ACCESS ◭

INTRODUCTION

Technology, Culture and Value: Heideggerian Themes

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> *But where danger is, grows*
>
> *The saving power also.*
>
> Friedrich Holderlin, *Patrnos*

What is Called Thinking?

Martin Heidegger (1968: 3) begins his course of twenty-one lectures, which he delivers to his students during 1951 and 1952, with the following words: "We come to know what it means to think when we ourselves try to think. If the attempt is to be successful, we must be ready to learn thinking." Learning, in other words, is central to understanding thinking. He continues: "In order to be capable of thinking, we need to learn it first. What is learning? Man learns when he disposes everything he does to him at any given moment. We learn to think by giving our mind to what there is to think about" (1968: 4). Yet he suggests while there is an interest in philosophy there is no 'readiness' to think. The fact is that, even though we live in the most thought-provoking age, "we are still not thinking" (4). In *What is Called Thinking?* Heidegger is immediately concerned with 'learning' and construes the learner on the model of the apprentice, emphasising the notion of 'relatedness' - of the cabinetmaker's apprentice to the different kinds of wood that sustain the craft. The 'relatedness' of the learner-apprentice to his craft or subject, he determines, will depend on the presence of a teacher.[1]

 "Heidegger is primarily a teacher. He does not wish to travel alone and then report what he has seen, nor does he wish to go as a guide merely pointing out objects along the road," writes Lovitt (1977: xvi) in his Introduction to the first English translation of *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays.* We mention Heidegger on thinking because in different ways we were all involved in a first-ever Summer School project on *rethinking* the theme of "Technology, Culture and Value" at the Auckland University of Technology, in January-February 2002. The set of lectures, designed by Michael Peters, Professor of Education at University of Auckland and University of Glasgow and Adjunct Professor at Auckland University of Technology, included guest lectures and assistance from Elizabeth Grierson, Sharon Harvey, Wayne Hope and Mark Jackson, of Auckland University of Technology. It was a conscious attempt (against Heidegger's inclinations) to develop a *critical* theory of technology for a newly established *university* of technology.

A critical view of technology

What does a university of technology mean if not one that, in the tradition of the Kantian University, enables and promotes a *critical* view of technology and its role within society? By critical we mean a university that bases itself on the tradition of Kant's critical philosophy, or critical reason, as a source of criticism, critique and reflection, and its basis for self-criticism, self-reflection and self-governance. In this sense we might agree with the Heideggerian inspired Michel Foucault (1986: 42) when he suggested that "the thread which may connect us to the Enlightenment is not faithfulness

to doctrinal elements but, rather, the permanent reactivation of an attitude - that is, of a philosophical ethos that could be described as a permanent critique of our historical era."

The original conception of the 2002 Summer School, *Critical Perspectives in Arts: Technology, Culture & Value* was seen as "a little pedagogical experiment", an intervention in the institutionalisation of technology by settling on a *critical philosophy of technology,* considered in the broadest sense, and its hopeful development in a research network or ensemble. The set of lectures that constituted the Summer School took its inspiration from Heidegger. We began with Heidegger because even though the essay "The Question Concerning Technology" was delivered in 1955 and first published in English in 1977, it remains one of the most profound statements concerning technology and has become a philosophical classic. It has also remained an important source of inspiration for a generation of philosophers writing on the nature of technology. Following Heidegger, a range of critical theories of technology has engaged with issues of technology raised by this work. Heidegger's philosophical enquiries have strongly influenced contemporary traditions of critical thought, from Herbert Marcuse of the Frankfurt School to French writers Michel Foucault and Jean-François Lyotard. These thinkers have brought critical theories of technology to bear upon further understandings of Western cultural institutions, practices, and subjectivities. Through a reconsideration of Greek antiquity, Heidegger's probing of metaphysics opens the contemporary ground of globalised economies and technologies to further critical engagement and analysis. When modern science and technology is a matrix of rationalist instrumentalism, then Heidegger's concept of *enframing,* or ordering for its own sake, offers stimulating grounds for interrogation of contemporary political thought and practice.

Technë and the work of relational thinking

The above then was the intellectual propulsion for the twelve lectures in the Summer School. They focused on an introduction by Michael Peters to Heidegger's famous seminar "The Question Concerning Technology", which had been delivered by Heidegger in December 1949 as part of a four lecture series under the tide of "Insight into That Which Is". Heidegger presented the second of those lectures ("Enframing" *"Das Gestelt')* in an expanded version as "The Question Concerning Technology" in November 19 5 5, in the main auditorium of the Technische Hochschule, Munich, as part of the series "The Arts in the Technological Age" arranged by the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts.

For Heidegger, "technology's essence is nothing technological" (1977: 4), it is a system, *Gestell,* an all-encompassing view that describes a mode of human existence. The questioning mode of thinking posed by Heidegger established the pedagogical approach of the Summer School, which was dedicated to the role and work of relational thinking in an age characterised by a technological mien and attitude. Of the decline in a philosophic attitude of thinking, Heidegger wrote in "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" (1999: 434): "The need to ask about modern technology is presumably dying out to the same extent that technology more decisively characterizes and directs the appearance of the totality of the world and me position of man in it." *Criticality* towards the provenance of thinking has been largely eradicated by the 'skills paradigm' of thinking/doing as the "operational and model based character of representational-calculative thinking becomes dominant" (Heidegger, 1999: 435).

Heidegger seeks to disclose the origin of the modern technological age by showing that *"Techne* was a skilled and thorough knowing that disclosed ... a mode of bringing forth into presencing, a mode of revealing" (Lovitt, 1977: xxv). And to read Heidegger is in itself a mode of *techne,* as possible meanings come into view through the relations and connections of words that carry forward the concepts in an ongoing way bringing those threads into presence in the text. He turns to the ancient Greeks for a revealing of this process. *Poiesis* is the "bringing-forth *[Her-vor-bringen]"* in "every occasion for whatever passes over and goes forward into presencing from that which is not presencing" (Heidegger, 1977: 10).

"Descriptive and evocative," says Lovitt (1977: xxiii) of the movements and interrelations in Heidegger's flows of thought and language. For Heidegger "the primary question to be asked is always *how* and never *why*" (xxiii). Reading Heidegger entails the willing act of *being-with* his language and travelling along a road that unites form and content. It would be a fruitless quest to search for some hidden abstraction or arcane meaning outside of the language that speaks being into existence, for Heidegger shows that the very act of thinking/writing/reading is where being *is.* "He wishes the reader to accompany him on the way, to participate with him, and even to begin to build his own way through thinking, and not merely to hear about what it is or should be" (Lovitt, 1977: xvi).

The Summer School

Lovitt declares, "To read Heidegger is to set out on an adventure" (1977: xiii). Through the Auckland summer of 2002 there was a twice-weekly adventure of thinking-through Heidegger's philosophical project and its applications into contemporary politics of technology. For participants in the Summer School: *Critical Perspectives in Arts: Technology, Culture & Value,* there was a conscious working towards a political philosophy of technology, to counter the way of technology - as technologised thinking- that is so easily assumed in education, knowledge production, information transfer, media formations, self constitution, and in political and social actions.

From the starting point of "The Question Concerning Technology" and its primary themes, Peters presented lectures on Herbert Marcuse, Michel Foucault, Hubert Dreyfus, Donna Haraway, and Andrew Feenberg. Readings of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) opened modern social theories and political practices to scrutiny- with his defence of radical social change and the polemics that it gave rise to. Articulations of power and "regimes of practice" were considered through Foucault's *Technologies of the Self* (l988), with special attention to "governmentality" and "the history of how an individual acts upon himself" (1988: 19). Working towards a critical history of 'the self' in the present, Foucault considers that Western thinking has forgotten "the precept 'to be concerned with oneself' [which] was, for the Greeks, one of the main principles of cities, one of the main rules for social and personal conduct and for the art of life" (19). The Athenian task of being concerned with 'knowing yourself' as a principle and practice of citizenship *for the city* shifted in the Christian tradition to a different form of care for the self - through which a different form of self emerged. Foucault's rich and rewarding text opened many questions to do with the way 'self' is conceptualised, and technologised, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The work of Hubert Dreyfus came under scrutiny, tracing strong influences of Heidegger's work. Peters points out in his paper (in this collection), that Dreyfus's "non-reductive account of the relation between minds and brains ... makes his work of the first order of importance to education thought and to educational philosophy." Following Dreyfus, the lectures then turned to Donna Haraway and Andrew Feenberg. Dismantling biological or social identities, feminism and science come together in the work of Donna Haraway with her forays into the techno-embodiment of the cyborg. Challenges to the neutrality and unassailability of technology are paramount when one considers hybrid amalgamations of biotechnology, virtual reality, computer simulation and the means by which identities may be formed and the world 'known' in a cybernetic age. In the manner of Giorgio Agamben in *The Open* (2004), Haraway questions the given boundaries between subject-object, and in a Heideggerian procedure, takes this as far as dismantling the boundaries between human, animal and machine.

With Andrew Feenberg's constructivist approach to a philosophy of technology, the enquiry then turned to the prevalence of technical rationality as a culture system in which the social dimension of technology must be considered politically. Where the effects and efficiencies of technologised existence pre-determine end results, we might look to the 'ready-made' work of French artist Marcel Duchamp, with his wry commentary signified by the title, *In Advance of the Broken Arm* (1915). Exhibited as a work of art, a snow shovel pre-supposes that which will happen.

And Agamben comments further, " ... everything happens as if, in our culture, life were *what cannot be defined, yet, precisely for this reason, must be ceaselessly articulated and divided*' (2004: 13, original emphasis).

Following Peters' lectures, and James Marshall on Foucault, a lecture apiece was presented by Auckland University of Technology academics, Mark Jackson, Elizabeth Grierson, Sharon Harvey and Wayne Hope. The last four lectures of the Summer School, at the AUT city campus, attracted a large number of staff and postgraduate students. Mark Jackson, from the School of Art and Design, gave the first of the four. In his *Abbau-Unbuilding* he explored Heidegger's dismantling of the philosophic tradition of productionist metaphysics to open other horizons for thinking through the issues of technology, *techne.* Forming a bridge between Michael Peters' lectures, at Auckland University, and the last four lectures at AUT, Jackson brought forth Heidegger's philosophical focus on the oblivion of Being in Western metaphysics, opening it for further questioning.

In *Heeding Heidegger's Way: Questions of Creativity and Innovation,* Elizabeth Grierson, also from the School of Art and Design, brought the question of technology into relation with the work of art. Working through Heidegger's essay "The Origin of the Work of Art", she considered the potential for opening spaces of *poiesis* in the face of the destitution of modernity. Using art historical examples, she pitted the strength of Heidegger's argument alongside the ubiquitous re-inscriptions of transcendental values of idealism embodied in representational practices of art and image as a way of 'knowing' the world. Sharon Harvey, Associate Dean of Research at the Faculty of Arts, presented *The Virtual University,* questioning the concept and efficacy of a virtual university vis-a-vis declining levels of state funding. She delineated the different issues involved in digitally contextualised university education, considering its modes of educating with technology, and questioning the claims for gains in efficiency and learning quality. And finally, Wayne Hope, from the School of Communication Studies, took the discussion of Heidegger and technology to the interpenetration of new technologies and finance capital in his *Globalisation, New Technologies and Finance Capital.* He considered how new spatio-temporal dimensions of structural power, ideology and system instability have emerged as distinctive features of contemporary globalisation.

The Summer School was intellectually stimulating, thought provoking, and challenging for those who attended and participated; also productive as it opened new avenues for research and scholarship for a number of participants. In arenas of philosophical enquiry there are bound to be difficulties with ownership and control. In that respect it seems appropriate to make mention of institutional vagaries that arose. Led by Michael Peters as AUT Adjunct Professor of Communication Studies, the series was originally to be hosted by Auckland University of Technology, Faculty of Arts. The University of Auckland, through the then Heads of the School of Education, Faculty of Arts and Human Resources, attempted to thwart the enterprise of the Summer School on the basis of a staffing issue insofar as Peters was Professor of Education at the University of Auckland and Glasgow. Officially, this procedure was purported to be based upon a conflict of interests. As a result, Peters was told that he did not have permission to teach the course. Administrative arguments and pressures were brought to bear even though the two Auckland based universities had a memorandum of agreement for cooperation, with a precedent clearly established for cooperation in teaching, and under the Fifth Labour government, New Zealand had supposedly moved away from an era of neoliberal competition to one of cooperation.

Ultimately, following negotiation, the Summer School was allowed to proceed, by holding it as a joint course between the AUT Faculty of Arts postgraduate cohort, and the year three undergraduate students at Auckland University, School of Education. It also had to be held on the campus of Auckland University. These stipulated conditions, issued at short notice, partially compromised the integrity of the event. The course then had a multilevel audience for which it was not designed, comprising year three education students and a range of PhD researchers and university staff. Nevertheless, the series was a success.

The present collection

With its interventionist application to questions of technology, culture and value, *critical approaches to technologised thinking* were highlighted, articulated and applied *pedagogically* in the work of education. The present collection of essays is the outcome of this process. The nine essays and two book reviews were selected for publication from a greater number submitted for consideration. The selections were made, following reviewers' feedback - with consideration for the Heideggerian themes raised. Every contributor had been involved in some way with the Summer School, either as lecturer or participant, and each has brought their own disciplinary expertise to bear upon those themes.

The editorial strategy for this collection was not one of inclusion on the basis of a convergence of concerns or common reading of Heidegger, but rather, an openness to the questioning that comes with thinking from and to Heidegger.

The two contributions that most poignantly signify this 'moving-from' in the manner of a proximal 'moving-to' are those that open and close this collection. Michael Peters, in a text that in summary fashion addresses his key thematic lectures in the Summer School, maps the recent emergence of a field pertinent to a philosophy of technology. While Heidegger is positioned categorically in some 'originary' role, Peters stresses the divergent moving from Heidegger's seminal question concerning technology. This he achieves through a broad range of philosophical questioning from Foucault to Feenberg, via Marcuse, Dreyfus and Haraway.

The concluding essay, by Maria O'Connor, taps into that "House of Being" emphasised by Heidegger, focusing on the plural register of language's styles that may be read in and through Heidegger's "philosophical classic" on technology. O'Connor brings forth the French literary philosopher, Maurice Blanchot, in a text that sustains the question of the proximity of philosophy to literature. If Heidegger draws on the German Romantic poet Holderlin in the saving act of the essence of technology - "But where danger is, grows/the saving power also" - then he equally discounts the poet as a thinker of philosophy. O'Connor's text asks us to draw from Heidegger's legacy on "the way of thinking", as a questioning way, at the core of deconstruction, of the plural styles, masks and perspectives that any thinking embodies.

While Peters and O'Connor have shown multiple paths of a Heideggerian thinking, Grierson addresses most explicitly the question of "heeding" in "Heeding Heidegger's Way." To "heed" is not to follow, but to invent; and the question of heeding is a crucial one. Grierson addresses directly, with respect to a question concerning the work of art, how does one listen for the poetic. If we can paraphrase Heidegger's "philosophical classic" on technology, the essence of art is nothing aesthetic. And this goes to the kernel of Grierson's probing essay, with its close engagement with Heidegger's essay, "The Origin of the Work of Art", posing what it means to put art education to work, to put education to work, to put work to work. As her essay shows, the question of the *work* of art for Heidegger is inseparable from the question of technology as a disclosure or bringing forth.

It is this close relation between *technë* and the art work that is further addressed by Tina Engels-Schwarzpaul in her essay, "Ways of Appropriating: Culture as Resource and Standing Reserve." Heidegger suggests in his Art-Work essay that works ~fart in our epoch of technicity are so much standing-reserve for a culture industry, stored like sacks of potatoes m gallery warehouses. Engels-Schwarzpaul approaches a contemporary cultural production considered by its manufacturers as an art and technology hybrid - the computer game. Engels-Schwarzpaul undertakes a detailed investigation of one Sony-developed game, *The Mark of Kri,* which features "characters" who have distinct Polynesian and Maori cultural "traits." These were "employed" by the game's designers to bring novelty to the global marketing of such games. Polynesian and Maori "characters" are something new on the scene. Engels-Schwarzpaul's own analyses focus on a triple reading of the Heideggerian term *Ereignis* or "appropriation." This is a difficult notion in Heidegger's own writings, and one that Engels-Schwarzpaul works with carefully and with a very concrete and everyday mode

of engagement. She alerts us to a debate that has developed between Maori concerns with the appropriation of significant Maori traditions that have been little understood or respected by the game's designers and developers. Most importantly, in elucidating three interpretative frameworks by which we can think along the way of Heidegger, she alerts us to the mistake of attempting to be a devoted disciple to the "correct" and "authentic" Heidegger, when Heidegger himself so stressed his own avoidance of any disciples.

The question of how to read Heid egger is echoed again in Mark Jackson's "Abbau … Unbuilding." In a paper that looks at another of Heidegger's "philosophical classics," "Building, Dwelling, Thinking," Jackson addresses directly the theme of this volume of *ACCESS,* on technology, culture and value. "Building" is culture-building, revealed in our epoch of technology as cultures of technology. Hence our valuation itself is implicitly that of instrumental thinking. "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" attempts to dismantle such thinking and in so doing, addresses radically what might constitute building. Jackson reads BDT in conjunction with another text by Heidegger, "Valuation" (in *Nietzsche Vol. III),* re notions of nihilism and valuation. He points to a danger in reading Heidegger in a valuative manner, as if we were beholding a corrective or better account than others of a technologised age. The question of rethinking technology requires a determined rethinking of the constitution of culture-building and the grounds of valuation itself marking any accounting-for notions of "progress" or betterment.

Within the frameworks of music curricula in New Zealand education, Janet Mansfield brings such concerns directly to the field of music education. In a close reading of Heidegger's essay on technology and a parallel reading of music curriculum documents, she cites evidence of the extent to which music education is defined by an implicit but little understood or questioned ground of *Enframing.* Hence, music education has moved significantly from a concernful *techne* or making of music, to an engagement with a "standing-reserve" of music commodification. And in this, education itself becomes caught in the enframing system, unable to disclose the danger.

While Mansfield has direct focus on the "subjectivisation" of the music subject in a technoculture of music production, Nesta Devine extends this discussion to broader cultural concerns, in a twin reading of the epoch of technicity suggested by Heidegger's essay. Heidegger, in introducing his own question, suggests the two major approaches that are taken concerning the "what is" of technology. The first suggests technology is an ends-means instrumentalism; the second suggests a humanist reading that technology is something made by 'man.' Devine interrogates the import of each of these two accounts of technology, and pays particular attention to an example offered by Heidegger concerning the bridge, both as ends-means instrumental solution for crossing and as a communicative or relational means for culture-building. As with many of the papers, Devine opens a plural reading that moves us towards other thinking on the question of technology. She addresses Marcuse, Haraway, and Foucault's notion of 'biopower' in relation to questions of governing the self and others.

The following two papers significantly expand a discussion of human communicative or relational means with respect to Heidegger and those within his legacy. Charles Crothers presents a succinct account of Heidegger's reception in the discipline of sociology. Two key issues seem to be at stake in his discussion. On the one hand, and in general, the discipline of sociology appears to have had little relation with Heideggerian philosophy, in part, suggests Crothers, because of the difficulty of the translation between philosophy and the social sciences. And this is particularly so for a philosopher whose language is notoriously idiosyncratic. On the other, Crothers demonstrates that the key thinkers in the social sciences over the past thirty years (those who have provided the discipline with its directions), in particular Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens, have both stressed the pivotal influence of Heidegger on their thinking. In their different ways, each admits an influence of Heidegger on key or kernel concepts in their theoretical fields. Hence, we sense the significant though detoured impact Heidegger has had on sociology, a discipline that Heidegger himself disparaged on more than one occasion.

Tina Besley engages in another scene of Heidegger's influence, this time on the philosopher Michel Foucault. It was only late in his life that Foucault "admitted" the pivotal influence of Heidegger on his work. Besley engages particularly in a close reading of Foucault's notion of "technologies of the self" or how a "self" becomes a subject who speaks the true. If one of the most profound aspects of Heidegger's engagement with technology allows us to understand how we ourselves become part of the "standing reserve" for production's sake, Besley explores, through Foucault's genealogies of the self, how a self becomes an obedient and docile object of production. Besley brings her argument directly to the scene of education, in the space or sight of the school as a spatialising mode of the training and disciplining of the self, thereby bringing into cl~ e proximity the Heideggerian theme on technology that Foucault so powerfully mobilises in some of the last lectures delivered before his death.

This series of essays closes with O'Connor's "Fault-erring: On the Styles of Margins (Blanchot/Heidegger)." This essay, perhaps as a fitting conclusion, asks "who reads?" and "what is being read?" when one is "simply" reading Heidegger. The essay attempts to complicate any simple answer, and in this gives emphasis to what has gone before as a series of plural and disseminating engagements with an important philosopher and a "philosophical classic."

The two book reviews by James Marshall that follow the essays extend the critical and philosophical implications raised elsewhere in the collection. The first, echoing O'Connor's "fault-erring" on the margins of philosophy and literature, presents a review of a book by Kleiman and Lewis on literature and philosophy and their possible relations in the work of education. "Is there a cleft between literary texts and philosophical texts?" asks Marshall, as he thinks-through the different readings of Kleiman/Lewis's text, and the literary readings cited within it. Marshall's questioning reveals much about the question of relations. With the selection of the extracts, and through the questions that the writers pose from traditional Anglo-American philosophy, Marshall's concern is therefore with the closing down of other potential philosophical possibilities obtainable in literary works.

The second review is of a recent book edited by Grierson and Mansfield *The Arts in Education: Critical Perspectives from Aotearoa New Zealand.* Marshall exalts the book for its timely and critical approach to the recent arts curriculum document noting its universal application beyond New Zealand.

There is much resonance and overlap of authors between the reviewed book *The Arts in Education* and this issue of *ACCESS.* Both present some pressing arguments for cogently addressing the arts, not so much as to rescue some small pockets of culture, but rather to address the deeply resonant relations that exist between culture, value and technology.

Notes

1. This paragraph appears also in Peters' introduction to *Heidegger; Education, and Modernity* (2002: 1).

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