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Heidegger without Man?

The Ontological Basis of Lyotard's Later Antihumanism

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In the following, "antihumanism" denotes a rejection of any and all systems of thought and discourse wherein a universal concept of the human, i.e. the human as such, forms the conceptual and ethical center of the universe and/or history. It is widely known that Jean-François Lyotard's "pagan," "postmodern" and later works are antihumanistic in this sense; less often discussed is the ontological grounding of this antihumanism in something very close to Heidegger's philosophy of the event, or *Ereignis*. In what follows, I will reconstruct the mature Lyotard's antihumanism as a radicalization of Heidegger's, on the grounds that a) a version of the philosophy of Being as *Ereignis* forms the ontological basis of Lyotard's antihumanism, and b) he reconfigures the place of the human being with respect to the revelation of Being.

An overview of my argument runs as follows. The Heidegger of the "Letter on 'Humanism'" speaks of Being as *Ereignis*. The term is usually rendered in English as "event," but in Heidegger's particular usage it is an event which gathers Being to itself while clearing it to itself. Put differently, *Ereignis* would be Being as the revelation of Being to itself *qua* the thinking of Being by human beings (i.e. the region of itself which is clear to itself). Heidegger's rendering of Being as *Ereignis* is antihumanistic inasmuch as it configures human beings as the place of Being *qua* event, but not as the conceptual/ethical centre of the universe and/or history. Simply put, Being in itself transcends human beings. But Heidegger's antihumanism cannot be said to be radical or thoroughgoing, inasmuch as it accords human beings an essential role in the thinking of Being and thereby a special kind of destiny and dignity. Lyotard for his part, from at least the pagan writings onwards, writes in terms favourable to Heidegger's rendering of Being as event. However he radicalizes Heidegger's antihumanism in denying that human beings have any essential role to play with respect to Being. They are entirely contingent effects of the event, possessing no special destiny or dignity.

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Though Lyotard did not often cite Heidegger directly as a source or inspiration, at least prior to *Heidegger et "les juifs,"* I believe my interpretation to be highly plausible for three reasons. First, what primary textual evidence there is, most notably in *Le Différend*, is highly favourable to the argument I will construct. Secondly, Lyotard's intellectual context was awash in Heideggerian influence, and he undoubtedly imbibed a certain amount of Heideggerianism indirectly, for example via Levinas[1] and Derrida, whose earlier post-Heideggerian philosophy I will briefly discuss. Indeed, as Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut have argued persuasively (if polemically), Lyotard's generation of radical French philosophers – those whose thought they lump under the label *"la pensée 68"* – can be broadly characterized by their radicalization of the antihumanisms of several German thinkers (among which Heidegger is certainly counted).[2] Finally, and most importantly, there is a striking structural homology between the antihumanisms of Lyotard and Heidegger, as well as between the ontological-linguistic presuppositions that generate them. In what follows I will favour a reconstruction of the homology in question, noting where, why and to what extent Lyotard and Heidegger differ. By way of support I will bolster my argument with textual and historical-philosophical evidence.

Heideggerian Antihumanism and its Ontological Basis

Let us begin by considering Heidegger's "fundamental ontology,"[3] specifically with respect to the human being, as expressed in the "Letter on 'Humanism'." For Heidegger, Being,[4] as such, is basic: it is transcendent to all particular beings, it is "the *transcendens* pure and simple."[5] The essence of the human being is thus its relation to Being;[6] specifically, "the human being essentially occurs in his essence only where he is claimed by [B]eing."[7] More specifically still, human beings are the particular beings for whom Being, as such, is a truth (or, to the extent that the human has "fallen" and forgotten Being, and this is Heidegger's concern, a question to be posed).[8] This is to say that human beings stand in (more accurately, they are) a place or region[9] of Being that is "clear" (i.e. they stand in, or rather are, the "clearing of Being").[10] The clearing of being, however, is "clear" not simply for human beings as such (i.e. as particular beings), but in the more basic sense that in the clearing, Being is clear to itself; in a manner of speaking, "the clearing itself is [B]eing."[11]

It is, in any case, Being as *transcendens* (and not human beings, properly speaking) that "clears" the clearing. Hence human beings have a special place among beings, but only in the sense that Being poses the truth or the question of itself as or through them.[12] Human beings, in Heidegger's picture, therefore have a special destiny[13] and thus a special dignity[14] not shared by such beings as animals, rocks and trees. Their destiny, and their dignity, specifically, is to be the "shepherd" of Being[15]; more precisely, to be the region of Being that poses the question of Being and thereby guards

against its forgetting, holding the promise that beings might yet "appear in the light of [B]eing as the beings they are."[16]

Though imbued with a special dignity, the human is something of a vassal, charged in its essence with the care of Being,[17] of which it is both a revealing and an anamnesis.[18] This does not mean, however, that Heidegger is unconcerned with the human being as such. But the precise nature of his concern should be distinguished from humanism. For Heidegger, humanism is characterized as "meditating and caring, that human beings be human and not inhumane, 'inhuman', that is outside their essence. But in what does the humanity of the human being consist? In his essence."[19] In principle, then, in its concern for human essence, humanism poses questions similar to Heidegger's. The difference is that relative to Heidegger's project, humanism sets the bar too low and stops short in its questioning.

Specifically, he notes the way in which past and existing humanisms stemming from the original Roman thinking of *humanitas*, such as Renaissance, Marxist, Sartrean and Christian humanisms, all assume "an already established interpretation of nature, history, world, and the ground of the world, that is, of beings as a whole."[20] In other words, "[e]very humanism is either grounded in a metaphysics or is itself made to be the ground of one." Metaphysics, while it "thinks the being of beings … does not think [B]eing as such, [i.e.] does not think the difference between [B]eing and beings."[21] The specific metaphysical interpretation of beings assumed by all humanisms posits the essence of the human to be that of a "rational animal."[22] While not false, this essential definition of the human being is "conditioned by metaphysics" and thus incomplete or inessential.[23] Heidegger's own care for the essence of the human being, insofar as it digs to the very bedrock below the categories of "rational" and "animal" themselves, is therefore not, on his view, a form of humanism. It rests not, in other words, upon a shallow, question-begging "interpretation of beings," but rather arises from a questioning of both metaphysics and the deeper "truth of [B]eing."[24] Humanism, insofar as it is metaphysical, "impedes the question [of Being] by neither recognizing nor understanding it"[25]; moreover, it "does not set the *humanitas* of the human being high enough" and therefore fails to grasp "the proper dignity of the human being."[26] Heidegger, by contrast, claims to approach the question of human essence and human dignity by way of a proper assessment of metaphysics and an engagement in the fundamental question of Being that metaphysics forgets, covers over, or simply does not pose.

It is crucial to note that for Heidegger, the standing-in-the-clearing-of-Being proper to human beings is language. Not language as a tool or medium of communication; rather, language in its essential relation to Being.[27] Here is how he puts it: "In its essence, language is not the utterance of an organism; nor is it the expression of a living thing. Nor can it ever be thought in an essentially correct way in terms of its symbolic character,

perhaps not even in terms of the character of signification. Language is the clearing-concealing advent of [B]eing itself" ("concealing" because language clears, but as a revelation of Being, which implies "the Nothing," it also partially hides what it clears).[28] As Heidegger puts it elsewhere, "Language is the house of [B]eing"[29] (later, "the house of the truth of [B]eing"; later still, "at once the house of [B]eing and the home of human essence"). This is to say that "[i]n its home human beings dwell. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of [B]eing insofar as they bring this manifestation to language and preserve it in language through their saying."[30]

Put differently, thinking and saying are the work of Being manifesting itself (to itself, as human being), and guarding against its forgetting (by itself, as human being). The particular way in which human beings are always already preceded by Being is inescapably tied to language, in its essential dimension; as we saw, language is "the home of the human being's essence."[31] Hence, for Heidegger the human being "has" language in only a strictly metaphorical sense.[32] He is not always successful in making this clear, as the above quote concerning the human bringing Being to language suggests. But this does not appear to indicate a blind inconsistency on Heidegger's part. Like Lyotard's, Heidegger's project necessitates writing in such a way that strains the bounds of ordinary language. Since language, according to Heidegger, has been degraded through the history of metaphysics to an operational and communicative tool, "[b]efore he speaks the human being must first let himself be claimed again by [B]eing."[33] This necessitates Heidegger's project of the recovery of thinking from and by means of a language degraded by metaphysics.[34]

Heidegger treats this question of language specifically in a later text, "On the Question of Being." There we see more of the properly philological dimension of his philosophical project; Heidegger submits even the term "Being," insofar as we inherit it from a language degraded by metaphysics, to a radical questioning (going so far as to cross out the term whenever he must use it).[35] As Spivak notes in her preface to Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, "On the Question of Being" is considered by Derrida, a contemporary and philosophical fellow-traveller of Lyotard, to be the "authority" for his own practice of "writing under erasure" (i.e. crossing out certain terms to indicate that they are inadequate, but, given the state of language, necessary).[36] Derrida maintains however that despite what he perceives as Heidegger's attempt to "free language from the fallacy of a fixed origin," he still sets Being up as a transcendental signified, a signified to which all languages ultimately refer, and on top of that accords the human being a special relation to that signified.[37] Heidegger's, then, is not a thoroughgoing antihumanism. In Derrida's words:

> It remains that the thinking of Being, the thinking of the truth of Being, in the name of which Heidegger de-limits humanism and metaphysics, remains as thinking *of* man. Man and the name of man are not displaced in the question of Being such as it is put to metaphysics. Even less do they disappear. On the contrary, at issue is a kind of reevaluation or revalorization of the essence and dignity of man... [it is] a thinking of Being which has all the characteristics of a *relève* (*Aufhebung*) of humanism.[38]

According to Derrida, then, Heidegger's gesture would be radical but for the fact that it retains a transcendent principle as its core, and accords the human a special dignity thereby. Though Heideggerian in his methods and inspiration, Derrida attempts a thought not of Being, but of pure difference. He recognizes that he is left thereby to vacillate between two dissatisfying methods. First, a deconstruction which Heidegger practices almost exclusively, which does not "change terrain," which attempts to "use against the edifice the instruments or stones available in the house, that is, equally in language."[39] Practicing deconstruction in this manner, one risks, as Derrida imputes to Heidegger, "ceaselessly confirming, consolidating, *relifting* (*relever* [*Aufhebung*]), at an always more certain depth, that which one allegedly deconstructs."[40] But the alternative is to brutally change terrain "in a continuous and irruptive fashion," affirming "an absolute break and difference."[41] The context of Derrida's article is 1968, and he identifies the latter, more Nietzschean/Dionysian method as the one most characteristic of French thought at the time.[42] One can certainly read into this a description of Lyotard's Nanterre writings, and a prescient characterization of *Économie libidinale*, Lyotard's most uncompromisingly radical, antihumanistic and ethically aporetic text. Derrida nonetheless notes that this irruptive method has its own pitfalls: ordinary language "ceaselessly reinstates the new terrain on the oldest ground," and such a "displacement" can lead one to unwittingly inhabit "the inside one declares one has deserted."[43] In practical terms, one thinks here of how the revolt of 68 largely played itself out as a flexible regime of capital accumulation and a shallow culture of consumerism, hedonism, and aestheticism.[44] As such, Lyotard the libidinal economist's injunction to "be in inside and forget it"[45] can be flagged as highly problematic; indeed, as Lyotard later admits, *Économie libidinale* delivers nothing less than a "politics of capital," an "accelerationist" rather than properly revolutionary philosophy.[46]

Lyotardian Antihumanism and its Heideggerian Inspiration

More could be said here about Derrida's critical appropriation of Heidegger, but for my purposes the main thing to note is the following: in the linguistic turn which followed the libidinal phase of his thinking, Lyotard adopts something very close to this roughly sketched critical

appropriation of Heidegger. While like Heidegger, he searches for something in or about language which is "always already before" human speech and human beings, he attempts, like Derrida, not to succumb to the temptation to render language nihilating-transcendent or to retain some special, dignified place for humanity. Lyotard's antihumanism following the libidinal philosophy is therefore in this respect, like Derrida's, a radicalization of Heidegger's. It is also highly idiosyncratic in some of its specifics. At this stage I will note its most general outlines, with respect to both the similarities to and the departures from its Heideggerian matrix.

It is worth pausing however to inquire why philosophers like Lyotard and Derrida would attack humanism, even going so far as to purge Heidegger's nominally antihumanistic philosophy of the destiny and dignity he accorded humanity. In quite general terms, their line of attack stems from the Nietzschean critique of the nihilism which dominates Western philosophy, in particular the notion that transcendent concepts nihilate concrete particulars. Quite simply: because it is a transcendent concept, "Humanity" may be invoked to justify all manner of atrocities aimed at individual human beings. Therefore humanism is pernicious and a truly radical philosophy will have gotten beyond it. But this raises the problem of how a contemporary, post-religious philosophy which jettisons humanism may articulate an ethics. In the wake of May 68 and the early 1970s, the efforts of Lyotard and Derrida may be broadly interpreted as a sustained engagement with this question. In this connection their considerable debt to Levinas should also be noted.

These considerations shed light on why, following the ethically aporetic libidinal phase of his thinking, Lyotard attempted to think an ethical antihumanism. In the process he all but abandoned Freud's pulsional theory and turned to language pragmatics as his primary material.[47] Granted, to the extent that language pragmatics evokes images of human beings communicating and creating certain other linguistic effects, this may seem hard to square with an antihumanist project. Lyotard attempts nonetheless to pull off a thoroughly antihumanist linguistic turn. He seeks an understanding of language pragmatics which degrades the conceptual position of the human as such, a linguistic "revolution of relativity and of quantum theory," as he puts it.[48]

Lyotard casts language in such a way that human beings are no longer in command of it, as "language users," or at the centre of it, as originators or privileged loci of discourse. This will come as a surprise to readers who know Lyotard through his most popular text, *The Postmodern Condition*, wherein he freely employs the later Wittgenstein's notion of language games to describe the social bond. The later Lyotard purifies his terms of humanist residues, insisting that "[y]ou don't play around with language … [a]nd in this sense, there are no language games."[49] Rather, he conceives of language as a kind of primal but unstable material preceding, structuring and, in a

sense, generating human beings. Language pragmatics, far from simply denoting the ways humans do things with words, is re-construed as the way in which language, radically heterogeneous with respect to itself but also always already prior to the human, does things or produces certain effects with humans. But as we will see, Lyotard does not view humans as an essential component of language pragmatics; they possess no "destiny" in Heidegger's sense.

This stems from Lyotard's beginning to view the pragmatic dimension of language as a question of ontology or, better perhaps, Being-generating-time, or Being-coming-into-being, i.e. occurrence, as and at the behest of Being: what Heidegger calls *Ereignis*, Being itself as "propriating event," an event which gathers Being to itself and clears it to itself (some Anglophone commentators speak of *Ereignis* as "en-owning"); Being as pure "there is" or "it gives").[50] In *Le Différend* Lyotard interprets language in more or less Heideggerian fashion, appropriating the latter's terms. Language is now Being, but not quite in the sense of *transcendens* pure and simple; it is rather Being, in and generating time. Language is now viewed, in other words, in terms of the *event*: Heidegger's *Ereignis*, the "event of propriation." Language/Being is, then, for Lyotard a phrasing, the pure "it happens," and this entails not Being as a stable, pre-existent, transcendent structure structuring the human linguistically, but rather, as he puts it in *Le Différend*, "one being, one time," every time.[51] For Lyotard, this means that "language" is not simply the natural human language spoken by you and me; rather, it is any and every event, insofar as every event is a kind of phrasing.

When a phrase happens, it presents at least one "universe."[52] A universe is a concatenation or "situation"[53] of four pragmatic poles: *referent* ("what it is about, the case"), *sense* ("what is signified about the case"), *addressee* ("that to which or addressed to which this is signified about the case"), and *addressor* ("that 'through' which or in the name of which this is signified about the case").[54] A universe is distinguished by how its four poles are situated: "The disposition of a phrase universe consists in the situating of these instances in relation to each other. A phrase may entail several referents, several senses, several addressees, several addressors. Each of these four instances may be marked [i.e. clearly indicated, or filled in by something definite] in the phrase or not."[55]

A phrase presents a situation; it cannot, however, present its own presentation, which is to say, its presentation is not itself situated in the universe it presents.[56] The presentation of a phrase may nonetheless be marked in the universe it presents by *There is* (*il y a*); since ordinary language can refer to itself, a phrase like "There is a presentation in the current phrase" marks it, but does not strictly speaking present or situate it. The presentation entailed by a given phrase, however, may be situated in the universe of another phrase.[57] This is to say that when a phrase occurs, there is *what* it presents (*ce qu'il y a*), as well as *that* it presents (*qu'il y a*); the latter

may be vaguely indicated in the phrase, but it can only be situated in another phrase (i.e. the fact that the phrase presented something becomes a referent in another phrase). The *il y a* is the phrase in its most ontological dimension, and we should guard against restricting the concept of "phrase" to natural language. *Any* event may be described in these terms, since any event situates the four pragmatic poles described above.

At this point it should be clear why Lyotard's philosophy of phrases may be plausibly interpreted in terms of the ontological/linguistic dimension of Heidegger's philosophy. But here we can ask whether for Lyotard, as for Heidegger, human beings constitute a particular, privileged "region" or "clearing" of Being. To the extent that they are addressees of the fact that Being, as event, "speaks" or rather phrases to them, they are "called" by Being, if not to "think Being" in the specifically Heideggerian sense, then at least to respond to the event. But more fundamentally, as we will see, before it can be said that they are called *by* Being, to respond or otherwise, human beings are called *into* being by Being, which is to say they are called into being by the event. As with Heidegger, human beings are for Lyotard transcended by Being; Lyotard interprets Being, however, as pure event. Hence, while it appears that he has abandoned or compromised what I would argue is his nearly career-long struggle against nihilating transcendence, Lyotard is really saying – not without inconsistency, which is immediately obvious – that singularity is, precisely, what is transcendent (and hence, singularity is still privileged), even to the extent that it is the transcendent condition of transcendence itself.

Where Lyotard departs from Heidegger is with respect to the notion that the human being is the shepherd of Being, the region of Being destined/dignified to pose the question of Being and thereby to open itself to Being's dispensation and guard against its forgetting. In fact, questions of calling or destiny are absent from Lyotard's account of *Ereignis* as bare occurrence; inasmuch as each event can be characterized by both a presentation and a situation, such questions are "situational," i.e. they are of the order of what is presented *by* the event (*ce qu'il y a*) but they are not *of* the event (*qu'il y a*), strictly speaking. In Lyotard's estimation:

> [Heidegger] persists in making 'man' the addressee of the giving which in *Ereignis* gives, and gives itself while withholding itself, and [he] particularly persists in making in making the one who receives this giving into the man who fulfills his destiny as man by hearing the authenticity of time. Destiny, addressee, addressor, and man are instances or relations here in universes presented by phrases [i.e. events], they are situational, *tô logo*. The *There is* takes place, it is an occurrence (*Ereignis*), but it does not present anything to anyone, it does not present itself, and it is not the present, nor is it presence. Insofar as it is

> phrasable (thinkable), a presentation falls short[58] as an occurrence.[59]

As Bennington interprets this passage, "Lyotard distinguishes his thinking about time from the later Heidegger on the *Ereignis* on the grounds that the latter still thinks time in terms of gift and destination, i.e. in terms of instances situated within a *presented* phrase-universe, rather than as the bare 'occurrence' of the event of presentation of that universe."[60] As bare occurrence, Being does not give itself (as question, or clearing, or event) to the human being, without *generating* or having generated the human being by situating it pragmatically as either addressor, addressee, sense, or referent. In fact, the formulation of *Ereignis* as "there is / it gives" is already too loaded: it is for Lyotard, simply, a matter of the "there is," the *il y a* or "*il arrive*." As he puts it, "[p]resentation is not an act of giving (and above all not one coming from some *Es*, or some *It* addressed to some us, to us human beings)."[61] Being is the pure "it happens."[62] This does not entail a stable, pre-existent, transcendent structure, structuring by "donations" or "sendings" the human being as/via language. It entails, rather, Being in terms of the particular phrase or utterance: i.e. "one being, one time," every time.[63]

This being the case, it is only *sometimes* true that a human being is called into being when Being, the event, happens; the presentation entailed by the event is not necessarily a presentation *to* a human being or human beings (or for that matter, a presentation *from* them or *by* them), nor is it necessarily a generation *of* the human being. The seemingly anthropocentric pragmatic poles of addressee and addressor of the event, Lyotard suggests, may be fulfilled by virtually any being.[64] His account of the onto-logic of the event apparently leaves no special role for human beings as such. This is to say that whereas there is a technically antihumanist account of a particularly human destiny for Heidegger, there is none for Lyotard; there is only what appears to be a thoroughgoing antihumanism.

If I have been successful in my reconstruction, then the homology with Heidegger and the nature of Lyotard's radicalization will have both become clear. I also believe that my reconstruction opens at least two more paths of inquiry which I will have to merely indicate and not follow here: one onto the question of the extent to which Heidegger's critique of the essence of technology influenced Lyotard's critique of capitalism and technoscientific development, and one onto the question of the extent to which Heidegger's fundamental ontology generated his later political *attentisme* and subsequently influenced Lyotard's own.[65] It is my suspicion that Lyotard, one-time Left-Marxist militant, imbibed something of a poison pill in turning to the resources of Heidegger's fundamental ontology. For the later Heidegger there is no other calling for the human being than to clear the ground for thinking, to think, and to await in one's thinking the dispensation of Being. For the later Lyotard, there is no other human project

but to testify to the incompleteness and dissonance of the human itself, and all that remains of politics is the bearing witness to the event. It is my suspicion that not just the ontology, but also the melancholy of the later Lyotard has its roots in Heidegger.

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[1] It could be fairly argued that Levinas, not Heidegger, deserves to be considered the primary influence on Lyotard's later antihumanism. While I do not dispute the importance of Levinas for Lyotard's thought from the pagan period onwards, it should be noted that Levinas himself was, above all, responding to Heidegger. Note also that for Levinas, a "humanism of the other man" was a live option (Emmanuel Levinas, *Humanisme de l'autre homme* [Paris: Fata Morgana, 1972.]). Finally, since Lyotard's debt to Levinas is better known and more widely discussed, I would be happy to consider the following a contribution to the history of philosophy which leaves room for but does not directly broach the question of Levinas's influence.

[2] Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *French Philosophy of the Sixties: An Essay on Antihumanism* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1990).

[3] Fundamental ontology "strives to reach back into the essential ground from which thought concerning the truth of [B]eing emerges." Martin Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'" in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 271.

[4] For clarity's sake I follow here the convention, adopted by some English-speaking translators/interpreters of Heidegger, of capitalizing the term "Being" when it is a question of the noun designating "what is … above all," "the *transcendens* pure and simple," i.e. Being as such (Martin Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'" in *Pathmarks*, 239, 256). Capuzzi's English translation of the "Letter on 'Humanism'," which I cite, unfortunately renders indiscriminately as "being" four distinct German terms: *sein* [French (infinitif): *être*; English: *to be*]; *das Sein* [French: *l'être*; English: *the "to be"*]; *seiend* [French (participe présent): *étant*; English: *being*]; *das Seiende* [French: *l'étant*; English: *a being*]. For Heidegger, the fundamental ontological difference resides in the difference between *das Seinde* (a particular being, e.g. a lamp) and *das Sein* (the "to be" of a particular being; e.g. that which is or accounts for the be-ing of the lamp). The clarity of English renderings of Heidegger may suffer where this fundamental difference is not worded correctly;

hence, though perhaps inelegant, I have inserted into my citations from Capuzzi a capital "B" in square brackets wherever it is a question of *das Sein*.

[5] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 256.

[6] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 242.

[7] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 247.

[8] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 253.

[9] Levinas on Heidegger: "human existence interested him only as the 'place' of fundamental ontology." (Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo* [Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1997] 38-40.)

[10] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 247.

[11] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 253.

[12] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 251.

[13] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 247, 249.

[14] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 251.

[15] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 252.

[16] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 252.

[17] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 252.

[18] Note here the Heideggerian roots of deep ecology, exemplified by such thinkers as Arne Naess and Dave Foreman: apart from being in a unique position to preserve or betray the biosphere, the human being is simply a part of nature, holding no ethical pre-eminence.

[19] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 244.

[20] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 245.

[21] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 246. In other words, metaphysics does not think the ontological difference between *das Sein* and *das Seiende*.

[22] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 245.

[23] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 246.

[24] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 245. Cf. also Martin Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 82–96.

[25] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 245.

[26] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 251.

[27] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 242-243.

[28] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 248-249, 272-273.

[29] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 239.

[30] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 239.

[31] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 254.
[32] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 247.
[33] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 243.
[34] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 254. See also Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Preface," in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), ix–xc, xiv-xv. Much like Lyotard after him, Heidegger is also confronted with the problem of what ethics, if any, is entailed by this thinking of Being and the being of the human being. The difference is that for Heidegger, antihumanism simply cannot generate an ethics.
[35] E.g. the forward of Heidegger, "On the Question of Being" in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 291–322, 291.
[36] Spivak, "Preface," xvi.
[37] Spivak, "Preface," xvi.
[38] Jacques Derrida, "The Ends of Man," in *Margins of Philosophy* (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press Limited, 1982), 109–136, 128, 134.
[39] Derrida, "The Ends of Man," 135.
[40] Derrida, "The Ends of Man," 135.
[41] Derrida, "The Ends of Man," 135.
[42] Derrida, "The Ends of Man," 135.
[43] Derrida, "The Ends of Man," 135.
[44] See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, MA, and Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).
[45] Jean-François Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 3.
[46] Jean-Francois Lyotard and Jean-Loup Thébaud, *Just Gaming*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 90.
[47] In the wake of *Économie libidinale*, Lyotard makes his agnosticism with regard to the ontological status of Freudian metapsychological categories explicit with the phrase "il y a des énergies (façon de parler)" – that is, "there are energies ([merely] a way of speaking)" (Jean-François Lyotard, *Rudiments païens: genre dissertatif* [Paris: Union générale d'éditions, 1977], 130).
[48] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 137.
[49] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 137.
[50] Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 240-241 (footnotes), 254. The event is not a special category for Heidegger, but, one could say, Being insofar as it reveals itself

("clears" itself). Time, which the notion of an event seems to presuppose, occurs in any case "essentially in the dimensionality that [B]eing itself is" (Heidegger, "Letter on 'Humanism'," 254).

[51] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 70.

[52] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 70.

[53] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 70-71.

[54] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 14.

[55] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 14.

[56] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 71.

[57] I Lyotard, *The Differend*, 71.

[58] Geoffrey Bennington's translation in *Late Lyotard* (self-published, 2005), 86 (footnote): "is missed."

[59] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 75.

[60] Bennington, *Late Lyotard*, 86 (footnote).

[61] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 75.

[62] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 70. It is interesting to note that in *The Differend* and elsewhere Lyotard favours the strange formulation "il arrive" rather than the more obvious "cela arrive" or "ça arrive."

[63] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 70.

[64] Lyotard, *The Differend*, 77.

[65] For a discussion of the specifically political dimensions of Lyotard's antihumanism, see Matthew R. McLennan, "Anthro-paralogy: Antihumanism in Lyotard's Late Works," in *Rereading Jean-François Lyotard: Essays on his Late Works*, eds. Heidi Bickis and Rob Shields (Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2013), 43-53.