

Space and World as Concepts Key to Political Existence in the Work of Schmitt and Heidegger¹

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1.

The premise of Carl Schmitt's *Land and Sea*, published in 1942, is that the force of rupture and innovation that characterizes the *subject* — this actor peculiar to modernity — is based on his self-anointment as an absolute foundation. Consequently, the subject appoints himself/herself, the capacity, as a form of *will*, to make decisions and take legitimate actions to topple unjust and irrational regimes and to establish a just and rational order.

In relation to the political and juridical realm, all occidental regimes since the ancient Greek era have incorporated a superior power with the authority to issue final decisions. However, in modernity, this schema takes on a new and exclusive form as the regime is conferred the identity of *state sovereignty*. The modern form of coexistence is one of free and equal citizens in a nation state understood as a *spatially delimited* order, with the sovereign power occupying the highest echelon of this order. As such, it is guaranteed that a *singular* and normative will rules through coercive power. Conversely, the same rationality invariably implies that *beyond the limits marking the periphery* of the State as an individual entity, there is a plurality of equivalent state regimes that are all analogously free and equal. This means that these multitudinous regimes are not ruled by — nor could there legally exist — a sovereign authority, supranational, with the power to decree decisions and coerce every single Leviathan to comply with the rules peculiar to an *unbounded* spatial dimension. According to the classics on modern statehood, this kind of power would inevitably be considered as despotic and — to put it in relatively anachronistic terms — *totalitarian*.

In other words: the fact that the logic of command/obedience is structured as *sovereignty* means that the foundational decision literally spatializes a territory that is public, pacified and normativized in terms of its verticality, with an absolute decision-making entity at the apex: the sovereign representative. Thus, the political configuration

specific to modernity is the nation state with a single core generating and regulating judicial legality within its territory. But this form of governing based on borders also designates an *exterior*, an exteriority where there is simultaneously a decisionist will in existence. However, this will functions in accordance with a symmetrically inverted schema, namely: in this area of externality or in terms of international relations, nation states are located on a horizontal plane characterized by judicial equality that nullifies the idea of a coercive power with legitimate superiority over all regimes (a so-called planetary sovereign). This other spatiality external to the state, this space of inter-state relations, answers to the same premises of rationality which are used to justify the internal dimension of sovereignty. The sovereign state and the pluralism of states are only two sides of the same phenomenon that has been formative of modern juridification in the classic period (from approximately the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century).

In summary: intra-state normativity and extra-state normativity are analogous to the extent that they are based on the same metaphysics of the subject and are a natural extension of the same politico-philosophical and judicial principles. They diverge, however, in their respective structures and sources of dynamism. The interior normativity of the finite (the *delimited* realm of the civil) and the exterior normativity of the infinite (the *unbounded natural* space) are mirror images of each other, they are symmetrically inverse — two sides of the same rationality.

Both dimensions in which the sovereign will prevails and becomes consolidated complement each other in regards to their tensions and differences, but in both cases *space is organized*. This is Schmitt's conceptualization of the political as a determining decision between friendship and enmity in a spatial realm where one '*Element*' predominates. The term '*Element*' evokes or revisits the classic doctrine of the *elements* which informs occidental thinking (although not exclusively), namely: earth, water, air, fire as conceived and symbolized based on distinct types of knowledge. However, Schmitt injects this doctrine with political and social meaning to the extent that it addresses the type of order which is established through accepting the preeminence of a configuration of one or more of these elements as a space of coexistence. Thus, from this point of view and regarding the inter-state realm, Schmitt understands this form of action by the modern will in its condition as source of sovereign decisions as a *decision for the finitude*, for the earth as a

politically ordered territory. With respect to the external realm, it is the source of a *decision for the infinitude* — water as a politically unbounded spatiality (the model of the concept of *desert space* — uncivilized, not subject to rationality), especially in America. This line of thought can be interwoven with Schmitt's ideas regarding the sequence of central fields as a process of "neutralization and secularization" that forms the context of meaning for the term *das Politische*. It then becomes evident that the passage of time can also be understood as the submission of the element *earth* as a physical-anthropological realm to the element *water*, to the extent that with the preeminence of the central economical-technical realm [*Zentralgebiet*], fluidity takes precedence over stability, the indefinite over the definite, the international over the national, the *total* and unlimited confrontation over the contained war or war *en forme*).²

The modern conquest of this infinite spatiality is the subject of *Land and Sea*, a beautiful essay that contains the first of Schmitt's explicit references to Heidegger. Even though Schmitt does not name Heidegger, there is no doubt to whom he is referring: "A manner of thinking, which was impossible in previous times, is now becoming possible. A contemporary German philosopher has defined it as follows: it is not the world that is in space, but rather it is the space that is in the world."³

Hence, Schmitt seems to indicate that within the treatment of "world" and "space" in *Being and Time*, there is a (possible) philosophical correlate to his theory of the historical role of the existential decision made by modern actors when they embark upon the conquest of the infinite territories of water and earth, the oceans and America, thereby generating an *order* (i.e. a comprehensive vision of spatiality, a corresponding normative system and, consequently, a legitimization of the conduct of the states in their reciprocal relations) *which is actually global for the first time*.

Let us begin by stating that, based on our understanding, Schmitt's reference to Heidegger highlights an affinity outlined in highly vague terms, with the result that there is a blurring of the incompatibilities between the nomothetic decision, the basis for Schmitt's reflections, and the existential apriority of the world with respect to space in Heidegger. Fundamentally, Schmitt's reference to Heidegger ignores the fact that *Being and Time* emphasizes a primary ontological dimension that is *a priori*, both in relation to the scientific conceptualization and comprehension of space (as a product of an objectifying,

calculating and scientific rationality), as well as the subjectivism of the political will which constitutes the normative system, as is the decisionist will of Schmitt.

Regarding Schmitt's notion of the decisionist will, which was the subject of his "world-historical reflections" referenced in the title of the essay of 1942, the crux is the gesture of rupture and innovation of planetary proportions performed by the modern will — for Schmitt, this is an authentic existential *fiat* of a limitless and expansive movement initiated by these whale hunters, pirates and adventurers as they searched for new oceanic and geographic spaces that were formerly unknown to European experience.

Among these actors who were unaware of the historical magnitude of their feats, Schmitt finds those who unleashed the passage from the stable substantiality of the telluric, to the fluidity of the aqueous, the transposition from existence based on the element of earth to existence based on the element of water (it must be reiterated: within the variety of the mythical, literary, ethical-juridical and utilitarian connotations Schmitt brings together when he uses the term "*Element*"). The result of this turn to the sea was the new and revolutionary *nomos* of the Earth, which theoretically and practically dissolved former schemas and determined future developments within the historical period both thinkers deliberate about — which, in a way, is still valid today.

The core of the legitimization and putting into action of the new *nomos* of the Earth, that of modernity, is that in both peace and war inter-state relationships are rationally and by nature subject to rules that are not questioned as long as they use occidental Europe as a spatial referent. However, these relationships are resemanticized as absolute natural liberty (that is, freed from their obligatory character) whenever they are situated in realms that are *natural, uncivilized* — spaces of irrationality, fruits of the delay in the civilizing process and/or of the despotic violation of the enlightened *ratio*. In the genesis of this process, there is a transcendental change in the "image of space", which takes place in the 16th and 17th century — a disruptive transfiguration with precisely "spatial revolution" as its "specific core", the production of a new "*Raumordnung*". The beginning of all historically significant eras derives from this decision to *capture* territory, but the particularity of the modern event is the decision in support of the *real* infinitude (*free* waters and territories) — a decision that is existentially *a priori* in relation to modern *scientific* views (physics and the empty infinitude of space; the legal realm and international law). In turn, the fact that

this decision persists in contemporary times becomes apparent in the image of space — more contemporary and more politicized, proper to the era of totalization — as a “force field of human energies”⁴.

2.

It is now possible to present a broad outline of the aspects of *Being and Time* which we consider to be most important in light of Schmitt’s reference, that is, those aspects containing signs of what we call the *aspect of decisiveness or resoluteness* intrinsic to the form of existence known as Dasein in the context of spatiality.

At the starting point, there is obviously the idea that the “essence” [*Wesen*] of Dasein lies in “its existence” as a “to-be”. The latter becomes more concrete with the decision that brings about a given “determination of being”, “as to the way in which it is in each case mine [*je meines*]”. If the “fundamental structure” of this “entity”, to which the “Being which is an *issue* for [it] in its very Being, is in each case [its own]”, consists in an openedness to possible modes of “being in the world”, this Being is “characterized by mineness [*Jemeinigkeit*]”. Consequently, the absolute distinctiveness of its most personal existence has its roots in the fact that it already “has always made some sort of decision [*schon immer irgendwie entschieden*] as to the way in which it [Dasein] is in each case mine [*je meines*]”. That is, by deciding for its most proper Being, that is for the how of its most personal level of existence: “it can, in its very Being, ‘choose’ itself and win itself; it can also lose itself” by means of its own choice [BT 42/68].⁵

On the basis of what we may call the constitutive drama of human existence, Heidegger completes his conception of the existential situation of humankind. Following this, Heidegger highlights the distinctive spatial spatiality of Dasein — the full originality of its “Being-in-the-world” [*In-der-Welt-sein*] as a “unitary phenomenon” (which could be phrased as the inseparability of the world and human beings). In this sense, the *world* is *where* the decision takes place, by virtue of which the Dasein opens itself to other entities present-at-hand. Correspondingly, its “images of the world” only take shape based on this “*existential*” of Dasein. While the entities present-at-hand are simply located in a certain place and maintain a “definite location-relationship”, as a result of their ontological-existential constitution, human beings, on the other hand, inhabit an existential space; they

reside or are situated within a space that is familiar to them, they are accustomed to. Thus, I reside in a space that is my own. The *Being-in* of Dasein in its existence “*has Being-in-the-world as its essential state*” [BT 52-54/78-80]. In a nutshell, the world is a kind of spatiality based only on the distinctive existence that human beings have in relation to all other entities present-at-hand (which are connected according to differing degrees of physical contiguity), the existential *there* (*Da*) as the phenomenological essence of Dasein; this is the condition of possibility of all subsequent localization. That is, having “a ‘Being-in-space’ of [one’s] own” [BT 56/82], this “*existential spatiality*” [BT 56/83] is the original realm where Dasein establishes relationships with others and with the other entities present-at-hand.⁶

The strongest connection to our subject takes shape when Heidegger presents four interpretations of the meaning of the *world* where existence takes place. The first two concern the ontic without considering the existential moment that is of interest.⁷ The remaining two, on the other hand, are more directly connected to the constitutive worldhood of existence. The third demonstrates that, from the ontic dimension, *world* signals “that ‘*wherein*’ a factual Dasein as such can be said to ‘live’”. In this sense, it does not have the ontological characteristic of the *existentiales* [*Existenzialien*] and its meaning is merely “pre-ontological existentiell [*existenziell*]”. This perspective marks a sort of exclusivity to the experience of the world as belonging to the *I-myself as Dasein*, given the world may be understood here as “the ‘public’ we-world, or one’s ‘own’ closest (domestic) environment”. The fourth interpretation explains the phenomenological connotation of this constitutive basic instance: the “ontologico-existential concept of *worldhood*” alludes to the structural sense of “Being-in” each world, that is “the a priori character of worldhood in general”. This enables the modifications proper to the respective “structural wholes [*Strukturganzen*]” that “any special ‘worlds’ may have at a time” [BT 63-65/91-93].

Worldhood is intrinsically connected to the usability of the “equipment”: it is the ontological condition of possibility of a plurality of worlds, which, for their part, show the corresponding diverse modes of concern with which Dasein treats the entities within its reach, that is how it deals with the tools that are ready-to-hand for him in various *wordly spatialities*. In turn, this variety of worlds correlates to the different ways in which Dasein cares for these entities, how it deals concernfully with them while it is attentively observing

the surrounding world in general — a type of treatment which is proper to worldly existence. This concerned dealing has particular modes of realization, diverse forms of manipulating and making use of the ready-to-hand. This means that this original pragmatism and the connective skill in dealing with the entities present-at-hand coalesce diversely according to the variety of worldly situations (the “*Strukturgesamtheit*”). We emphasize these aspects because they account for the diversity of situations whose particularities seem to be essentially defined within the *environmental* contexts in which human existence develops according to the peculiarity of each individual — as is the case regarding Schmitt’s theological-political perspective, his conception of terrestrial and maritime existence. To be sure, this initial correlation between both approaches is all too vague. Nonetheless, it allows us, already at this point, to establish an, albeit *very general*, theoretical proximity between the decisiveness and the worldhood of Dasein.

3.

Heidegger highlights the relational character of the entities “within-the-*environment* [*inner-umweltlich*]” with which the Dasein has “*dealings*” — the contact with the entities which it has ready-to-hand as “equipment” within a certain “environment [*Umwelt*]” [BT 66-68/95-97].

The dealings with tools manifest in manifold ways of concern, but their original structural condition (their “prephenomenal basis [*vorphänomenale[r] Boden*]”, [BT 67/96] is the “in-order-to” which characterizes it, that is, that the equipment is “something in-order-to”. They carry an “*assignment or reference* of something to something”, to a term — another useful thing or another conduct — in which they achieve the fulfillment of the usefulness of the used equipment. This referential term is located within the same ontic universe, given that it is by virtue of this connection that the equipment accomplishes its pragmatic signification. In this way, the “usability” that characterizes them is defined ontologically. Our philosopher emphasizes the interrelation of reciprocal references sustaining the usability of that which is useful: “there ‘is’ no such thing as *an* equipment”, as an isolated entity, because this *being-in-reference-to* constitutes it as a “totality of equipment”. The dealings with these entities as tools signifies that Dasein is presented with a “totality of equipment” and that it is only in this context of a “manifold of [...]”

assignments” that these entities serve a purpose and are usable [BT 68-69/96-97]. Strictly speaking, the spatial metaphor of the primary ontology of the entity, in so far as it is useful (the “basis [*Boden*]” of the equipment), is comprehensible because what Dasein is faced with is an ontologically original environmental context and not isolated entities within an *empty and indistinct space*.

These considerations start to reveal the existential decisiveness of Dasein in its originality with respect to that which, in modern metaphysics, will later be the subjective decisionist will. However, this apriority is not equivalent to passivity, quiet expectation regarding what one has in front of oneself. This ontological precedence signifies that the worldhood of existence is a *decision to let* the entity show itself in its immediate pragmatism within the world, a making it show itself. We understand this transcendental “*lassen*” as a unique disposition *to decide that chooses to act originally before acting as a subject*. Dasein in the world is open to the entity, it has dealings with the ontic, it is concerned with the usable ready-to-hand. And behind this concern there is an *operational* decisiveness: its *pre-occupation* with the configuration of the equipment is based *on and in* the “work” (to be produced). And it is by *working* that Dasein makes recourse to “materials” and discovers “nature” as power and potential as well as material source.⁸

At this point, Heidegger makes an important distinction. The appearance of nature (without rationalist or voluntaristic mediations) before the gaze and concern of Dasein forms part of this phenomenological state which is prior to any theoretical knowledge or technical usage of the power of nature or of natural elements and which is proper to existential analysis. Heidegger, however, also gives examples and epochal evidence indicating that this originality only lasts until the emergence of modern industry [BT 70 f/100ff]. *The level of historical concretion which he achieves in his arguments is important, as it helps us to evaluate the Schmittian reference to Being and Time.*

Thus, if the phenomenological approach is transposed to the historical-political dimension, it becomes evident that its situational context is the transition to the Industrial Age or the prolegomenon to modernity. In this era, *working* still consisted in artisanal production and was meant to satisfy the personal features of consumption (the two existential moments inherent to “work”). The type of work that Heidegger explicitly refers to (“simple craft conditions” [BT 70/100], “the domestic world of the workshop” [BT

71/100] in no way violates the ontological primordially of Dasein in its two extremes: as producer and as consumer. In a still reliable world, a person who works is acutely aware of the recipient of his/her product, because both are within the same world: “The work is cut to his figure; he ‘is’ there along with it as the work emerges.” [BT 70-71/100] The concern for the entities ready-to-hand and the intertwined familiarity with the equipment has not changed. Of course, productive expansion is a reality, since the process does not stay restricted to the late medieval or preindustrial workshop. Instead, the figure of the “*public world*” emerges and, as such, “the *environing Nature* [*die Umweltnatur*] is discovered and accessible to everyone” [BT 71/100]. Yet we have still not arrived at the stage of developed technology and the increasingly unlimited circulation of products distinctive to the era of mass production, where progressively technologized large-scale production and continuously overstimulated consumption determine the rhythm, customs and worldviews of standard participants.

4.

A slight connection between this situation and the *main* (not exclusive) context of Schmitt’s essay may be found in the fact that the new global order had not yet been consolidated in the moment that triggered the analyzed process (the decision for water: the conquest of the ocean and the American lands, the *infinite* spaces). The *nomos of the Earth* of modernity was gestating, but obviously its physiognomy was not yet mature.

However, even this same heroic phase of the pioneers of this unrestricted expansion (*i.e.* those for whom the element water became their existential condition) constitutes, in our understanding, a more advanced and qualitatively more diverse stage of modernity than the Heideggerian one — regardless of how imprecise it might be in its distinctive forms. That is, its epochal character is indeed still valid in relation to modern mass society.

The persistence of *handicraft*-type features in maritime operations (including on the *Pequod* as a factory-ship, to recall a literary testimony that was fundamental for Schmitt) presupposes that the ancient skills of navigation had already changed and adapted to the new requirements and/or that they had been substituted by those skills proven to be apt in responding to the vicissitudes of the great ocean crossings and, therefore, had become an ordinary and familiar practice. That is, they had transformed (they were *naturalized*, so to

speak) to phenomenologically immediate and original modes of conduct. And, in correlation, the same occurred with the totality of necessary equipment for work in oceanic spaces. If the generative instance of the new planetary order was a revolutionary foundational decision, without a doubt this decision occurs in a context where the mediations proper to the utilitarian rationality associated with the accelerated development are already consolidated within the logic of production and consumption, where the uncontrollable increase of the technologization of production appears and, in short, where the neutralization of the same epic will responsible for initiating this process is activated — that is, the normativization of what was originally considered to be the *heroic* rupture which announced the new era.

In our estimation, this does not seem to be the historic situation referred to in *Being and Time*. Heidegger addresses (perhaps in remembrance) an immediate normality, prior to all subjective intellectualization. Schmitt addresses the exceptional, the normalizing pre-mediate decision, *i.e.* the condition of the normal normative mediation. This subjectivity which existentially seeks out the sea is, indeed, analogous to the sovereign decision regarding the exception, and if this similarity is not absolute, it is because statehood does not emerge in the infinitude. In this sense, *Land and Sea* confirms the core of Schmittian thinking of the 1920ies: the reaffirmation of the primacy of the political in relation to the polemic regarding the diverse immanentist neutralizations.

In any case, the incompatibility between the two approaches is more profound than what can be inferred from the contexts in question. Certainly, the decisionist will is *a priori* in nature and this aspect maintains a generic affinity with the decisiveness of Dasein and the Heideggerian existentials. In Schmitt, however, the normativizing function of the (intra- and inter-state) spatial order which this decision fulfills does not rely on an enlightened ontological transcendentalism based on an analysis of existence, but rather, on theological-political conceptualization and on the state theology of *Dezisionismus* as an intrinsic modern view. Moreover, the inherent conflictivity of the Schmittian approach (the contraposition and antithesis of the political against the immanentism which regulates precisely the dimension in which it should take priority over *qua* foundational decision) is absent in the treatment of spatiality in *Being and Time*, because the respective actors (Dasein and the deciding sovereign in the state of exception) are configured on the basis of

different metaphysics. To summarize, Schmitt's approach on the matter is only somewhat related, but positively identifiable in relation to the position of Heidegger.

Let us broaden our interpretation. Undoubtedly, both thinkers share a position that questions the ontologic and epistemologic, as well as ethical premises of liberal rationalism, which both consider to be outdated on the doctrinaire level (while they view Marxism as its dynamic theoretical offshoot and a practical threat). From this perspective, the historical referent of both approaches, in broad strokes, is the period of occidental culture extending from the end of premodern conditions (the Heideggerian context) to the ordering of spaces all over the world, unfolding and predominance of technological development and capitalist production. That is, this period includes the beginning of the demise of the first colonizing power of the New World, the collapse of the pontifical authority as international judge as well as the zenith and hegemony of English rule over the oceans and politics (the context Schmitt privileges). However, defining this joint point of historical reference so broadly, such that it encompasses the whole period from the genesis to the consolidated imposition of the modern *nomos* of the Earth, still in force until the conflict of 1939-1945, is equivalent to obfuscating that which is specifically epochal in each of these approaches. Yet, on the other hand, if we subscribe to more precise characteristics, the immediate phenomenological conduct of Dasein is spatialized in realms where an artisanal kind of work and restricted consumption endure. The original worldhood maintains a trace of premodernity. In turn, the world to which Schmitt refers to while ruminating on the *secularizing transubstantiation* from the land to the sea (the conquest of the oceanic waters and access to new lands with the typically modern impetus celebrating occupation and domination) has already ceased to be (at least in the north Atlantic nations that initiated the process) the one of handicraft work. Instead, it is in the process of irreversibly configuring the space of industrial development, which is irrepressible, and the forms of communal life that are consistent with the new vision of things.

5.

We have reached a crucial point in the philosophic evaluation of the meaning of the Schmittian reference to Heidegger since the moment of spatiality now intersects more profoundly with decisiveness as a constitutive feature of Dasein.

This issue is developed in paragraph 18: “*Involvement and Significance; the Worldhood of the World [Bewandtnis and Bedeutsamkeit; die Weltlichkeit der Welt]*” [BT 83-89/114-123]. Before initiating a more detailed investigation of some aspects of this paragraph, we reiterate that, at this point, it is crucial to understand that the attitude of Dasein is an activity that consists in a letting be (*lassen*), so that the ready-to-hand can show its pragmatic aptitude, its “involvement”. The will of the one who uses it is not the enthusiastic will of power of modern subjectivity. Let us rather say that the intervening decisiveness Heidegger refers to is not subjectivizing or dominating, but rather, respectful of the immediate phenomenological state of the entities it encounters within the world. Regardless, we believe that this Heideggerian decisiveness maintains a kind of family resemblance (neither more than that, nor less) with the Schmittian decision, despite the constructivism of the latter, in the sense that it is a challenge to the claims of the practical reason of liberal-enlightenment made from the standpoint of an also modern political subjectivity — the one of the sovereign actor and those who it represents, the citizenry.

Hence, it is due to this original “letting it be involved” that the equipment obtains its specific pragmatic character, its *aptitude* to yield usability. It is about, therefore, the reference to, or this *turning to the other* (the “*wenden*” which is at the roots of “*Bewandtnis*”) as a characteristic feature of the relation between the entities within the world, in the sense that these are spatially configured in accordance with what we may call (not without inaccuracy) a structure of teleological adaptation, the one of the “in-order-to”, in a context that depends on intentionality to define its meaning. In this sense, this pragmatic spatiality is phenomenologically indebted to the decisiveness of human existence, since it is Dasein that establishes the spatial assignment or reference which gives meaning to the pragmatic idiosyncrasy of the equipment ready-to-hand.

In summary, at this point Heidegger deepens the meaning of the “in-order-to”, the usability or the “serviceability [*Dienlichkeit*]”, which “is a reference [*Verweisung*]” to the equipment, by analyzing the relation between the original existential openedness of Dasein to the ontic and the relational structure of the mutual assignments of the entities present-at-hand, by virtue of which they are apt for the usage that Dasein assigns to them. It is a matter of elucidating the pragmatic character of all entities present-at-hand and available to be used, that is the free “availability” of the entities so that Dasein, while making use of

them, makes it possible for them to show their specific “usability” for the chosen work. We already know the point of departure: “In anything ready-to-hand the world is always ‘there’” [BT 83/114].

As observed, the original Being-in-the-world of Dasein and its pragmatic work are existentially prior to the worldhood of the entities ready-to-hand. There is, therefore, a problem that takes shape here: “How can the world let the ready-to-hand be encountered?” [BT 83/114]. The key to answer this question may be found in the fact that Dasein, while dealing with the entities in different situational contexts which are proper to them, *decides to let them be involved* as they are to it; and this “*letting be involved*” (“*lassen*”) is the transcendental condition of phenomenological, pre-geometric and pre-conceptual spatialization. This original spatializing understanding inherent to Being-in-the-world lets the condition of the “for which” — proper to each equipment in its “usability” for a specific service or for it being employed in one way and not in another — be “disclosed”. The terms that structure the existential analysis of world and space, “*Bewendenlassen*” (letting something be involved) and “*Bewandtnis*” (involvement), contain in their semantic core the ontological decisiveness that is inherent to the openedness to or turning towards the entities ready-to-hand of Dasein, this peculiar pre-theoretical and pre-voluntaristic decision to let the entity show itself, to *permit* that relations of “referentiality” are established between the different pieces of equipment, by virtue of which the latter — within the diverse spaces in which worldhood articulates itself — can be encountered by Dasein with their respective pragmatic usability — that is, the assignments which are determined as “serviceability-for-, detrimentality [*Abträglichkeit*], usability and the like”.⁹

To be usable implies *referential referentiality*: a device is useful because it refers to another as a referent which completes the meaning of its constitutive pragmatic usability. Dasein decides on the type of “concernful circumspection”, of “taking account” of the entity, and so it lets the entity be involved, it lets it show itself as useful. That is, it decides the how and the towards-which to apply it. While effectuating the “towards-which” of a “structure of assignment or reference” which obviously brings along a “for-the-sake-of”, as it can be derived from the ontic nexuses to the effect that each equipment is something “in-order-to”, it provides a utility to it in view of which it can be employed. We emphasize here what was already anticipated: this decisiveness of Dasein (the immediate *deciding-to-let-*

be-disclosed) cannot be assimilated with any figure of absolute constructivism inherent to the modern subject; it is not mediated by the subjective will. In relation to Dasein and by virtue of its decisiveness, different pieces of equipment are turned towards each other, involved with each other in a structure of mutual assignments and form a kind of harmonic web in a spatial “region” within the world. In a nutshell, this immediateness of the worldhood of Dasein precedes and conditions the subsequent cognitive objectification and similar activities of *cogito*, and it is also *a priori* with respect to the pragmatic subjective will of the modern, the *Wille zur Macht*. Ultimately, the incompatibility of the two thinkers is rooted in their differences regarding the decisiveness outlined by the decisionist will which is the modern and state component of the Schmittian position.

In a way, space is a key notion for both thinkers in the immediate political projection of their ideas, in the case of Schmitt, as well as in the more complex translation of the existential analysis to politics in the case of Heidegger. Their views differ. Schmitt is coherent with the territory of the *state* on which the political is based. This is not the same foundation on which Heidegger builds his populist communitarianism.

According to our interpretation of these steps of *Being and Time*, the idea of the “for-the-sake-of” turns out to be symptomatic. This idea is used simultaneously as a circumstantial complement and as a noun, because Heidegger wants to give a special phenomenological nuance to the underlying *will* present in it. The aptitude of the equipment *has behind itself an existential will* that, and here we insist, is not the will of subjective *action*, but a kind of pre-subjective *abstention* which allows the equipment to be ready-to-hand in its distinctive utility and, therefore, also allows Dasein to make adequate usage of it (e.g. use a “hammer” for “hammering”). By doing so, it concretizes one of the possibilities of existence. The useful entity, like for example the protection against bad weather, “‘is’ for the sake of [*um-willen*] providing shelter for Dasein — that is to say, for the sake of a possibility of Dasein’s Being.” [BT 84/116] That is, a utensil does not have an ontic “property” that would be available to the I-user, but it shows its or itself in its specific aptitude when Dasein, confronted with the open possibilities inherent to its existence, uses it while respecting its idiosyncrasy — when it decides that the entity should manifest itself in a harmonic totality of worldly tools within a spatiality which also is due to original decisiveness [BT 84/116]. What is at stake here, is what we may call the teleological

feature inherent to the pragmatism of the entity rooted in the, in a matter of speaking, phenomenological dynamic of deciding — letting the entity be involved, letting it be useful. In so doing, Dasein realizes one of its ontological-existential possibilities; i.e. as we have seen, “it *can* [...] ‘choose’ itself” [BT 42/68]. This decisiveness demonstrates the ontological peculiarity of Dasein itself: “The primary ‘towards-which’ is a ‘for-the-sake-of-which’. But the ‘for-the-sake-of’ always pertains to the Being of *Dasein*, for which, in its Being, that very Being is essentially an *issue*. [...] Ontically, ‘letting something be involved’ signifies that within our factual concern we let something ready-to-hand *be* so-and-so *as* it is already and *in order that* it be such.” [BT 84/116-117]

6.

We will now address the sections of *Being and Time* that are dedicated to “C. *The Aroundness of Environment and Dasein’s Spatiality [Das Umhafte der Umwelt und die Räumlichkeit des Daseins]*”. These passages define “in what sense space is a constituent for [the] world” and, as well, — *prima facie* — there are some points of support developed for the Schmittian reference, in that the spatializing existential decisiveness conceptualized in relation to Heidegger is made explicit. Thus, in terms of a spatialization inherent to the immediate worldhood of Dasein, the first of the texts reads as follows: “In particular we must show how the aroundness of the environment, the specific spatiality of entities encountered in the environment, is founded upon the worldhood of the world, while contrariwise the world, on its part, is not present-at-hand in space.” [BT 101-102/134-135]

The entities with which Dasein has “dealings”, the entities ready-to-hand, are within an existential “*closeness*”, a proximity that is not demonstrated by a geometrical-topological measurement, but by a habituality and familiarity of everyday dealings. The pragmatic web now responds to a greater deciding activity, to “circumspective ‘calculative’ manipulating and using [*umsichtig ‘berechnenden’ Hantieren und Gebrauchen*]” [BT 102/135]. This spatiality of the entity ready-to-hand configures the accessibility of the same (to the point that if a tool is not in its place, its absence draws attention) and implies that the entities and their respective aptitudes or involvements are at “one place out of a whole totality of places directionally lined up with each other and belonging to the context of equipment that is environmentally ready-to-hand [*Das Umhafte der Umwelt und die*

Räumlichkeit des Daseins]" [BT 102/136]. Dasein decides for this localization *within* the world, consistently preparing and arranging the equipment *in relation to* their pragmatic performance. *Thanks to* this, the ready-to-hand settles in its "region [*Gegend*]". In combination, the concerned dealings of Dasein with the entities ready-to-hand and its localizing gaze which arranges them at a place close to Dasein express, so to speak, the decisiveness we just emphasized: "Dasein, in its very Being, has this Being as an issue; and its concern discovers beforehand those regions in which some involvement is decisive." [BT 104/137]¹⁰ This peculiar existential apriority signifies that the empty space, simple all-encompassing container (studied by science and the basis for the metaphysics of subjectivity), is not original (this "mere space still stays undiscovered"); but this world and its particular places or spatializations are.

As such, the degree to which Schmitt's observations approximate Heidegger's approach becomes more perceptible: "The 'environment' does not arrange itself in a space which has been given in advance; but its specific worldhood, in its significance, articulates the context of involvements which belongs to some current totality of circumspectively allotted places. The world at such a time always reveals the spatiality of the space which belongs to it. The encounter of the ready-to-hand in its environmental space remains ontically possible only because Dasein itself is 'spatial' with regard to its Being-in-the-world." [BT 104/138] That is, because its decisiveness is spatializing.¹¹

The profound meaning of the ontological structure proper to existence, that is the correlation Dasein/world, lies in the particular and distinctive decision of the first, which, with its concerned circumspection, localizes the most immediate entities within the second, with determined locations and arrangements, in its encounter with the world. In so doing, a totality of regions is formed whose respective idiosyncrasies maintain relationships with the diverse aptitudes of the equipment localized in them. *Worldhood is the shared ontology of all of them.* The plurality of particular spaces is the result of the spatialization which Dasein decisively performs, because this localization, by means of a process of de-severance and the arrangement within an environment, is intrinsic to its existence, it is a way to have its Being as an issue: the concern for the ready-to-hand.

Thus, Dasein, deepens its perspective, which is all-embracing of the environment and concerned of the entities arranged in a certain region, by means of a "de-severing that

gives directionality” [BT 108/143]. To do so, it depends on “signs” that facilitate the indication of direction. In sum: the act of addressing the entities spatially expresses the (in a certain sense passive) spatializing decisiveness of its specific Being-in which cannot be identified with that of any other Being.

This is the reason why, in paragraph 24 that follows, there is the reference to “‘giving space’ [*Raum-geben*]” or “‘making room [*Einräumen*]””. This way, by being localized in regions, the entities ready-to-hand are utilized with confidence and familiarity and cease to attract attention (the “inconspicuousness of the ready-to-hand things”). It is only on the “basis of the spatiality thus discovered, [that] space itself becomes accessible for cognition” [BT 111/146]. The authentic apriority of space is that of the phenomenological originality of the *spatializing letting-show* which characterizes the concern of Dasein for the entities ready-to-hand, its *pre-occupation* for them. It is only based on this apriority that space is subsequently subjected to an objectifying neutralization typical of modern metaphysics, which treats it as an empty container in itself, an object of “calculation and measurement” by the cognitive-epistemological subject. The premise of this subjectification of Dasein and this objectifying of the entities ready-to-hand is the rupture with, and the concealment of, the correlation Dasein/world which Heidegger thinks of as an abbreviation of spatialization. This occurs as a passage to an era which is distinguishable as a result of what Heidegger characterizes as the phenomenon that “the worldly character of the ready-to-hand gets specifically *deprived of its worldhood* [*Entweltlichung der Weltmäßigkeit des Zuhandenen*]” [BT 112/147]. Consequently, the “world loses its specific aroundness” and the “environment” becomes (is thematized and treated like) geometric space and objective nature (“the world of Nature”), a homogenous and indistinct space within which the places and the totality of aptitudes of the equipment are *neutralized* in regard to their originality (their being involved-for within a familiar space) and they are degraded to mere sites for extensive things, objects, phenomena, etc. This new epochal characteristic closes this going-back to the world. Rendering the originality of the world and the decisiveness of Dasein, which *is in* it, visible once again...this is the task of the analytic of Dasein [BT 113/148].

At this point, having already examined (in very broad strokes) the philosophical background of the Schmittian reference in *Land and Sea* (“it is not the world that is in

space, but rather it is the space that is in the world”), we can recall the part of paragraph 24 which has generally been considered to indicate his textual referent: “*Space is not in the subject, nor is the world in space. Space is rather ‘in’ the world in so far as space has been disclosed by that Being-in-the-world which is constitutive for Dasein. Space is not to be found in the subject, nor does the subject observe the world ‘as if’ that world were in a space; but the ‘subject’ (Dasein), if well understood ontologically, is spatial. And because Dasein is spatial in the way we have described, space shows itself as a priori.*” [BT 111/146]

7.

We have tried to emphasize some moments of Heidegger’s analytic where this decisiveness of Dasein marks a *somewhat* shared territory with the Schmittian decisionism. But in *what way* does it do so?

Above all, regarding an attitude of thinking that is sufficiently common to both of them, one can visualize a familiarity of the critiques which both of them make in regard to liberal individualism. But it is a similarity that is feeble and not very productive intellectually speaking. Regardless, it can be observed that in Heidegger there is a philosophical critique which reaches out for the heart of subjectivist ontology and its deduced metaphysics in general. Schmitt, for his part, assumes subjectivism and concentrates on the denunciation of liberal and pluralist neutralization which he ultimately ascribes to irresponsibility in face of the problem which mobilizes the political: the state of exception; with the aggravation of the inevitable effect: confronted with the collapse of spontaneous and systemic harmonization, liberalism precedes like the revolutionaries to take over power and to maintain itself for the sake of redemption: both resort to indiscriminate, unlimited and inhuman violence in the name of reason, humanity, freedom, etc.

Secondly, the more precise issue is the one of space and *nomos*. Schmitt outlines a genealogy of modern spatialization of the globe emphasizing the heroism of the oceanic adventurers, pirates and whale hunters as the initial actors and first advocates of the effective conditions for a new planetary order. The heroic feat told in *Land and Sea* takes place in the dawn of this loss of original worldhood referred to by Heidegger, because the

era in which the modern *nomos* of the Earth is instituted is that of the collapse of the limitations linked to a stable, unmediated existence moderated by traditional patterns. This process of expansion of subjectivity is the vehicle for a peculiar transubstantiation: the one from the fixed telluric to the mobile aquatic; from handicraft and proto-industrial work to technified mass production; from the displacement within limited spatialities to the unrestricted mobility around the terrestrial globe; from the circulation of production and consumption of commodities and ideas within territorialized markets in correspondence with the figure of the nation state to the dynamics of a market with international dimensions.

In this sense, it might seem appropriate to link — perhaps too weakly as is the case when they are treated as common instances to understand the era at the same cultural moment — the Schmittian “secularizations and neutralization” and Heidegger’s characterization of the ready-to-hand as “*deprived of its worldhood*” [BT 112/147]. Yet they would constitute nothing more than expressions stemming from an epochal sensibility that are only shared in a very general way and that, according to one thinker, are channeled in political-juridical terms and, according to the other, in motives and developments specific to his existential ontology. In any case, certain aspects of the Heideggerian *Entweltlichung* might signal proximity with the subjects brought up by Lukács (in *History and Class Consciousness*) in reference to the anticapitalist critique of the Young Marx, as a critique of objectification, reification and, more general, of alienation *sensu lato* — a critique that does not include, nor does it develop any of the fundamental components of the Schmittian conceptual universe.¹²

In summary, if we take into account the previous observations, the hypothesis of the most secure interpretation is almost precluded. The process of secularization and technicalization specific to modernity seems to be considered by one of them from his political theology and, by the other, from the ontology of existence. But both launch an attack against the metaphysics of subjectivism, with rationalism as constituting the philosophical theorization of its universalism, and liberalism the political-juridical and economic projection or transposition.

So if we accept that the two thinkers share a moderate mutual empathy based on a relatively similar diagnosis of the era, we may establish a parallel between the dependency

which, in Heidegger, science and the conceptualization of space as an objective entity have with respect to the original ontology (the decisiveness of Dasein in its existential openedness towards the ontic ready-to-hand). In Schmitt, the liberal (economistic and normativistic) neutralization has a dependency analogous to the political (exceptional decision about the exceptional, foundation of the juridical state order). That is, in face of the oblivion of origins, of the neutralization of the genealogy in terms of neutral rationality in science and in liberalism (an inherent requirement for the claim of auto-foundation and self-sufficiency of the absolute individual-subject), both thinkers rehabilitate the apriority of the existential: *original* in phenomenological terms in Heidegger; *political-juridically foundational of the sovereign order* in Schmitt. The common feature of both approaches lies in the existential apriority of the *pre-subjective decisiveness* in the first and of the *decisionism of the actor-subject in relation to the logos of sovereignty* despite the decline of classic modern statehood in the latter.

8.

In spite of the perspective just mentioned, we also understand that Schmitt's decisionist subjectivity and its force of juridical-political conformation of spatiality in the figure of the national territory of the state, and also of the totality of the Earth as a space of interstate relationships in the course of a process which has led to the transformation and deformation of both (inner- and interstate) spatial orders, is hardly compatible — if not completely incompatible — with the phenomenological-existential pre-political — simply ordering the immediate pragmatic closeness — *decisiveness* of Heideggerian Dasein. We insist that the familiarity which characterizes this point (as opposed to the difference in relation to the problem of *values*) concerns certain general features.

In relation to Schmitt, the *Jurist* highlights the theological-political interrelation between what he refers to as the existential fundamental “elements” (both in their mythical formulation as well as in the historical confirmation of the latter, so to speak, explained in Schmitt's political, constitutional categories and categories of international law). In this way, he sheds light on the effect of revolutionary rupture, the radical change of the horizon of meaning which arises with the advent of modernity, in general, and with the act to capture the infinite waters and lands, in particular, thereby triggering the heroic feat of the

expansion and assurance of this new (metaphysical, political-juridical, socio-economical, cultural in general) *view* of the world. These are not the premises of the existential analytic. Consequently, the allusion to Heidegger in *Land and Sea* could be due to many motivations (among which one should not exclude a minor concern for the penetration of the hermeneutic difficulties and the philosophical suggestions of *Being and Time*).

We conclude by questioning to what point Heidegger can offer a kind of philosophical support or correlate necessary and appropriate for the Schmittian view to the effect that the reference in *Land and Sea* would constitute a theoretical support less vague than one of family resemblance. If the existential genealogical moment of modernity lies in the decision for (oceanic and American) infinitude that shatters the traditional bond with territorial finitude proper to the classic *nomos*, is the Heideggerian analytic capable of accounting for the specific revolutionary dynamics of the modern *nomos*?

Prima facie, the figures of Heideggerian phenomenology of spatiality might give account for the natural, telluric existence, as well as for the linked pre- and/or proto-modern attitude towards work, consumption etc. But even this undetermined correlation is disputable, because the territorial *nemein*, in which Schmitt sees the foundation of the classical organization of space, presupposes a greater activism than the original activity of Dasein. In modernity, a similar activism has increased incommensurably, becoming a catalyst for the disintegration of the traditional schema (the *Landnahme* as a sedentary and fixed ordering institution justified by the idea of natural limitations), to the extent that — once it has configured itself as voluntarism of modern subjectivity — it generates statehood and, therefore, not only internal order, but external relations *between states*. The first aspect is the one of a schema which articulates — in an absolutely novel way with respect to the whole former political dispositif — the *horizontal* of societal coexistence between free and equal citizens (based on the *exchange* of ideas and products) with the foundational *verticality* which characterizes state power as *sovereignty*.

The second aspect is precisely the one of interstate relationships and projections of sovereignty to the exterior of its territorial jurisdiction. On this level, the decision and subsequent actions which dynamize the new organization of the world in modernity (this inversion and adaptation of human existence from the natural element, earth, to an antithetic element, water) points to the will of an actor-subject which establishes

normativity in a space articulated in a novel way as the duality inside/outside, interior/exterior, peace/war. Its preeminence in regard to all systemic normality is that of the political as a constructive-constituting decision based on its capacity to define amity and enmity, as well as to normativize space as a result, as also occurs on the planetary level (topic of *Land and Sea*).

Thus, the uniqueness of modernity derives from the fact that the foundation of the state as a leviathanic system (in the Schmittian reading of Hobbes) is a double movement: on the one hand, the intra-state organization of the finite territoriality, precisely the one of the nation state; on the other, a movement of infinite extra-state expansion which accompanies and completes the first. In the face of these dimensions of secularization and political reformulation of public law, the decisiveness of Heideggerian Dasein (the *orientation towards the entity ready-to-hand letting it show itself be involved within the realm of everyday work in its aptitude for...*) does not maintain specific connections with the decisive will portrayed by Schmitt, it maintains neither categorical nor situational resemblances with the modern decision for infinitude which Schmitt theorizes and with which he completes his decisionist political and judicial approach.

Hence, conceptually speaking, Schmitt does not owe anything to the philosopher responsible for *Being and Time*. Likewise, Heideggerian thought prior to the *Kehre* does not demonstrate any significant or essential points of contact with Schmitt's basic ideas on this subject. Simply put, the allusion of 1942 seems to be limited to an earnest recognition of a position which he finds close and akin to his own. But this is only the case if one interprets the Heideggerian analytic in very general terms and as a function of a shared polemic against the fundamental dogma of modern rationalism and liberalism. At the most, we might consider that Schmitt has found in the ontological primacy of the "world" with respect to "space" an apriority which is *not completely alien or remote* to the decision for infinitude and the consequential swing towards the infinite waters of the pioneers of the new planetary order, the "children of the seas". Perhaps, one might very boldly take up (with Schmitt) the immediate familiarity with which the crews of the Leviathans, which animate the modern Epos on the oceans of the planet, deal with their everyday tasks. Then, the task would be to confirm (with Heidegger) what could be considered as the concerned dealings they give to the equipment ready-to-hand in the region of the ship — this everyday

management and usage of the tools proper to maritime work which seem natural to these crews.

But this would not change the incompatibility between the decisionist voluntarism and the element of original *decisiveness* of Dasein which may exist in relation to “worldhood” and “spatiality”. To associate the maritime vicissitudes of the centuries in which modernity — already sure of itself — expanded around the whole world with an adequate concretization of Heideggerian existentials would result from a superficial and inaccurate interpretation which would not guarantee the validity of the phenomenological analysis used to explain the *revolutionary and foundational* significance of the overturning or displacement of one existential “element” by another: from earth to water. Therefore, what weakens the rigor of the Schmittian reference to Heidegger is that the analytic of world and space does not offer any *specific* elements (conceptually and situationally) for the comprehension of the epochal rupture provoked by the existential decision of the modern.

Certainly, the activism of the founders of the new *nomos* in the unlimited spaces and according to the logic of fluidity of the aqueous presents a pre-thematic and pre-cognitive aspect (apriority of the decision for the oceanic waters and its initial *heroic* concretion in regard to the subsequent *post-heroic* systematization and stabilization). Yet this aspect is rooted in a *decision* which Schmitt understands and explains on the basis of his political theology and his concept of the political; and it is precisely by virtue of these premises and connotations of his ideas that the decisionism Schmitt ascribes to these pioneers cannot be assimilated to the figures of the “ontological analytic”. What is more, the modern epics of the turn to the sea are sustained within the limits of this impenetrable core which Heidegger seeks to neutralize with his ontological view: the will of the *subject*.

Our conclusion is as follows. If the categories inherent to the worldly and spatializing existence of Dasein are too vague and generic to illuminate this specific situation, which for Schmitt is central to illuminating the political and juridical meaning of the inaugural heroic feat of modern revolutionarism, then the question one has to ask in regards to Schmitt’s reference to *Being and Time* in *Land and Sea*, is whether the Heideggerian conceptual apparatus confirms, but from obviousness; or denies, from incompatibility; or perhaps ignores, from the perspective of a post-subjective ontology,

these key differences which include the *specific political* meaning of certain epochal features.

The question, then, could be expressed in the following manner: Up to what point does Heidegger contribute to differentiating between the eternal marine fishing of sand smelts and the oceanic whale hunt which, for Schmitt, is the foundational heroic feat of a modernity that is truly planetary in scope; or between the limited spatiality of the pirate as an enemy of humankind in the Mediterranean sea of the Romans, and piracy as a force propelling liberty and capitalism which was undertaken by the “dregs of the seas”, the buccaneers, freebooters, privateers, and adventurers on the oceanic waters, particularly on those which surround the New World? All of them are Dasein which are-in-the-world and work pragmatically by utilizing the ready-to-hand.

9.

In conclusion, it could be said that the affinity between Heidegger and Schmitt only seems to be based on the context of the era in which both participate; but this does not dissolve the philosophical divergence between them.

Therefore, the Heideggerian understanding of space is not susceptible to entering into specific significant correlations and analogies with the Schmittian decision. Moreover, the Being-in-the-world and the existential disclosure of the things ready-to-hand to Dasein cannot be connected in anything but a general way to this force of rupture of the established normativity which is proper to the will faced with the exceptional, as it manifests itself in the conquest of the seas and desert lands — that is, of uncivilized spaces. If we were to do so, we would be forcing a juxtaposition which, far from enriching this vague familiar relationship, would weaken it.

This being the case, the Schmittian reference to Heidegger only indicates — we repeat — a genuine recognition of the grandeur of the philosopher, but based on a coincidence, that is either superficial or even directly misleading in its vagueness: it simply indicates that both belong to the same epochal climate, rather than a theoretic proximity between two similar ways of conceptualizing the relation between humans and space. One of them does this in terms of phenomenological originality, the other one in terms of the primacy of the political in all normative foundations, both within states, as well as in terms

of external extra-state normativity.

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¹ Compared with its previous version, “Mundo y espacio en Schmitt y Heidegger. Una aproximación”, in F. Birulés, A. Gómez Ramos y C. Roldán (eds.), *Vivir para pensar. Ensayos en homenaje a Manuel Cruz*, Barcelona: Herder, 2012, pp. 23-42, this work presents more than a few modifications and incorporates some unpublished paragraphs.

² Carl Schmitt, “Die europäische Kultur im Zwischenstadium der Neutralisierung“, *Europäische Revue*, V, 8, 1929, 517-530; with certain modifications later published in Carl Schmitt, *Der Begriff des Politischen. Mit einer Rede über das Zeitalter der Neutralisierungen und Entpolitisierungen*, München, Leipzig: Duncker u. Humblot, 1932; Schmitt does not retain it in the edition of 1933, but it reappears, so to speak, in the new edition which correlates to and complements the one from 1932: *Der Begriff des Politischen. Text von 1932 mit einem Vorwort und drei Corollarien*, Berlin: Duncker u. Humblot, 1963; and following editions.

³ Carl Schmitt, *Land and Meer. Eine weltgeschichtliche Betrachtung*, Leipzig: Philipp Reclam junior, 1942, p. 75; engl.: *Land and Sea*, trans. by Simona Draghici, Washington: Plutarch Press, 1997, p. 58. He refers to Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit. Fünfzehnte, an Hand der Gesamtausgabe durchgesehene Auflage mit den Randbemerkungen aus dem Handexemplar des Autors in Anhang*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1979; engl.: Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. Hereafter this work will be cited as BT. The pages indicated in the text refer to first the German edition and second the English translation.

⁴ These considerations enliven *Land and Sea*, the story Schmitt “tells” his daughter Anima (“Meiner Tochter Anima erzählt” [“As told to my daughter Anima”]); but they also constitute the common theme of Schmitt’s considerations in *Der Nomos der Erde im Völkerrecht des Jus Publicum Europaeum*, Köln: Greven Verlag, 1950; engl.: *The Nomos of the Earth in The International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2003.

⁵ The human being as Dasein chooses or loses itself according to its own choice: “But only so far as it is essentially something which can be *authentic* — that is, something of its own”. It follows, then, that the “modes of Being, *authenticity* and *inauthenticity* (these expressions have been chosen terminologically in a strict sense) are both grounded in the fact that any Dasein whatsoever is characterized by mineness” [BT 42/68].

⁶ “Not until we understand Being-in-the-world as an existential structure of Dasein can we have any insight into Dasein’s *existential spatiality*“ [BT 56/83].

⁷ The initial interpretations indicate, firstly, that the world, ontically considered, may indicate “the totality [*das All*] of those entities which can be present-at-hand within the world”, that is the totality of entities, that are only present [BT 64/93]. Secondly, that *world*, as an “ontological term”, alludes to a field or realm comprising a series of objects, which are addressed, studied or treated according to some kind of discipline or knowledge: that which is proper to exactly this “realm [*Region*]” [BT 64-64/93]. In both cases, he refers to entities which are not Dasein, but merely environmental.

⁸ It is only as a function of this pre-conceptual dimension (that is, previous to all geometric order) that the equipment receives its pragmatic meaning. Heidegger calls it “[w]hat we encounter closest to us [*Nächstbegegnende*]” [BT 68/98] where the totality of equipment originally resides: that which is prior to all subsequent cognitive-theoretical approaches is the pragmatic realm starting from which “the ‘arrangement’” of every context “emerges, and it is in this that any ‘individual’ item of equipment shows itself” in the particular usability which characterizes it, in its particular involvement. But the totality of equipment is, as it were, “[*b*]efore” the discovery of each utensil [BT 68-69/96-99]. The variety of usages of the tools associated with the original pragmatic view of Dasein, thus respond to the manifold references which all utensils establish between themselves within the regional immediate environment of the encounter with Dasein, which, in turn, includes them with circumspection and applies them according to their respective aptitude and consequential “‘manipulability’ [*Handlichkeit*]” within the environment [BT 69/98]. Within the dealings of Dasein with the ontic for production, nature forms part of the world, it is located in it like something which submits itself to the productive work; the latter being the expression of the immediate pragmatism of human existence. Likewise, the operator (the one who produces) and the recipient of the work product, “the person

who is to use it or wear it”, also enter into an assignment-context [BT 69-70/99-100].

⁹ “[T]he Being of the ready-to-hand has the structure of assignment or reference” [BT 83, 83-84/115]. Dasein ensures that the entity with its immediate and pre-theoretical “aptitude” will be encountered. *Spatializing* the equipment according to the vicissitudes of its existence allows for the *ad-aptation* of a totality of the latter in function of the “for which” that categorizes them ontically. Precisely, the “towards this” shows its “aptitude”, the entity is determined as the “towards which” of the “serviceability [*Dienlichkeit*]” provided and as the “for-the-sake-of” of its “usability [*Verwendbarkeit*]” [BT 84/115-116].

¹⁰ It is worth reiterating: this decisiveness is an *a priori* condition of conceptualizing discursiveness and action determined by the will of a *subject*. The “circumspection” now entails locating or installing the entities by giving them an “arrangement” in accordance with their “character of equipment”; we may phrase it this way: locating them such that they are arranged in a certain existential “closeness” and, at the same time, in a certain “place” that will be *their* own. As such, each of them is “within the range” and not merely in any given place. By virtue of this spatialization, the different pieces of equipment demonstrate their respective involvement proper to the pragmatic equipmental totality close to Dasein which finds itself in a spatialized “region” — becoming, for it, its closest environment [BT 102-104/135-138].

¹¹ The *circumspective* concern devoted to the entities loosely arranged so they can be spatialized in a *localizing* sense has a twofold orientating dynamic: the one of “*de-severance* [Ent-fernen]” and the one of “*directionality*” by means of which Dasein exercises its “*essential tendency towards closeness*”: it makes them accessible in an existentially close place and, in this way, the spatial adaptation of all pieces of equipment is highlighted in the place where they accomplish their idiosyncratic belonging in accordance with their respective aptitudes [BT 105/139-140]. Bringing the entities close to oneself and arranging them is the decisive spatialization that is distinctive to existence, this Being-in-the-world is concerned with the ontic: “Circumspective concern [*umsichtige(s) Besorgen*] decides as to the closeness and farness [*Nähe und Ferne*] of what is proximally ready-to-hand environmentally. Whatever this concern dwells alongside beforehand is what is closest, and this is what regulates our de-serverances” [BT 107/142].

¹² The fact that “Being-in-the-world as state of Dasein” is disregarded and remains unobserved is concomitant to being “*passed over* [*Überspringen*]”, which is constitutive for existence. Hence, starting with this passing over, the world is interpreted in terms of the Being of the entities present-at-hand. There is a “*break* [Bruch] in those referential contexts which circumspection discovers”: Dasein is faced with emptiness because it does not capture the assignments or references of the equipment which is the very ready-to-hand, arranged for the pragmatic work of humans. The entities just stay disclosed, in the state of “*disclosedness* [*Erschlossenheit*]”, have the “character of having been laid open [*Aufgeschossenheit*]”, and the attention that Dasein pays to them by dealing with the others is one of concern for the entities which need it (“*Besorgen*”) and not the one of “*solicitude* [*Fürsorge*]” in view of an authentic life. In these situations, the Dasein that deals with the entities loses itself in them; it stays dazed or fascinated by them (“*benommen*”). With the figure of the world being “deprived of its worldhood” exposed in this way, we seek to visualize the relative proximity of what is most habitually understood as Marxist alienation [Cf. BT 65, 75, 112-113, 121].