*, namely art, becomes a fundamental issue for the self-overcoming of metaphysics. Although throughout this section I have emphasised and tried to explain the distinctiveness of *Ge-stell*, nevertheless the issue of the continuity between *Ge-stell* and ancient *poiēsis* as *technē* should also be remembered. Now I will explicate this issue and explain how *Ge-stell* is actually rooted in ancient *technē* by showing that the basic characteristic of *technē* is still operative in *Ge-stell*, though in a very reductive manner. I hope that this will clarify the gesture towards art in *Ge-stell* and its significance.

As I have explained, the completion of Western metaphysics in *Ge-stell* also attests to a loss of resistance within beings as a whole, since with the transition from *Gegenstand* to *Bestand* there is nothing that in principle cannot be mastered. Everything can be brought into the measure of *Ge-stell* as standing-reserve. This is how overarching *Ge-stell* is and how it is unlike ancient *technē*, since in the mode of *Ge-stell* beings do not have any inner possibility or limitation. Rather, they are seen as endlessly transformable and manipulable. However, this violent transformation of beings in *Ge-stell* in fact has its roots in the degradation of the basic characteristic of ancient *technē*. In the second chapter, with the help of some secondary literature, it was shown that *technē* addresses beings ‘not’ as they are in themselves. In contrast to *Ge-stell* ancient *technē* showed itself to be dependent on the capacity to be affected, i.e., *pathein*, which belongs to beings as a whole. Accordingly, I concluded that to be understood and disclosed as other than themselves is a fundamental characteristic of beings themselves in the context of the *pathein-sterēsis* structure (see ch.2.3 and 2.4).

Furthermore, in his article “Being-affected”⁶⁹, Josh Hayes explains that for Heidegger this capacity is also the possibility of alteration (*metabolē*) in *phusis*, and not only the ontic alterations such as movement in space, but also, and more significantly, the ontological movement, such that *genesis* itself can be seen to depend on the capacity of being-affected (BA 161-3). In turn I think that this shows that this capacity, namely *pathein*, is related to the self-withholding essence of *phusis*, since the self-withholding, i.e., *sterēsis*, is what makes possible the movement from non-presence to presence, i.e., *genesis*. This is because *sterēsis*

⁶⁹ Josh Michael Hayes, “Being-affected: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Pathology of Truth”, in Daniel Dahlstrom (ed.), *Interpreting Heidegger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

makes it possible for a being to come into presence in a certain shape by withholding itself. These analyses show that *technē* in fact depends on this *pathein-sterēsis* structure.

Moreover, it can be said that the *pathein-sterēsis* structure characterizes *phusis* itself, since it defines the very movement of coming-to-presence that belongs to *phusis*. Hence to be addressed as something other than itself or as “not” itself belongs to the being of *phusei onta*. Therefore it can be concluded that although *Ge-stell* is radically different from ancient *technē*, there is also an intimate relation between *Ge-stell* and ancient *technē*, since *Ge-stell* also discloses beings as other than themselves, as I have been discussing. However, while ancient *technē* is characterized by an attentiveness to the capacity to be affected in conjunction with the self-withholding of being, the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* denies that this capacity belongs to being. Thus, while ancient *technē* foregrounds this ‘not’, or the alterity that belongs to being, *Ge-stell* completely fails to acknowledge this alterity⁷⁰, although it still depends on this alterity, i.e., the self-withholding of being⁷¹. This means that the dependence of *technē* on this capacity of being becomes more and more forgotten throughout the history of metaphysics, and *Ge-stell* can, on the one hand, be interpreted as the complete denial of this capacity.

However, it can be said that as the essence in the sense of essencing as a continual granting emerges from the traditional *essentia*, the question with regard to the essence of art also emerges from the questioning of the essence of modern technology. As a result, I think that the problematic of *technē* arises as a fundamental question out of the questioning of the essence of technology due to the indication of *Ge-stell* of its relation to ancient *technē*. In relation to this it can be said the possibility of interpreting *Ge-stell* in its relation to ancient *technē* arises out of the challenging claim with regard to the notion of essence that *Ge-stell* makes upon thinking itself. So it can be concluded that although *Ge-stell* is, on one level, the culmination of metaphysics that is constituted by a will to mastery, it also, on another level, paves the way for another beginning by raising the question of the essence of

⁷⁰ This is also the other reason why *Ge-stell* itself is not the essence of truth and *Ereignis*.

⁷¹ Both the issue of proximity between *Ge-stell* and *technē* and of alterity will be addressed again in context of art in the next chapter, especially in ch.4.1.

art. In other words, *Ge-stell* simultaneously has the capacity to draw out the other extreme of its stance towards beings, i.e., ‘letting be’, instead of mastery. This again shows that the thought of strife is highly significant in Heidegger’s thinking. This is because the possibility of the self-overcoming of metaphysics in the age of modern technology stems from the ambiguous nature of *Ge-stell* which brings these two extreme modes of revealing into view together as two counter-attitudes which are both rooted in the same way of revealing, namely *technē*. Furthermore, this also shows how the problematic of *technē* is central for the issue of the self-overcoming of metaphysics. The reason for this has three aspects. Firstly, Western metaphysics itself is essentially technological, therefore to see how *technē* is transformed throughout the history of metaphysics becomes a very significant component for understanding the singularity of Western metaphysics. Secondly, the analyses show that the possibility of the other beginning also depends on a certain mode of *technē*, namely art. Thus both the completion of metaphysics and its dissolution as well as the possibility of the other beginning hinge on the issue of *technē*. Lastly, if this other beginning also hinges on the possibility of a revealing of the self-concealment of being *as* concealment, then this means that a retrieval of an originary mode of *technē* is required, since this self-withholding element also depends on *technē* in order to be revealed, because *technē* is also a *logos*, *legein*, which is capable of bringing this self-withholding into presence.

In the final analysis *Ge-stell* holds the possibility for another beginning, since it is both the completion of metaphysics and its dissolution. It becomes so by alluding to the dynamic process of the self-overcoming of metaphysics that is shown not to be a simple overturning or opposition, but a *Destruktion* of the metaphysical tradition through a remembrance and retrieval of and confrontation with that very tradition. Thus I think that for Heidegger the overcoming of metaphysics does not mean an escape from metaphysics. On the contrary, it can be understood as a retreat in the face of metaphysics itself in order to confront it, as in the literal sense of coming face-to-face, and *Ge-stell* occasions or allows such a confrontational relation with the tradition to take place. Furthermore, through this relation, the issue of art emerges as a profound possibility, which can grant a non-metaphysical way of revealing the truth of being. I think that Heidegger offers art as the saving power,

precisely because it is capable of revealing the self-withholding element as essentially belonging to being itself through a certain elaboration of earth. In the following chapter I will elucidate how *technē* as art is capable of such a revealing and try to elaborate how this kind of revealing can be understood as a site where a non-metaphysical way of revealing is exposed.

Chapter 4

The Work of Art and the Possibility of Retrieval

In the previous chapter I have attempted to show that the fundamental movement in the history of being is a self-withholding that is completely concealed in the age of modern technology. In turn, the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* was interpreted as a double concealment that hints at an unexperienced domain of truth as *a-lētheia* in the sense of the retrieval of the lethic essence of the truth of being. It has also been shown that the disruptive claim of *Ge-stell* with regard to the traditional conceptions of essence and of truth itself prepares the way for this possibility. It was concluded that through this disruptive claim, *technē* as art becomes a fundamental issue and a possible site of the above-mentioned domain of truth. In this chapter it will be shown how *technē* as art can be the site of such a possibility by showing how the elaboration of earth as essentially self-secluding in the artwork constitutes a resistance to the metaphysical impulse towards mastery⁷². To do this, firstly, the relation between the artwork and *alētheia* will be examined in order to show that the disclosure of earth as essentially self-concealing can be interpreted as a retrieval of the lethic essence of *alētheia*. Secondly, I will delineate the relation between earth and *sterēsis* to show in what ways earth displays a resistance to representational forms of thinking and thereby demands a new type of thinking. Moreover, on the basis of this relation I will argue that the artwork becomes a site where the alterity of being itself is disclosed.

4.1 The work of art and *alētheia*

In the second chapter it was stated that for Heidegger the artwork is co-constituted by two elements, namely world and earth. Although they were briefly described, the relation between these two elements was not discussed in detail with respect to the issue of *alētheia*. In the present chapter these elements will be examined with regard

⁷² Based on the analyses of this resistential character of art that will be carried out in this chapter the will to mastery will be further examined in relation to the mode of revealing of art, namely the letting-happen (*Geschehenlassen*) in the conclusion of the thesis.

to this particular issue. This problematic is the fundamental issue with regard to the discussion of the work of art, since the significance of the artwork precisely lies in its relation to the truth of being, i.e., *alētheia*. Furthermore, it can preliminarily be said that the artwork is not an external entity or a medium in which the truth of being, namely *alētheia*, is merely represented, even if such representation were possible. Rather, the artwork itself is the very place where the truth of being happens. Hence Heidegger says “[t]he essence of art would then be this: the truth of beings setting itself to work.” (OWA 162). So art itself is neither the representation of an external thing nor an aesthetic object, but it is essentially the setting itself into the work of the truth of being. If we recall that *alētheia* is an un-concealing event then the work-being of the artwork should be the very happening of this event. This is why Heidegger claims that the truth of being, namely the disclosure of a particular being in its being, is at work in the work (OWA 161f.).

The work-being of the artwork lies in this happening of truth. Thus in Heidegger’s thinking the artwork emerges as the site in which truth happens. Moreover, if we remind ourselves of the conflictual essence of truth, namely as an event of the constant strife between concealing and unconcealing, then this means that the artwork should be capable of disclosing and enacting this strife. In this context, the relation between world and earth comes to the fore as a relationality which is nothing but the conflictual un-concealing event itself, i.e., strife. Thus, as was shown in ch.2.5, world and earth are two interdependent elements that constitute the work-being of the artwork insofar as the artwork becomes the site of the truth of being by exposing the relation between world and earth in terms of strife. Accordingly, the following three subsections will deal with this relationality. However, the primary aim of this section is not to summarize the general structure of the relation between *alethēia* and the artwork. Rather, I will try to explicate how the artwork can inaugurate the other beginning by examining the relation between *Ereignis* and *alētheia* as the strife between world and earth.

4.1.1. World and unconcealment

In “The Origin of the Work of Art”, the notion of world appears as having multiple meanings⁷³. However, in the following discussion I will focus on one structural characteristic of the world, namely world as an activity of setting up and constituting a certain meaningful relationality that enables the disclosure of beings as a whole in a certain manner⁷⁴.

As briefly described in ch.2.5, world signifies a context which constitutes meaningful relations that make it possible for Dasein to be in relation to other beings. This does not mean that the world discloses each and every being (*Seiendes*) with regard to their ontic structures. Rather, what is disclosed in and through the world is the very manner of their being, like ready-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*) and being-with (*Mitsein*). In this sense, world is the disclosure of all that is in a certain manner with respect to their modes of being. Heidegger describes this disclosure as a “worlding” (OWA 170). So for Heidegger, the world is neither a mere aggregate of all that is, nor the representation of a totality. In his description, the world appears to designate an active, on-going process. In relation to this it can also be inferred that the world is itself an event or a happening. The following quotation will clarify how the worlding of world should be understood,

By the opening up of a world, all things gain their lingering and hastening, their remoteness and nearness, their scope and limits. In a world’s worlding is gathered that spaciousness out of which the protective grace of the gods is granted or withheld. Even this doom, of the god remaining absent, is a way in which the world worlds⁷⁵. (OWA 170)

⁷³ For the explication of these various meanings of Heidegger’s notion of world, see Andrea Rehberg, “The World and the Work of Art”, *Epochē*, vol. 14, Issue 1, 2009; 131-42.

⁷⁴ Here it should be recalled that Heidegger explicitly says that world does not simply mean unconcealment and earth also does not simply mean concealment (OWA 180). They can be understood as two different pulls or movements. While the dominant movement in world is towards unconcealment and openness, the dominant movement in earth is towards concealment and seclusion. In the remaining part of this section, I will try to elaborate Heidegger’s understanding of world in terms of this movement towards unconcealment. The issue of world’s and earth’s movement will be clarified in terms of the strife between world and earth below, in the third section of this chapter.

⁷⁵ Actually, it is also highly important to note that a certain kind of absentiality – the gods remaining absent – is also understood as a worlding. I think that this gives us a clue about how we should think Heidegger’s notion of world-withdrawal. This point about world-withdrawal will be further developed later on in this subsection.

In light of this it can be concluded that this worlding is also an activity of setting up which is the allotment of an openness through which each and every being gains its own proper place in relation to every other one. Furthermore, if we also recall that the artwork is the setting *itself* into the work of truth then this worlding should be thought in relation to the self-revealing of being itself. Therefore it can be concluded that world is the way in which being lets itself be seen in a certain manner and this manner is also the way through which “each being emerges in its own way” (OWA 186). Moreover, this relationality, which grants each and every being its own proper place, also indicates that the worlding is a certain type of measure in the sense that the openness of the world guides the manner of coming-to-presence of particular beings. I think that for this reason Heidegger asserts that “[...] the world is the clearing of the paths of the essential guiding directions with which all decision complies.” (OWA 180).

To explicate further the issue of the guiding measure, Heidegger’s term “setting up” (*Aufstellen*) should be examined, not only because the artwork’s work is described as a setting up of a world, but also because the very activity of the world, i.e., worlding itself, is a setting up. The first thing to draw attention to here is that this word also shares the root verb *stellen*, i.e., to put, to place, like *Ge-stell*, *Vorstellung*, etc. So it can be said that there is some sort of placing in worlding. The ordinary usage of the term *Aufstellung*, as Heidegger tells us, is erecting (*Erstellung*) a building, or placing (*Errichten*) a statue (OWA 169, GA 5 29f.). By contrast to this ordinary sense of the term Heidegger claims that the “setting up” or “erecting” of the world is not a mere placing, but rather here to set up means,

[...] dedication and praise [...] To dedicate means to consecrate, in the sense that in setting up the work the holy is opened up as holy and the god is invoked into the openness of his presence. [...] To e-rect [*Er-richten*] means: to open the right in the sense of a guiding measure [*weisendes Maß*], a form in which what is essential gives guidance. (OWA 169, GA 5 30)

I take this to mean that the relationality, which is granted by the openness of the world, is a guiding measure in which certain limits or boundaries are drawn so that particular beings can emerge as what they are. The limiting here does not mean a blocking, or hindering, on the contrary, each being starts to presence on the basis of this limit or horizon. More importantly, this measure is a guiding measure in the

sense that it forms a meaningful contextual relationality and I think that what Heidegger indicates when he says that “each being emerges in its own way” (OWA 186) is this meaningfulness of the world’s openness, since beings do not simply stand as self-contained and unrelated individuals. Instead, through the erecting of the world, each of them becomes what it is in relation to every other being in a contextual meaningful whole. This is because the openness of the world is nothing but the self-revealing of being itself in which the very manner of coming to presence is disclosed. So this means that the manner of coming-to-presence is determined through worlding. This determination is what gathers each being and bestows its proper place in relation to every other. In parallel to this Karsten Harries, in his monograph titled *Art Matters*⁷⁶, claims that world is a translation of Greek *kosmos* that allocates all beings their proper place and therefore world designates the manner in which beings appear (AM 112). Thus it can be concluded that worlding is a particular disclosure of the manner of coming-to-presence itself.

On these grounds I think that there is an intimate relation between Heidegger’s understanding of the history of being and his notion of world. To put it briefly, thereby running the risk of oversimplifying the matter at stake, if the world designates the openness in which the very manner of coming-to-presence is disclosed, then there must be a relation (which should be taken into account in order to understand how *technē* as art is supposed to inaugurate the other beginning) between the epochality of being and of world, since world too is a disclosure of the manner of coming-to-presence insofar as beings as a whole are disclosed in a particular manner through the worlding of a world. The analyses drawn earlier in this section showed that what Heidegger calls worlding is an event that makes being available for a certain configuration. As was shown in the previous chapter, being as a gift becomes available for a certain figuration and in this sense it is made available for certain appropriation by disclosing the very manner of coming-to-presence in a particular way (see ch.3.1). With respect to this it can be said that the openness of world also bears the structural characteristic of the epochal names for being in the sense that both in the epochal names and a world, beings as a whole are disclosed in

⁷⁶ Karsten Harries, *Art Matters: A Critical Commentary on Heidegger’s “The Origin of the Work of Art”*, New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2009.

a particular manner. Michel Haar expresses this point by saying that “[t]he concept of world is intrinsically linked to the notion of epoch, so much so that it seems to be confounded with it.” (SE 58). Moreover, the ontological significance of the artwork also depends on its power to disclose the happening of the truth of being itself, so the world must be related to the epochal disclosures of being, since world too actualizes the historical openings of being, which is one of the elements that makes art ontologically important. Heidegger’s description of the Greek temple also indicates such a configuration in the work of art, since, if I can use Harries’ interpretation, the Greek temple sets up the Greek *kosmos* and thereby inaugurates a historical or epochal way of revealing all that is. This is also evident from Heidegger’s claim, stating that “[w]herever those utterly essential decisions of our history are made, are taken up and abandoned by us, [...] there the world worlds.” (OWA 170)⁷⁷.

On the one hand, all this supports the claim that the worlding of the world is an activity of setting up, of erecting a contextual referential whole in which each being gains its proper place. On the other hand, they do not explain, and they even prevent us from understanding, why the artwork differs from the metaphysical configurations of being, why art, now in the age of modern technology in which Western metaphysics has reached completion, becomes the possible site of the other beginning, since the worlding of the artwork seems to be yet another disclosure of beings as a whole. In turn, this would also jeopardize the status of the work of art as the possible site of the other beginning at the end of metaphysics, since, as I just mentioned, it seems that each particular historical world that the artwork sets up does not essentially differ from the metaphysical epochal names of being.

Furthermore, how should we think the artwork and its opening up of a world in an age where works of art are displaced, assimilated or subordinated to human enjoyment and thereby transformed into an object? How should we configure the openness of a world that is completely withdrawn? I think that at this point

⁷⁷ There are other instances in “The Origin of the Work of Art” where Heidegger makes reference to the historical determinations that are opened up by the world. For instance, “[t]he world is the self-opening openness of the broad paths of the simple and essential decisions in the destiny of a historical people.” (OWA 174) and also “[t]he all-governing expanse of this open relational context is the world of this historical people.” (OWA 167). I think that with his notion of world Heidegger attempts to think historicity itself from a non-anthropocentric point of view. The world is given to Dasein, it is not a construction of human being. In this sense the historicity that emerges from a world is also not an accomplishment of human being.

Heidegger's understanding of world-decay and world-withdrawal should be taken into account, which will help to address the questions that were raised above with regard to the world and the possibility of the other beginning. Let us take a closer look at the following passage to conceive Heidegger's understanding of world-withdrawal,

However high their quality and power of impression, however good their state of preservation, however certain their interpretation, placing them in a collection has withdrawn them from their own world [...] the world of the work that stands there has perished.

World-withdrawal and world-decay can never be undone. The works are no longer the works they were. It is they themselves, to be sure, that we encounter there, but they themselves are gone by. As bygone works they stand over against us in the realm of tradition and conservation. (OWA 166)

This passage can be interpreted as a mere criticism of the aesthetic tradition that objectifies works of art by organizing them according to the category of the aesthetic experience of the subject. It is absolutely true to say that "The Origin of the Work of Art" carries out a deconstruction of aesthetics. Yet can we not say that this passage goes beyond mere criticism? Is it possible to find an ambiguity in aesthetics that brings about world-withdrawal, which is structurally parallel to the ambiguity in *Ge-stell*, which both endangers the ontological status of the artwork and makes it possible at the same time to inaugurate the other beginning? I think that the aesthetic tradition can also be thought of as being ambiguous. Like the objectlessness that is brought about by the restless disclosure by *Ge-stell* of all that is as *Bestand*, world-withdrawal may also indicate a turning within the tradition. Therefore I think that to interpret world-withdrawal in relation to the completion of metaphysics and to Heidegger's thinking of *Ereignis*, which points to the lack of a name for being, will aid us in understanding how *technē* as art is capable of inaugurating the other beginning in a more comprehensive manner. This is because to understand world-withdrawal as an ambiguous phenomenon will firstly prevent us from equating Heidegger's notion of world with unconcealment, since there is also a counter-movement within world itself, namely its own withdrawal. Secondly, and more importantly, it will show how the artwork's setting up of a world differs from the previous epochal openings of being throughout the history of metaphysics. In the following I will attempt to offer a reading of the notion of world-withdrawal in relation to the lack of a name for being and the ambiguity of *Ge-stell*.

In relation to this issue I would like to draw on Rehberg's article titled "The World and the Work of Art". In this article she claims that the Heideggerian notion of world-decay can also be understood as indicating the impossibility of one overarching determination of being in an age in which Western metaphysics is said to be completed⁷⁸ (WWA 140). With the help of her analysis it can be said that world-decay and world-withdrawal not only describe the status of the work that actually belongs to a completely different world that has gone by, such as the ancient Greek world or the medieval world and the way they are encountered, but also – and more critically – it becomes the very characteristic of the artwork at the end of metaphysics. In an age "[w]hen the world is reduced to a network of interchangeable connections [...]" (LG 9), the artwork is no longer capable of establishing a world that gives a unified meaning to all that is. This is not only because the world in the age of modern technology is reduced to a mere system of availability, but also because in and through the mode of disclosure of *Ge-stell* the complete forgetting and abandonment of being takes place, as I discussed in ch.3, and in turn, being becomes unavailable for a discernible name.

At this juncture to recollect the ambiguity in *Ge-stell*, i.e., to say that *Ge-stell* is both the supreme danger and the bearer of the possibility of the saving power, will help us to discover what kind of possibility is left to the artwork and what kind of world it can set up in order to inaugurate the other beginning. The completion of metaphysics means the exhaustion of the possibilities of metaphysics but not in the sense that metaphysics becomes self-identical. On the contrary, the completion of metaphysics indicates the point where metaphysics begins to differ from itself in the sense of non-coincidence with itself, since *Ge-stell* is both the completion and the disruption of the metaphysical tradition, as we saw in the previous chapter. This means that the artwork can no longer set up one overarching world in which being is revealed in a discernible and historical manner, since being is no longer available for a particular determination. Therefore neither the artwork nor the world that it sets up can be thought of as capable of establishing a new discernible epoch in the history of

⁷⁸ Actually, Rehberg argues that this lack of one dominant disclosure of beings as a whole gives way to a multiplicity of micro-historical worlds (WWA 140). However, for the purposes of this thesis, I will focus on the lack of one unifying determination of being.

being. Furthermore, if this were the case, namely that the artwork at the end of metaphysics was still capable of establishing an epochal world, then this would mean a continuity of the history of metaphysics and not the instantiation of the other beginning.

In relation to this I think world-decay and world-withdrawal are two important conditions that make the other beginning possible in and through *technē* as art, if and only if we understand world-withdrawal still as a worlding but as one in which not beings as a whole are brought into the open in a unified manner but the impossibility of such a unifying disclosure is revealed. I think that this is the only possibility that is left to the artwork in the age of modern technology in which metaphysics completes itself. This should not be understood as decadence, or the diminishment of art, on the contrary, it is this possibility, namely the possibility of revealing the lack of one overarching determination of being as a lack that makes *technē* as art the possible site for the other beginning. This brings us again to the issue of the history of being and the event of appropriation, i.e., *Ereignis*, since the thinking of *Ereignis* is a thinking that engages this lack and discloses the fundamental movement of being as a self-withdrawal. For Heidegger, the other beginning is only possible if thinking enters into the event of appropriation. Hence the relation between world-withdrawal and *Ereignis* becomes important for an understanding of the role of the work of art with respect to the other beginning.

In ch.3.1 it was noted that there is a parallel between the event of appropriation and the strife between world and earth. Now the relation between *Ereignis* and the notion of world, as described in “The Origin of the Work of Art”, can be clarified on the basis of world-withdrawal. Both the thinking of *Ereignis* and the notion of world-withdrawal engage with the impossibility of a name for being emerging at the end of metaphysics. If we recall that this namelessness, or the lack of a name for being, is the essential component of the event of appropriation, then *technē* as art should also bring about such a lack in order to be the possible site of the other beginning. Therefore the world can no longer be understood simply as a contextual referential whole through which the disclosure of beings as a whole takes place in a unified manner if art is to be thought of as the site in which the saving-power grows or the other beginning is actuated. What I am trying to explicate here is

that not only has the world of the Greek temple gone and it can only be encountered as a “bygone” world, but also that the art to come, which is the possibility of the other beginning, should reveal this withdrawal of the world *as* a withdrawal.

However, this does not mean that the artwork is no longer capable of setting up a world; world-withdrawal can still be interpreted as a worlding, since the world is a guiding openness that “keeps us transported into being.” (OWA 170). This is because world-withdrawal announces a moment within the history of being in which being is completely forgotten and by announcing this moment it also announces the leap beyond that history.

On the basis of this, world-withdrawal can be interpreted precisely as indicating the very structure of its epochality or historicity as constituted, or even grounded, by a fundamental finitude, an unavailability that does not enter into the history of being. Thus world-withdrawal as a worlding can be understood not as establishing a particular epoch but as disclosing the very structure of historicity itself as grounded by something un-historical. I think that world-withdrawal can be understood as a disclosure of its own finitude and by doing so it sets itself back into its ground, namely earth. What is significant here is that by understanding world-withdrawal as a mode of world that is capable of revealing the lack of a name for being it becomes the openness that discloses its own finitude and hints at its non-historical ground, namely earth, as the non-historical ground that can now be manifested as itself. To explicate this point it can be stated that insofar as worlding emerges as a withdrawal, worlding is no longer a disclosure of beings as a whole in one unified manner. Following from this, world-withdrawal makes it possible to engage with the non-historical self-withdrawal of being itself by disclosing its own finitude and its being grounded in the non-historical element, namely earth. It is in this sense that world-withdrawal makes room of the self-withholding of being. This is significant because it becomes possible for the artwork to bring into presence what has been covered over throughout the history of Western metaphysics, namely the self-withholding or *sterēsis* of being as itself. World-withdrawal makes it possible to experience *alētheia* as *a-lēthia* in the sense of the disclosure of the lethic essence of the truth of being. Thus it can be said that Heidegger’s designation of *technē* as art as the saving-power is by no means an indication of a return to the ancient Greek world,

on the contrary, it refers to a new kind of art. Although the Greek temple revealed its own historical world and also the self-withholding in what emerges by itself, *phusis*, to its own historical people, it was not received as the disclosure of this self-withholding as such⁷⁹.

4.1.2 Earth and self-concealment

In previous chapters I indicated that earth appears as the self-withdrawing element which co-constitutes the work of art together with world, and in the second chapter it was also noted that Heidegger's understanding of earth stems from his interpretation of the Greek notion of *phusis*. In this interpretation I emphasised Heidegger's designation of *sterēsis* as the hidden essence of *phusis*. Furthermore, it was also indicated that earth designates this resistential essence of *phusis*, rather than *phusis* in general. In this section, first, I will try to elucidate how earth signifies a "non-passive"⁸⁰ resistance to coming-to-presence, rather than a mere passive state of concealedness. On the basis of this, how this resistential characteristic of earth and its disclosure in the work of art enables the other beginning will be explicated. To do so, I will first briefly summarize the general characteristics of earth and then establish its relation to Heidegger's notion of *Enteignis*, i.e., the expropriation that belongs to the event of appropriation. In turn, this will put us in a position to discuss the work of art as the site of the truth of being by instigating the strife between world and earth, which will be discussed in the next section.

To begin with, as the work of art sets up or erects a world (*aufstellen*), it also sets forth (*herstellen*) the earth (OWA 172-3, GA 5 32-4). The difference between setting up and setting forth is important, since it also indicates the difference between the essential traits of world and earth. Earth is not set up or opened up in the work of art, rather it is set forth, i.e., it is brought forward into presence, or better into the

⁷⁹ John Caputo in his article "Demythologizing Heidegger: *Alētheia* and the History of Being", *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. 41:3, 1988 519-46, precisely explains how the Greek experience differs from Heidegger's interpretations of those Greek notions such as *phusis* and *alētheia*. He focuses on the issue of *alētheia* and in the third subsection of this chapter this issue about the Greek experience will be taken up in relation to *alētheia*.

⁸⁰ I am borrowing this term from Michel Haar, simply because the word "active" subjectivizes and substantializes the earth, while "non-passive" can emphasize the dynamic characteristic of the earth without substantializing it (SE 100).

openness of world⁸¹. It is not opened up because earth can only be articulated as essentially self-secluding. However, earth cannot be understood as a simple state of being closed off just as the world is not a simple state of unconcealedness, since earth needs to manifest itself in the artwork as essentially self-concealing in and through its opposition with world. Moreover, Heidegger's statement, according to which the self-seclusion of earth comes into presence in inexhaustible modes suggests that the self-secluding of earth is a dynamic process that can be manifested in different ways (OWA 173).

As was demonstrated in ch.2.5, there is a parallel between earth and the Greek notion of *phusis* in the sense that both designate a coming-to-presence by itself. However, I think that Heidegger's understanding of earth emphasizes the resistential essence of *phusis*, i.e., *sterēsis*, precisely by describing the manifestation of not-coming-to-presence. I think that this is why Heidegger states that earth is "[...] that which rises up as self-closing." (OWA 180)⁸². Therefore earth cannot be thought as simple concealedness. On the contrary, it rises up, it becomes manifest, yet as something essentially self-secluding, just like *sterēsis* is not a mere disappearance, but rather the presenting of an absencing, as was explicated in the second chapter (see 2.3 and 2.4).

In "The Origin of the Work of Art", Heidegger explicates another sense of earth, also related to self-seclusion, namely sheltering (*Bergen*). Heidegger understands this sheltering in the sense of a self-concealing ground that enables the opening up of the world, a ground on which world grounds itself (OWA 174). The measure and the decisiveness of a world are grounded on the self-concealing earth as the unmasterable ground, since "[e]very decision [...] bases itself on something not mastered, something concealed, confusing; else it would never be a decision." (OWA 180). Actually, from this point, the essential characteristic of earth and its importance with regard to the inauguration of the other beginning arise, because this shows that what has been concealed throughout the history of metaphysics is this essential

⁸¹ "The work moves the earth itself into the open region of a world and keeps it there." (OWA 172).

⁸² The following sentence also expresses the same essential trait of earth. "The earth is the spontaneous forthcoming of that which is continually self-secluding [...]" (OWA 174).

characteristic of earth, namely the self-withholding essence of being, which makes it possible to disclose being in a particular manner.

Furthermore, if we recall that the self-withholding of being holds both the possibility of the epochal determinations of it throughout the history of metaphysics and the overcoming of metaphysics at the same time, then it can be said that the earth as the essentially self-secluding element is the ground both of the history of being and of metaphysics. This is because earth also appears as a ground on which the historical openings of the world are grounded⁸³, and on the other hand, earth as the self-secluding is also the non-metaphysical element, since by keeping itself closed and withheld it does not enter into the epochal determinations and decisions of the world and remains unavailable to metaphysics. Therefore it can be said that the earth names the self-withholding of being itself. In the previous section, world-withdrawal itself was interpreted as a mode of world that reveals its own finitude. World-withdrawal in turn becomes an opening which allocates a room for the self-withholding of being, namely earth. In the following I will attempt to show the relation between earth and Heidegger's understanding of *Enteignis*, i.e., expropriation.

As was explained in the previous chapter, the possibility of the other beginning and the self-overcoming of metaphysics depend on a non-metaphysical element, which is not, and cannot be, assimilated into metaphysics (see ch.3.1.3). The historical and epochal element requires an un-historical element as its ground. Earth as the non-masterable self-secluding ground also emerges as the non-historical element in the work of art. It is non-historical precisely because it withholds itself from any kind of explication, since by withholding itself it does not let itself be assimilated into any kind of historical determination. This is also why earth is the non-metaphysical element. Yet, as just indicated, earth is not mere negative passivity. On the contrary, it is the very possibility of historicity itself, since as the non-historical element, which withholds itself, earth makes the historical openings possible⁸⁴. I think this is why the earth is the ground on which the world is set up in the work of art.

⁸³ This ground is a non-substantial ground. For the explanation of this, see ch.3.2.1.3, footnote 69.

⁸⁴ See ch.3.1, above, for the relation between the historical and the non-historical.

On the basis of this it can be said that the earth is parallel to *Enteignis* in the event of appropriation, i.e., expropriation, a movement of making-unavailable (as was shown in the third chapter) because earth also designates an event of making-unavailable by emerging as the constantly self-secluding and impenetrable element. Therefore, if we recall that the artwork is the setting-itself-into-the-work of the truth of being itself, it can be concluded that by setting forth the earth the artwork makes space for the self-withholding of being to disclose itself as a withdrawal. This point is crucial with regard to the other beginning, not only because the possibility of the other beginning requires the non-historicity of earth but also because the artwork's articulation of earth discloses the fundamental movement within the history of being as a movement of self-withdrawal, namely as a resistance against technological presentification, by setting forth the earth.

Earlier in this section it was concluded that the earth as the self-withholding of being is the resistential essence of being itself, i.e., *sterēsis*. In light of this the specific meaning of resistance can now be described on the basis of the self-withholding essence of earth. As stated earlier in this section, the self-withholding of earth is not a mere state of concealedness, rather it is in constant emergence and it emerges as the counter-force to the metaphysical impulse, namely the will to mastery. The will to mastery, which is the technological essence of metaphysics that unfolds throughout history and culminates in the age of modern technology, is a restless attempt at making-available, at presentification. On the other hand, in the work of art, earth emerges as a making-unavailable by constantly emerging as self-concealing. Therefore it can be concluded that in earth's self-secluding there is a constant resistance to the technological essence of metaphysics. I think that this resistance describes the essential trait of earth and the work of art, by setting forth or even better by letting the earth be an earth, reveals this resistance *as* resistance and keeps it in the open and thereby it becomes the site in which the truth of being happens as a concealing clearing in and through the strife between world and earth. For Heidegger the artwork does not diminish the resistance, on the contrary, it instantiates and intensifies it, not only because it sets forth the earth as essentially

self-secluding but also because it brings the internal resistential nature of *a-lētheia* itself, as the constant struggle between clearing and concealing, into view⁸⁵.

4.1.3. The work of art and *alētheia* as the strife between world and earth

Near the beginning of this chapter it was noted that the work of art is the setting-itself into the work of truth. What is at work in the artwork is truth as *alethēia*. In ch.3.2 above it was also shown that Heidegger understands *alētheia* as an event of the constant struggle between unconcealment and concealment, which is the openness where being shows itself. Heidegger thinks that truth as *alētheia* has an impulse towards the work, it establishes itself in the artwork. Hence he states that “[...] the *impulse toward the work* lies in the essence of truth as one of truth’s distinctive possibilities [...]” (OWA 187, emphasis in the original). The artwork, by setting up a world and setting forth the earth, becomes the very happening of truth itself, since by accomplishing this the artwork instantiates the conflictual happening of truth itself.

The relation between world and earth is revealed as an essential strife in which both of them emerge as what they are in opposition to one another. The openness of the world constantly tries to break open earth and earth constantly destabilizes this openness. Heidegger refers to this as follows,

The world grounds itself on earth, and earth juts through world. Yet the relation between world and earth does not wither away into the empty unity of opposites unconcerned with one another. The world, in resting upon the earth, strives to surmount it. As self-opening it cannot endure anything closed. The earth, however, as sheltering and concealing, tends always to draw the world into itself and keep it there. (OWA 174)

Heidegger calls this conflictual yet reciprocal relation strife, and for Heidegger, as I also emphasized in the third chapter, the strife is not a dispute, but rather it is the primordial relationality that both holds the opponents together and makes it possible for them to become what they essentially are. It can be said that world needs the self-seclusion of earth in order to establish itself as a movement towards openness and earth needs the openness of a world in order to emerge and manifest itself as the self-secluding element. Thus, although the elements keep their difference and are not united or synthesized in the strife, this does not mean that these two elements become

⁸⁵ This issue of letting-happen (*Geschehenlassen*) will be explicated in the conclusion of this thesis in relation to the other beginning.

self-identical entities through the strife, since “[i]n strife, each opponent carries the other beyond itself.” (OWA 174). I take this to mean that the opponents, world and earth, emerge as belonging to and needing one another and thus they never become self-identical, since each one depends on the other’s counter-movement to become what it essentially is. This strife should be understood in terms of the Heideggerian *Auseinandersetzung*, namely a counter-turning of each in which each confronts the other, and on the basis of this confrontation each element is differentiated. But they still remain as essentially belonging together, since the difference emerges through the confrontation with the other⁸⁶. Thus it can be said that there is always an outstanding of elements in the strife as long as the artwork keeps them apart and counter-acting on each other.

Moreover, the work of art even becomes the instigator of this strife (OWA 175), since it is the artwork itself that sets up the *polemical* relation between world and earth. Heidegger describes this strife, which is established in and through the artwork, as a rift (*Riss*). With the word *Riss* Heidegger makes use of different connotations of the word. First of all, he emphasizes the sense of basis, ground or outline that draws out and holds together the essential characteristics of truth, namely clearing and concealing. Secondly, he also makes use of the sense of gap or rift, meaning that neither one of the elements is reduced to the other or united in a higher element, but always kept apart and in a constant counter-acting (OWA 188). Furthermore, I think that this usage of *Riss* explicates *alētheia* as an abyssal opening in the sense of the clearing of a concealing, which is not a disclosure of being in a particular manner, but is the revealing of how being is constituted by a self-withholding. Therefore I think that with this designation Heidegger also touches upon the unthought essence of *alētheia*, which is covered over throughout the history of metaphysics. The following sentence sheds light on how Heidegger understands this essence,

This occupying, however, can happen only if what is to be brought forth, the rift [*Riss*], entrusts itself into the self-secluding element that juts into the open region. The rift must set itself back into the gravity of stone [...] As the earth takes the rift

⁸⁶ For a detailed account of Heidegger’s notion of *Auseinandersetzung* and its relation to notions of strife and *polemos*, see HP. In this book, Gregory Fried constructs an interpretation of Heidegger’s thinking based on the notion of *polemos*. In the introduction of the book he gives a definition of *Auseinandersetzung* in relation to the above-mentioned notions (HP 14-17).

back into itself, the rift is first set forth into the open region and thus placed, that is, set within that which towers into the open region as self-secluding and sheltering. (OWA 188f.)

So not only does world need to be set back into the earth, but the rift, the strife itself, must be set back into the self-seclusion of earth. I take this to mean that *alētheia* is interpreted as the clearing of the self-concealing of being. Being is not taken as a discernible gift and disclosed as idea, will etc. What is revealed in the artwork is the very fundamental movement of being, namely the self-withholding itself. It is not a particular disclosure of being that takes place in the work of art, rather the very possibility of such disclosure is revealed. This means that the very essential structure of *alētheia* is disclosed. I think that this is why *technē* as art is capable of actuating the other beginning, since it discloses what has been covered over or what has remained unthought since the first beginning. That it is also why Heidegger states that “[t]he essence of *alētheia* was not thought out in the thinking of the Greeks [...]. Unconcealment is, for thought, the most concealed thing in Greek existence, although from early times it determines the presencing of everything present.” (OWA 176).

I think that here it is crucial to notice that the essence of *alētheia* remains unavailable for thought yet is still operative in determining coming-to-presence in the Greek experience. In his article titled “Demythologizing Heidegger”, John Caputo claims that although *alētheia* as the unconcealment of beings was part of the Greek experience, *alētheia* itself was not thematized and thought as such, rather the philosophical question for the ancient Greeks was the question of being (DH 523f.). He continues to say that to think *alētheia* as such belongs to our age in which metaphysics is said to have come to an end and he adds that Heidegger’s appropriation of *alētheia* designates the granting-giving of the presencing, i.e., the *Es gibt*. He captures this sense of *alētheia* by using the hyphenated version, *a-lētheia*, in which the lethic aspect as the self-withholding and the sheltering essence of being comes to the fore as that which grants the open and the presencing of beings by precisely withholding itself (DH 524-32). Accordingly, it can be said that Heidegger’s appropriation of *alētheia* differs from the Greek understanding in the sense that *a-lētheia* is no longer thought in terms of the disclosedness of beings as a whole in one unified manner but rather Heidegger’s understanding of the truth of

being as *a-lētheia* engages with the self-withholding of being and in this sense *a-lētheia* becomes the revealing of the self-withdrawal as a withdrawal. Thus the rift as well as world must be set back into the earth in the artwork, since the rift, in order to be the site of the truth of being, must reveal the self-withholding essence of being as a withdrawal. Yet earth also needs the openness of the world in order to become manifest, otherwise neither *a-lētheia* nor its lethic essence could be disclosed. Thus the truth has an impulse towards the artwork, since it is the artwork that establishes the strife between world and earth in the figure (*Gestalt*) and keeps them together as constantly confronting each other (OWA 180-1).

4.2 The work of art and the *sterēsis* of being: earth and alterity

In this section the resistential character of earth will be specified with respect to the metaphysical understanding of matter and temporality. The aim is to show how the resistential essence of earth, i.e., the self-secluding as a movement of making-unavailable, disrupts the traditional conceptions and offers a different type of thinking. On the basis of a certain elaboration and disclosure of finitude that enables the other beginning to take place it will also be shown that the earth as resistance discloses the alterity of being as a non-passive unavailability.

4.2.1. Earth and materiality

In the section on Heidegger's notion of earth it was noted, but not yet explicated, that earth is immediately linked with some sort of materiality or what Heidegger calls the thingly aspect of the work of art. In the artwork this so-called material or thingly aspect shows its essential characteristic by coming-to-presence only as self-concealing. Only the artwork is capable of such an exposure since it is only in the artwork that the essential trait of materiality is revealed as earth, namely as a fundamental event of making-unavailable for any kind of reductive explication. Here we should recall Heidegger's statement, according to which the material is not "used up" and does not disappear in the work of art. On the contrary, the artwork "[...] causes it to come forth for the very first time [...]." (OWA 171). In other words, the artwork releases the material in the sense of letting-be, or 'saves' it in the sense of fetching "[...] something home into its essence, in order to bring the essence for the first time into its proper appearing." (QCT 333), because in the artwork the essence of the material is put forth as earth, as something essentially unmasterable, for the

first time. Harries also points out that earth constitutes the material basis of the work of art and he states that the disclosure of earth in the artwork opens up “[...] that dimension of things that will always resist human mastery.” (AM 117). Harries calls this resisting materiality of earth “material transcendence” (AM 117)⁸⁷. However, he goes on to say that it is also the earth that gives “[...] each thing’s unique identity. The artist preserves that identity.” (AM 117). Here it seems to me that Harries tends to equate the earth with the material or the matter itself, and the organic unity of the matter is presented as a function of earth. However, I think that this unitary function that Harries seems to be attributing to earth is utterly misleading with regard to the essential characteristic of earth. I think that this kind of interpretation endangers the possibility of the other beginning by configuring earth as a unified, self-identical and substantial ground.

At this point I would like to draw on a difference indicated earlier, namely the difference between earth and matter, or the material. It is true that in “The Origin of the Work of Art” Heidegger emphasizes the employment of the particular work-material, such as stone, colour, words, in the work of art as fundamentally different from equipment, insofar as the artwork lets them appear as what they are, i.e., as essentially self-secluding. However, this does not mean that the earth is some sort of substantial ground that gives each particular material its unity or identity. Michel Haar says that the earth is neither primal matter nor pure passivity to be moulded with external forms. He also adds that although earth appears as more receptive to certain shapes than others, it is not a resource of pre-existing forms (SE 58). These two comments actually indicate the two main interrelated axes of the following discussion of earth and materiality. First, Harries’ commentary positions earth as a more primordial materiality that remains somehow closed off from any possible discursive explication but that gives a kind of organic unity to things – or at least this can be inferred from his interpretation. On the other hand, Haar’s interpretation rejects Harries’ positioning of earth as primal matter. By taking these two conflicting commentaries as the guiding thread in the remaining part of this subsection, firstly, I

⁸⁷ Harries explains this term as follows, “[b]y that term [material transcendence] I mean to refer to that aspect of things that makes them incapable of being adequately expressed in some clear and distinct discourse.” (AM 117)

will show why earth cannot be thought as primal matter and, secondly, I will explain why earth should not be interpreted as some sort of organic unity or that which gives unity to things. After covering these two main axes I will argue that as an event of making-unavailable, or resistance, earth indicates a non-coincidence in the sense that it refers to a constant movement of self-differing. On the basis of these two points, which stem directly from the self-withholding of earth, I will explicate how Heidegger's notion of earth offers a non-metaphysical understanding of materiality.

I think that to equate the earth with matter prevents us from seeing the possibilities that earth bears with regard to a non-metaphysical thinking of what is traditionally called matter since it substantializes earth as primary material base or ground. We can say, agreeing with Haar, that earth is not primal archetypal matter in the sense that it is not the ultimate primary substance that lies beneath the particular material. Rather, it indicates an event that essentially belongs to what is traditionally called matter, namely the happening of self-withholding. In ch.2. it was shown that the *sterēsis* in *phusis* is what enables the *metabolē*, i.e., change and *genesis*. In parallel to this the self-withholding of earth makes it possible to be addressed in different forms and shapes as a work-material. The self-seclusion of earth is what enables matter to be transformed into something other than itself. This is why the self-withholding of earth is not a fixed state but is capable of being elaborated in inexhaustible ways. This inexhaustibility does not originate from a substantial resource that somehow remains concealed. It is true that earth enables *genesis*, but only in the sense that by withholding itself it gives way to a particular disclosure of itself. Therefore it can be said that earth is a generative privation or absentiality in the sense that by withholding and concealing itself it is capable of being addressed in infinite forms and shapes. Thus even if we accept that earth is some kind of ground – and Heidegger asserts that the earth is the ground on which the world grounds itself – it is a non-substantial ground, or what Haar calls a “non-foundational foundation” (SE 64). This is because earth only becomes a ground by making itself unavailable, i.e., by withholding itself. Therefore an interpretation that reifies earth will be misleading and unfruitful with regard to its latent implications concerning a non-metaphysical thinking of materiality.

On the other hand, the self-concealing of earth does not lead to the idea that any form whatsoever can be imposed upon earth. It is true that on the basis of the *pathein-sterēsis* structure, which was discussed in the second chapter (see ch.2.3 and 2.4), beings can be transformed into what they are not. This means that to become something other than itself is made possible by the self-withholding and concealing event. Furthermore, it is also the self-withholding what makes it possible for earth to be elaborated in inexhaustible ways. However, to say that earth can be articulated in inexhaustible ways does not mean that any form can be imposed upon earth. This is because this idea of imposition presupposes a passive materiality which inevitably conceives earth as something completely available. On the other hand, what is meant by the inexhaustibility of the mode of articulation of earth is that the very movement of making-unavailable, or what I call resistance, can be articulated in inexhaustible ways. However, to take earth as simply a passive, completely available resource is the opposite of revealing this resistance.

Based on this, if materiality is thought according to earth as it is revealed in the artwork, materiality can no longer be thought as a pure passivity, since what enables the reception of certain shapes belongs to the very essence of matter, namely the self-withholding movement. In light of this I think that earth is not the particular matter, the particular colour, the particular stone, or the particular word. Rather, earth designates the very movement of self-withholding itself that constitutes the material and makes it possible to come to presence in a certain discernible shape. Accordingly, although there is a parallel between earth and *phusis*, which has been explicated above (see ch.2.5), earth is not *phusis* itself yet earth refers to the hidden essence of *phusis*, i.e., *sterēsis*. Therefore earth is not simply the passive matter in the sense of the purely orderable, but the primordial condition that enables *hule* to be ordered in a certain shape (*eidōs*).

But this self-withholding and concealing essence of earth itself becomes completely concealed in the sense that it becomes unnoticeable in the usefulness of a daily equipment. The peculiarity of the artwork precisely lies in its disclosure of this possibility as belonging to earth itself and by doing so it also discloses that this possibility of becoming other than itself and of taking different shapes depends on the self-withholding itself by disclosing earth as constantly self-concealing. I think

this is why Heidegger claims that the material comes to the fore for the first time in the work of art, since the artwork lets its hidden essence manifest itself by articulating earth as essentially self-secluding. After having delineated in what sense earth refers to the work-material now I will move on to the issue of self-difference that offers an understanding of materiality that does configure materiality in substantial terms. Actually, as I indicated near the beginning of this section, this aspect also stems from the issue of the self-withholding of earth.

In the previous chapter it has repeatedly been said that the movement of self-withholding and concealing also refers to a reserve that keeps itself unavailable. On the basis of this the possibility of the other beginning was explained in its relation to the history of being and to the non-historical element that co-constitutes history, which enables the other beginning as the unavailable reserve into which metaphysics cannot insert itself. On the basis of this it was concluded that in Heidegger's understanding of it the completion of metaphysics does not denote a phase where metaphysics comes to itself in the sense of self-identity. The disruptive claim of *Ge-stell* that challenges the tradition and forces it to leap beyond itself is what makes *Ge-stell* both the culmination and dissolution of metaphysics itself. Thus the completion of metaphysics means the very beginning of a process of self-differing, a process of becoming other than itself. Therefore it can be said that the movement of self-withholding, taken as an unavailable reserve, also indicates a movement of self-differing. On the basis of this idea, namely interpreting earth as the self-withholding reserve that enables a movement of self-differing, I will try to show how materiality itself can be thought without substantialising it.

If one accepts that Heidegger's notion of earth precisely designates a happening of self-withholding and secluding reserve, namely not as a substantial unknowable source but as an excess that does not allow any penetration whatsoever, then the earth cannot be thought as an element that enables the identity of things, contrary to what Harries seems to be asserting. On the contrary, it must denote the impossibility of any kind of self-identity since as the unavailable reserve it always endangers the identity of a thing with itself by carrying the possibility of becoming something other than itself. Therefore earth as unavailable excess or reserve indicates that there is always the non-coincidence or a constant self-differing in a being, since

a particular being is always constituted by a self-withdrawal that is pregnant with future transformations.

In light of this the two main axes that were just explicated with regard to earth and its possible suggestions for reconfiguring materiality depend on the essential characteristic of earth, namely self-withholding. The analyses carried out so far in this section indicate that this self-withholding occurs as a resistance since it occurs as an event of making-unavailable. Although this self-withholding is the very possibility of placing the orderable into a certain shape it also indicates the limits of that very shape and thereby earth becomes the condition of possibility of self-differing. Earth indicates and even constitutes the limits of a certain particular configuration, precisely because it is the unavailable reserve that cannot be exhausted in any particular configuration but that manifests itself as a lack in that very configuration itself. Thus it can be said that the self-withholding of earth is a coming-to-presence as resistance. This is firstly because earth is the very movement that determines the finitude of any particular configuration by constituting the possibility of becoming other. Secondly, since it constitutes the unavailable reserve, which constantly arises as the impenetrable self-concealing, it also delimits the movement of presentification as a counter-movement by not letting itself be assimilated to what is present.

Therefore I think that earth offers an understanding of materiality which is constituted by a “non-passive” resistance against presentification. The work-material cannot be thought as an amorphous pure passivity that has no internal finitude, so that any external form whatsoever can be imposed on to it. On the contrary, what enables the coming-to-presence in a certain shape belongs to the capacity of the work-material itself, as I have been discussing. Furthermore, since earth designates a fundamental finitude as the self-withholding element – and this is what makes it possible to come to presence in a particular manner – the work-material becomes a site of resistance against presentification even when it is put forth into presence in a certain form. This is because in that very form, what withholds itself, or what is not presentified, also announces itself as this self-withholding and finds its place in its strife with the world. So the earth becomes what it is when it meets its counter-movement in the work of art.

Actually, these interpretations have brought us to the next discussion with regard to the resistance that earth constitutes, namely the relation between earth and temporality, since the self-secluding of earth is the resisting movement against presentification, and it inevitably and directly raises the question of temporality. This is because earth withholds itself and thereby does not become present but it still presences and manifests itself. Thus it indicates a type of temporality that has been covered over throughout the history of metaphysics. In the following section I will try to elucidate how the self-withholding of earth as it is elaborated in the work of art also offers a non-metaphysical understanding of temporality by taking into account Heidegger's treatment of time in "Time and Being".

4.2.2. Earth and Temporality

The metaphysical conception and determination of time depends on an understanding of time as composed of successive "now" points. So the present – in the sense of *Gegenwart* – becomes the modality of time that actually determines the conception of time. This is also in accordance with Heidegger's claim saying that Western metaphysics is essentially technological, since presentification is what constitutes the technological essence of metaphysics – as discussed in the previous chapter (see ch.3.2). Accordingly, when time is determined from out of the modality of the present, i.e. now, the other two modalities, namely past and future, are also interpreted in terms of the present. In "Time and Being", Heidegger attempts to think time in a more originary way by tracing back the metaphysical conception of time to a more primordial happening out of which the three modalities emerge. Heidegger asserts that,

[...] if we are to characterize time in terms of the present [*Gegenwart*], we understand the present as the now as distinct from the no-longer-now of the past and the not-yet-now of the future. But the present speaks at the same time of presence [*Anwesenheit*]. However, we are not accustomed to defining the peculiar character [*das Eigene*] of time with regard to the present in the sense of presence. Rather, we represent time—the unity of present, past and future—in terms of the now. (TB 11, ZSD 11)

But what is the difference between present (*Gegenwart*) and presencing (*Anwesenheit*), and why is *Anwesenheit* more primordial than *Gegenwart*? The primordially of presencing lies in the fact that it does not describe a modality of time, rather it describes the manner of their emergence, and in this sense there is a

presencing in all three modalities. Heidegger describes presencing as a constant reaching out, extending [*erreichen*] (TB 12f., ZS 13)⁸⁸. I think that the following sentence expresses the importance of the presencing, “[...] we shall find in absence [*Abwesen*]—be it what has been or what is to come—a manner of presencing and approaching which by no means coincides with presencing [*Anwesen*] in the sense of immediate present [*Gegenwart*].” (TB 13, ZS 13). Following from this it can be said that the presencing that Heidegger offers as more primordial indicates that the absencing, which still presences, is more primordial than the immediate ‘now’, i.e., the present.

Presencing in the sense of approaching and extending is not limited to presencing in the sense of being-present. More importantly, approaching what is absent in the present, namely what has been and what is to come, is more primordial than the present. Hence Heidegger asserts that the approaching of what is to come and what has been reciprocally determine each other and their reciprocity brings about the present (TB 13). So it can be said that presencing as approaching is what constitutes the three modalities of time and their belonging together. However, what is significant here is that the presencing of an absencing that announces itself in presencing in the sense of approaching what is not present and available is more primordial than the present itself. I take this to mean that a certain kind of finitude is at play in the mutual giving of the three modalities that announces itself as approaching and extending. To put it differently, as well as the presencing of being, the presencing of time is also constituted by a fundamental finitude, i.e., a certain kind of self-withholding, since what is not present and available – yet still presencing by approaching, coming towards – constitutes the three ecstases of time.

On the basis of this finitude and the self-withholding of approaching, Heidegger asserts that time is four-dimensional and what he introduces as the fourth dimension is actually the primordial giving that determines all three ecstases of time. Heidegger calls this fourth dimension the “nearing nearness” (*die nähernde Nähe*), which holds both together and apart the three different modalities, namely future, past and present by distancing them (TB 15, ZS 16). Once again we are faced with an

⁸⁸ At this point it would be useful to recall that Heidegger interprets constancy, in relation to *ousia*, as standing in presence (*sunestota* or *das Ständige*) which was discussed in ch.2.1 and ch.2.3.

event that is essentially conflictual, which emerges as the ground of different but interrelated elements. Accordingly, I think that what Heidegger calls the nearing nearness must be understood in terms of strife, which does not allow the difference between the elements to go astray. On the contrary, it reveals the belonging together of the elements by disclosing their essential difference. Hence Heidegger says that,

[...] it [the nearing nearness] keeps what has been open by denying its advent as present [...] and] keeps open the approach coming from the future by withholding the present in the approach. Nearing nearness has the character of denial and withholding. (TB 15)

In light of this it can be concluded that the giving of time is also constituted by a fundamental *sterēsis*, since the openness in which the three ecstases of time come into play is constituted by a certain type of privation, namely withholding and denial. The denial of ‘what has been’ and the withholding of ‘what is to come’, which approaches, and the interplay between them, are what gives the present.

Here Heidegger repeats the same structure that he explicated in the first half of “Time and Being”. “Time is not, There is, It gives time [*Es gibt die Zeit*].” (TB 16, ZS 16). Furthermore, what is more primordial is again the giving of time itself that is essentially withholding itself. Not only the “It” that gives time withholds itself, but in each modality of time a certain kind of concealing and withholding takes place. Thus it can be said that presencing itself is constituted by a movement of self-withholding.

It is now obvious that there is a structural parallel between Heidegger’s understanding of time and his understanding of earth, precisely based on this fundamental withholding. However, I do not think that the relation is purely structural, since I believe that earth as essentially self-withholding is also the disclosure of how time itself is constituted by a withdrawal for the following reasons.

Firstly, I think that earth as the unmasterable reserve that enables the historical decisions of world also keeps open what Heidegger calls the approaching of what is to come with regard to the historical possibilities. This is because earth, by not giving itself, constantly emerges as absence which is presencing as continually approaching but never becoming present. This is why the self-withholding of earth enables the historical openings of world and constantly threatens its stability at the same time. There is a constant encounter between the determination and the measure of world and the self-concealing of earth, since earth is the movement that constantly

tries to “draw the world into itself and keep it there” (OWA 174). So earth as the unmasterable reserve is also the possibility of the withdrawal of a world. On the other hand, this self-concealing of earth is what makes it possible to keep open the approaching of what is to come, and thereby it at the same time enables epochal transformations. Thus it can be said that earth not only names the fundamental finitude that constitutes the epochal revealing of being, but also enables the imminent, yet never present, approach of future. What I am trying to say here is that earth as the unavailable reserve, which resists presentification by constantly withholding itself, is what makes every historical decision and determination inherently finite. In this sense it is also the possibility of what has been and this unavailability is also what keeps what is to come open as a possibility, since as the unavailable reserve it constitutes an inexhaustibility that can never be presentified. Thus earth, by withholding itself, announces a type of futurity. However, this futurity is not the manipulable ‘not-yet-now’. On the contrary, it is revealed as always approaching but never becoming present and available. Therefore it can be said that earth, by withholding itself and keeping open the possibility of becoming *other* than itself, announces an alterity in being that indicates a constant movement of self-differing. I think that this is what makes earth utterly crucial for the inauguration of the other beginning. This is because earth, by keeping open what is to come, enables a projection, not in the sense of concrete planned future projects but in the sense of having possibilities that can never be exhausted.

Moreover, when temporality is considered from the perspective of this always approaching future then the past, or more accurately ‘what has been’, too is put forward as a concern for us and not a mere something of the past. Based on this projection that is grounded in the never-present yet approaching future, what has been can be taken up again and opened up again in way so that the new beginning can be inaugurated. I think that Heidegger’s whole interpretation of the history of metaphysics depends on this kind of understanding of temporality and history. His interpretation of the history of metaphysics stems from the constantly approaching other beginning, and this kind of projection allows him to think what is in the past but still concerns us. Furthermore, this is also why earth not only describes the resistential essence of time, but it also resists and dismantles the traditional

conception of time. Therefore I think that earth reflects the interplay between what has been and what is to come which Heidegger explicates in “Time and Being”. Thus I think that Heidegger’s notion of earth can also be interpreted as a profound articulation of a temporality beyond any metaphysical constructions. Having elaborated how earth is interpreted as resistance, the following discussion of the artwork and the issue of letting-happen and the other beginning will form the conclusion of this thesis.

Chapter 5

Conclusion: The Letting-Happen of the Work of Art and the Other Beginning

Throughout this thesis I have tried to show that earth as the essentially self-secluding element emerges as a resistance to the metaphysical movement of presentification and of making-available in and through the artwork. In ch.4.2. it has also been shown how the resistance of earth manifests itself in relation to materiality and temporality. It has also been indicated that the ontological significance of the artwork lies in the disclosure of earth in its strife with world. However, in order to understand how art can become the possible site of the other beginning what must be shown is how art is capable of inaugurating a mode of revealing which is essentially *different* from both of the modes of revealing of the previous metaphysical epochs and of *Ge-stell*. So what is this special way of revealing of which art is capable? As demonstrated, *Ge-stell* and art appear as two extreme poles with respect to their modes of revealing, because while *Ge-stell* is marked by a relentless and endless challenging-forth and forcing out, contrary to *Ge-stell*, there is only a letting-be in art.

In “The Origin of the Work of Art”, Heidegger explicates the essential characteristic of the artwork’s revealing as an occasioning that enables the happening of the truth of being. In other words, the work of art, by instigating the strife between world and earth, allows the truth of being, i.e., *a-lētheia*, to take place, which was discussed in ch.4.1.3. In relation to this Heidegger asserts that “[t]ruth happens only by establishing itself in the strife and the free space opened by itself.” (OWA 186).

This is why the truth of being has a tendency or an impulse towards the work of art, because the artwork, precisely by instigating and intensifying the strife between world and earth, reveals the conflictual openness of *a-lētheia* in the sense of the revealing of a concealing, which is called the free space by Heidegger. This clearing or the free space is first of all made possible by a primordial concealment. Secondly, the clearing is opened up through the constant struggle or *polemos*, between the self-concealing and the self-revealing movements of being. This is why the work of art is capable of “[...] letting happen [...] the advent of the truth of beings.” (OWA 197),

since the self-withholding of being is given a space to show itself as a withdrawal. Thus it can be said that the artwork is the site where the truth of being as the strife between unconcealment and concealment takes place. In this sense art is the letting-happen of the truth of being.

However, if we recall the difference between Heidegger's interpretation of *a-lētheia* and the Greek experience of it, it must be noted that the truth which sets itself into the work should be the disclosure of the self-withholding of being *as* self-withholding. In other words, *a-lētheia* now becomes the clearing of the concealing, not in the sense of the dispelling of the concealing; on the contrary, the concealing is disclosed *as* a concealing⁸⁹. Therefore if the artwork is the letting-happen of the advent of the truth of being, it has to be a kind of disclosure that lets the lethic essence come to presence as itself. Here we again see the ontological significance of earth and of its elaboration in the artwork, since the happening of *a-lētheia* depends on the elaboration of earth as the self-secluding element. In connection with this what makes it possible for the artwork to become the site of the other beginning is the fact that “[t]he work lets the earth be an earth” (OWA 172). First of all, this sentence implies that the letting-be of art is not merely a passive refraining. Of course it is not the same with the modern technological way of producing or making. It is not a challenging-forth but it is not passive either. Although it was said that the modes of revealing of *Ge-stell* and of art are fundamentally different and therefore they can be understood as two extremes, it is not the case that art is the opposite of the technological mode of revealing, meaning that art is not a mere reversal of *Ge-stell*. Actually, to say that *Ge-stell* and art constitute two different extreme modes of *technē* is exactly an articulation of a certain proximity between these two modes. To recall what has been said in ch.3.2.1, it must be remembered that both *art* and *Ge-stell* depend on the capacity of being to be addressed as something other than itself, namely the *pathein-sterēsis* structure. Thus there is some kind of affinity between *Ge-stell* and art and this affinity is also what makes *Ge-stell* essentially ambiguous and thereby capable of the counter-turning that takes place within it. Thus it is

⁸⁹ This issue was discussed in ch.4.1.3 with reference to John Caputo's article "Demythologizing Heidegger".

important to recall that the self-overcoming of metaphysics is also made possible by this proximity between *Ge-stell* and art, which proximity is rooted in *technē* itself.

Technē is not passive, on the contrary, it denotes a certain kind of work or performance, which are, for instance, careful consideration and a certain kind of elaboration of the work-material. Therefore the letting-be which takes place in the artwork cannot be thought in terms of passivity. Another important indication of the non-passive nature of this letting-be is that through the artwork's setting forth of the earth, earth becomes an earth. To put it simply, it is the artwork that does not allow earth to disappear, to go unnoticed, by setting forth the earth into the open. Therefore the letting-be in the artwork should also be understood as being non-passive, parallel to the self-withholding of earth⁹⁰. If this is the case, then how should we think the letting-be of the artwork that is capable of inaugurating the other beginning?

As was shown in ch.3.2, Western metaphysics, which is rooted in a will to mastery, is essentially technological. The metaphysical stance towards beings as a whole stems from this will to mastery, and the presentification of all that is in the age of modern technology has to be thought in relation to this striving for mastery. Also in that chapter it was pointed out that the mode of revealing of the artwork constitutes the other extreme of this stance as the letting-be. However, the affinity between these two extreme modes of *technē* may lead to the conclusion that *technē* as art also includes a particular type of mastery, since it can be argued that by carefully considering and arranging the work-material the *technites*, i.e., the artist, still performs a certain type of mastery over the material (see ch.2.2).

However, this *apparent* mastery is not the same as the metaphysical urge towards mastery, since the work of the *technites* does not assimilate does not assimilate the artwork's resistential essence. On the contrary, by revealing earth as essentially self-secluding, thereby letting earth resist every attempt at penetration, this seemingly self-evident mastery which prevails in the performance of the *technites* results in the disclosure of what essentially cannot be mastered. This is the crucial point with regard to art's capacity for bringing about the other beginning, since by revealing the un-masterable, the apparent mastery over the work-material is

⁹⁰ See ch.4.1.2.

eradicated. Therefore in each work of art there is a constant *counter-turning* and *strife*, in the sense that the ‘mastery’ of the *technites* undermines itself and is no longer able to remain mastery, since the outcome, the artwork itself, reveals what cannot be mastered in the most extreme and uncanny way by disclosing earth as the essentially self-withholding element and thereby as resisting the technical mastery and any presentification. Therefore it can no longer be called mastery, because earth emerges as the essential resistance that does not allow – and even demolishes – any mastery. This is why I think that there is a constant counter-turning and strife even in the very process of the bringing-forth of the artwork.

In conclusion, I think that the letting-be that happens in the artwork cannot be grasped by the metaphysical conceptual pair activity-passivity, since it is neither active in the sense of the intentional doing of a subject nor passive in the sense of the absence of any doing. On the contrary, in order to disclose the resistential essence of earth there needs to be a certain elaboration. In other words, a certain performance must take place so that this resistentiality can come into the clearing. In light of this I think that the key claim of this thesis can be stated, namely that the mode of revealing of art as a letting-be corresponds to the privation in *a-lētheia* and in this sense it is also a not-letting-be in that it does not allow the lethic essence of the truth of being to remain concealed by not letting earth disappear in the work. This is the ontological peculiarity of the artwork, as I will now go on to explain further. To put it differently, the work of art does not let concealment remain in concealment, rather it discloses that there is a primordial concealment. In this way the other beginning can take place in art, since art does not turn away from the essential self-concealment and self-withholding of being which has continually remained concealed throughout the history of metaphysics. Therefore it can be said that the artwork, precisely by revealing the essential self-withholding of being, becomes capable of actuating the other beginning that was latent but suppressed and has remained unthought since the first beginning. This is why the other beginning does not allude to a new configuration of being or another naming for being. On the contrary, the very namelessness of being must be disclosed so that the other beginning can be inaugurated, as explicated in ch.3.1. In other words, being must be revealed as essentially self-withholding, i.e., as unavailable to any kind of manipulation,

reduction or subsumption to an alien element, and the artwork configures this mode of revealing that is to take place in the other beginning by letting earth resist every attempt at penetrating it and making it available.

Thus I think that it is art, more precisely the particular elaboration of earth, which has just been described and which was also discussed in ch.4.2., that makes it possible to enter into the thinking of *Ereignis*, since the artwork reveals that self-withdrawal, which was shown to be a forceful, non-passive resistance to the metaphysical will to mastery, is what is most proper to being. Lastly, I think that this is also why Heidegger concludes that art itself is the *Ursprung*, i.e., the primal founding leap (OWA 202) because it makes it possible to leap beyond metaphysics by disclosing the non-metaphysical reserve into which metaphysics cannot insert itself. Hence in Heidegger's thinking the elaboration of earth in the artwork can be interpreted as a focal point with respect to the process of the self-overcoming of metaphysics because the elaboration of earth as resistance is a non-metaphysical articulation of being as the happening of withdrawal. Therefore art becomes the genuine site of the other beginning since it is capable of revealing being as the non-substantial ground that always recedes and only shows itself as a self-withdrawal. Hence art, by giving space to the self-withdrawal of being, becomes the openness or the site where the truth of being as *a-lētheia* can finally be encountered and thereby be safeguarded.

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