

edited by
Dieter Roelstraete

Machines

à

penser

Fondazione Prada

CONTENTS

NOTE TO THE READER

This publication accompanies the exhibition “Machines à penser,” conceived and curated by Dieter Roelstraete at Fondazione Prada, Venice. The project recounts the architectural typology of the *hut* as a “machine for thinking,” made for or named after the three German philosophers Theodor Adorno, Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

In addition to the lead essay by the curator, the volume contains two essays and a poem written by scholars, theorists, and participating artists.

Also included are a selection of excerpts relating to the theme of dwelling by Adorno, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and Saint Jerome, and three conversations with artists commissioned to make new works for the exhibition project: Leonor Antunes, Alexander Kluge, and Goshka Macuga. The publication features a bibliography, the Italian translations of the texts, and a list of exhibited works and illustrations.

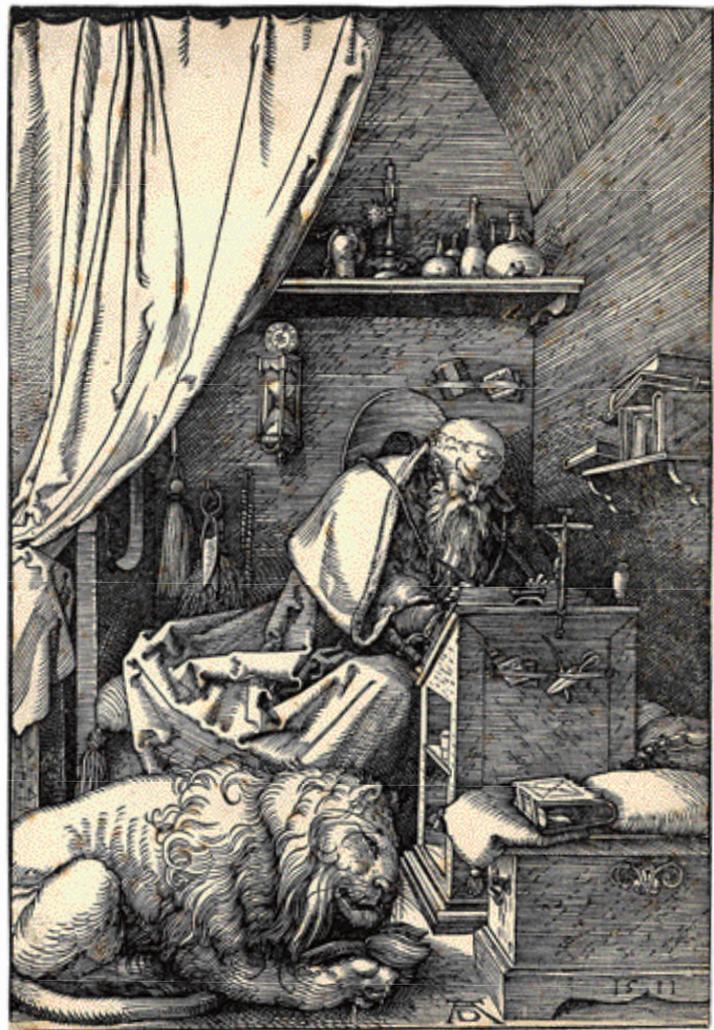
All the images in the book, apart from the cover cards, are accompanied by a short caption with the name of the artist or maker, title of the work, and date. Complete captions for the illustrations can be found in the list of exhibited works and illustrations. Key images are accompanied by an extended caption (in italic) written by the curator.

Dieter Roelstraete	<i>Trois machines à penser</i>	19
Ludwig Wittgenstein	<i>Culture and Value</i>	179
Shumon Basar	<i>The Eternal Return of the Primitive Hut</i>	197
Theodor Adorno	<i>Refuge for the Homeless</i>	251
Alec Finlay	<i>HUTOPIA</i>	257
Martin Heidegger	<i>Why Do I Stay in the Provinces?</i>	323
Goschka Macuga	} Conversations	339, 357, 369
Leonor Antunes		
Alexander Kluge		
Mark Riley	<i>Thinking Place: Imagining Heidegger at Todtnauberg and Wittgenstein at Skjolden</i>	403
Saint Jerome	<i>Letter XLIII to Marcella</i>	443
	Bibliography	449
	Italian Translations	453
	List of Illustrations and Exhibited Works	529









Dieter Roelstraete

Trois machines

à

penser



When men were scattered over
the earth, finding their shelter
in dugouts or some fissured rock
or hollow tree, philosophy
taught them to raise up roofs.

Seneca¹

German philosophy as a whole
[...] is the most fundamental
form of romanticism and home-
sickness that has ever been. [...]
One is no longer at home anywhere.

Friedrich Nietzsche²

Previous pages:

Bartolomeo Montagna
Saint Jerome in Bethlehem,
1505–10 11

Hendrick van Steenwyck the
Younger
Saint Jerome in His Study,
1630 12

Vincenzo Catena
Saint Jerome in His Study,
c. 1510 14

Albrecht Dürer
Saint Jerome in His Study,
post 1511 16

Dieter Roelstraete
Remains of Wittgenstein's hut,
Skjolden, October 2017 17

Bartolomeo Montagna
Saint Jerome in the Desert, n.d.,
15th century 18

1 Quoted in Joseph Rykwert,
*On Adam's House in Paradise:
The Idea of the Primitive Hut in
Architectural History* (Cambridge,
MA: The MIT Press, 1981; second
edition), p. 110.

2 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to
Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann
and Reginald J. Hollingdale
(New York: Random House,
1968), p. 225.

0. Corner

Theodor Adorno (born 1903 in Frankfurt am Main), Martin Heidegger (born 1889 in Messkirch) and Ludwig Wittgenstein (born 1889 in Vienna) occupy the opposing corners of the proverbial Bermuda triangle that constitutes 20th-century German-language philosophy, while simultaneously bridging the gap between the so-called “continental” and “Anglo-Saxon” traditions—the central drama, one could say, of 20th-century philosophy proper—between them. Curiously, all three have also had *huts* named after them, or have seen their names associated with certain modest dwellings, from the well-known, widely photographed and thoroughly documented to the obscurantist and rarely seen: Wittgenstein’s hut, Heidegger’s hut, Adorno’s hut. Of these three, Heidegger’s hut is far and away the best known: built in the early 1920s, it still stands today outside the Black Forest village of Todtnauberg,

Stones

attracting a steady stream of phenomenological pilgrims and philosophical tourists, all of whom are greeted by the same emphatic road sign identifying the mythical hut as inaccessible private property, still in the hands of the Heidegger family. Wittgenstein’s hut is a slightly more specialist—and therefore more enigmatic and alluring—affair, its footprint remains much harder to reach and find in the remote mountainous folds at the far end of Norway’s Sognefjord. Not entirely unsurprisingly, however, this hut too—or rather, the shadow cast by its memory: Wittgenstein’s hut has not stood at its original location in the village of Skjolden for many years now—has become something of a tourist destination. “Adorno’s Hut,” finally, I trust very few people have ever heard of: it comes bracketed in the quotation marks of a *title*—that of a faintly hut-like artwork by the late Scottish poet and sculptor Ian Hamilton Finlay, who surely knew only too well that

Theodor Adorno, of all people, could never have chosen to live in a hut on the edge of the known world, much less have built one himself. Finlay himself, however, was a hut-builder of sorts—and a hermit for sure: Adorno’s hut is really Finlay’s hut; the philosopher’s exile akin to the poet’s escape. Adorno was certainly indebted to the hermetic, world-denying tradition in philosophy, yet there is little in his thought, so anxious to root out any trace of the unreflectively romantic, that could be considered *less* Adornian than hut-dwelling. Still, “Adorno’s Hut” stands out as a powerful summation, in the wood and steel of Finlay’s chosen treatment, of modern philosophy’s enduring infatuation with fantasies of flight and *the architecture of retreat*.

As a philosophy student in the early 1990s, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Martin Heidegger each made a deep and lasting impression on me, though I do not remember ever being made aware of

the fact, back then, that these philosophers, with their curiously mirroring biographies—both were born in 1889, and although their intellectual trajectories took them in starkly differing philosophical directions, they kept quietly respectful track of each other’s work throughout their lives—shared the habit of hut-dwelling, and that the landmarks that would come to define their respective philosophical legacies were both conceived, in large part, in simple wooden cabins built for this very purpose in the same seven-year span. The significance of this particular congruence is something I only grasped later on, while leafing through a lavishly illustrated tome on postmodern art and architecture (the title of which, like so much postmodernism, I’ve long since forgotten) and coming across a single photograph of an artwork—assemblage, installation, sculpture—by Ian Hamilton Finlay titled *Adorno’s Hut*. The writings of Theodor Adorno had by then become another cornerstone of my

philosophical and art-theoretical formation, and it was the encounter with this curiously titled (and decidedly odd-looking) work of art that planted the seed for the present curatorial thought experiment—the ultimate aim of which it is to recast, to some extent, the often troubled relationships between these three key thinkers, whose lives and thoughts have done so much to enrich our own reflections on the subjects of building and dwelling, exile and retreat, rootlessness and belonging, homeliness and homelessness, as seen through the allegorical prism of the hut, or *the hut as both a figure of and home for thought*: Wittgenstein’s, Heidegger’s, Adorno’s “machines for thinking” are machines for rethinking philosophy’s very own edifice complex.³

³ The title of this essay, “Trois machines à penser”, alludes to Le Corbusier’s famous characterization of the house as a “machine-à-habiter.” It is of course worth noting that Le Corbusier likewise had a hut (called “le cabanon”) built for his private living use in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin on the French Riviera.











Previous pages:

- Patrick Lakey
Hegel: Collegium, Jena, Germany, 2004 27
- Schopenhauer: Schöne Aussicht, Frankfurt, Germany, I, 2004* 28
- Marx: Reading Room, Great Hall, British Museum, London, I, 2004* 30
- Nietzsche: Lake Silvaplana, Surlej, Switzerland, IV, 2004* 32
- Heidegger: (Hut) Todtnauberg, Black Forest, Germany, I, 2004* 34
- Patrick Lakey's German Photographs (1724–2005) series documents the places where German-speaking philosophers—from Immanuel Kant to Theodor Adorno—lived and worked, recorded with the clinical precision of a certain idea of "German" photography. Traveling through Germany, England, Switzerland, and ending up in his adopted hometown of Los Angeles, Lakey photographed the places where these thinkers wrote, thought, lived, and in some cases, died. [see also ills. on pp. 243–250, 331–338]

Though they themselves would doubtlessly, and predictably, have objected to the reductionist risks and facile lure of biographical anecdote, the respective life stories of Heidegger and Wittgenstein hold important clues to a deeper appreciation of their philosophies.⁴ It can be insightful and rewarding, for the philosophically challenged, to *see* for themselves, for instance, *where* a certain philosopher was born, grew up, lived and worked, or lies buried—where he or she *thought*, that is, or what they considered a suitable *home for thinking*. I, for one, have long enjoyed visiting philosophers' birthplaces, graves and hideouts, and two telling anecdotes related to my early passion for Heidegger (since considerably toned down) and Wittgenstein (since cautiously rekindled) are worth recounting in this regard.

In the fall of 2002, I visited Vienna for the first time in my life. Armed with the intoxicating recent memory

4 Heidegger's well-known distaste for biography is best remembered in an anecdote connected to his 1924 course on the *Fundamental Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, which he famously introduced, on May 1, with the observation that "the personality of the philosopher is of interest only to this extent: he was born at such and such a time, he worked, and died." It is worth noting, however, that this should be read in part as "a rhetorical flourish, for Heidegger referred his audience in the same breath to Werner Jaeger's path-breaking *Aristoteles: Grundlegung seiner Entwicklung*, dedicated precisely to the exploration of the link between Aristotle's biography and his thought." Hans Sluga, "Introduction: Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Man, the Life, and the Work," in Hans Sluga & David Stern (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein: Second Edition* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 4. A recent study comparing the philosophies of Heidegger and Wittgenstein—one of a number such investigations devoted to two thirds of our curatorial equation; a comparative study devoted to all three has yet to be written—starts out with an intent to "first, get the obligatory biographical parallels out of the way. Martin Heidegger and

of reading Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, I set about trying to locate the house where Ludwig Wittgenstein was born in 1889, which I mistakenly, but no less doggedly, remembered to have stood somewhere in a certain Kundmannngasse in the city's third *Bezirk*. I vividly remember finding, and walking up and down this street in the vain hope of encountering something like a "Palais Wittgenstein"—which I knew to have been built in the great era of *Gründerzeit* pomp—or at least a memorial plaque in its honor (I wasn't entirely sure, at the time, whether the building had survived the war): nothing of the kind, and after an hour or so I finally gave up. Only later that evening, back in my hotel, did I realize that the Kundmannngasse was not the address of the grandiose *Palais Wittgenstein*—which was indeed demolished, in the course of the 1950s, to make place for a nondescript housing block⁵—but of the much better known, quasi-mythical

Ludwig Wittgenstein were both born in 1889 in adjacent German-speaking countries (Germany and Austria, respectively). After flirting with other occupations (priesthood and engineering), they both came to study under leading philosophers of the day (Edmund Husserl and Bertrand Russell), each of whom recognized in his pupil not only an heir apparent but the saviour of philosophy as a whole. Both published a first book in the 1920s (*Being and Time* and *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*) which employ their mentors' methods (phenomenology and logical analysis) while criticizing their mentors' conception of it. Full of enigmatic claims written in a cryptic style (hyphenated neologisms and diamond-dense numbered statements, respectively), each book established its author as preeminent within a branch of philosophy." Lee Braver, *Groundless Grounds: A Study of Wittgenstein and Heidegger* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2014), p. 1.

5 The Palais Wittgenstein originally stood in the Allee-gasse, behind the Karlskirche; the street was renamed Argentinierstrasse after the war.

Haus Wittgenstein: the austere arch-modernist house Ludwig Wittgenstein designed together with one Paul Engelmann for his sister Margaret Stonborough-Wittgenstein in 1928, which I had somehow, miraculously it now seems, managed to miss on my three or four traipses up and down said street. (Oh well.) I have been back to Vienna many times since, but have yet to visit this *Tractatus* turned into stone, now famously functioning as the cultural center of the Bulgarian embassy in Austria. (I may choose never to do so.) The remains of Wittgenstein's hut in Norway, however, I have had a chance to see in the meantime.

Ten years later, in the summer of 2012, I set out on a similar journey when I decided to break up my trip from Basel to Berlin with a detour via Todtnauberg in search of Heidegger's fabled Black Forest cabin, about which I knew quite a bit already at the time—except,

crucially, the hut's exact address. (I don't think it ever had one.) The weather wasn't great that day in June, rainy and surprisingly cold, and although the village of Todtnauberg features many a road sign pointing to the so-called Heidegger *Rundweg* snaking around the hills above, I searched fruitlessly for a trace of the hut for about an hour before returning to Freiburg, frustrated and empty-handed—and decided to go seek out Heidegger's much more prosaic urban residence instead, a nondescript villa built in 1928 in the leafy Freiburg suburb of Zähringen. (The building of this house, which is today occupied by Heidegger's granddaughter Gertrud, was prompted by his appointment to a chair in philosophy at the city's centuries-old university, following in the footsteps of his erstwhile mentor Edmund Husserl.) This house, sited on the Röt buckweg 47, was much more easily found, which I took to be not only philosophically significant, in some vague way or other,

6 Heidegger's hut is the subject of a compelling architectural study by Adam Sharr published in 2006. In a foreword, Simon Sadler rhetorically asks, "Is the hut described in this text the smallest residence ever to merit a monograph?" Sharr wisely spends some time in his book discussing Heidegger's Freiburg villa, but a monograph titled *Heidegger's House* does not seem forthcoming. Adam Sharr, *Heidegger's Hut* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), p. ix.

but also a measure of revenge on the part of the much-maligned figure of urban (though really suburban) living in Heidegger's rustic, obsessively rooted thought. "Fuck the hut!" I remember thinking to myself back then—as anyone who chooses to expose him- or herself to extended doses of Heidegger reading must inevitably be tempted to think at some point or other in the process ("fuck the hut" being shorthand for a more fundamental dismissal of Heidegger as a whole, of course): consider the hut a corny, overthought and in some ways even *overproduced* vessel of an impossible, positively suspect idea of authenticity thankfully canceled out by the refreshing banality of a villa that Heidegger carefully sought to dissociate from his thinking for most of his public life.⁶ I have since managed to locate the actual hut, and have seen it *in vivo*. It is, thankfully, also rather banal in appearance—and as such, an inspiring disappointment.

Heidegger in Todtnauberg, Wittgenstein in Skjolden: there evidently exist many more examples of such exact structures. (As for Adorno's hut: besides the Finlay sculpture, perhaps his wartime Hollywood home will do? But we shall be returning to this matter in due time.) There exists a long history of thinkers' abodes built on the literal and/or metaphorical outskirts of civilization and/or society—for that is of course precisely where much philosophy has either long been, or, more pointedly, *imagined* itself to be most productive, from ancient times to the present day: in the desert, among the mountaintops—above the sea of mist or line of trees⁷—in the wilderness, “away” and outside. *Et in Arcadia ego*, and there I shall build myself a house for thinking—or writing, or composing. (A parallel history of purpose-built composers' and writers' retreats would have to include Gustav Mahler's cottage built in the 1890s in Steinbach am Attersee, east of

⁷ This is a reference to Caspar David Friedrich's iconic 1818 painting *Wanderer Above a Sea of Mists*, one of the most widely used images in the visual history of philosophy. We shall be returning to the implied association of retreat with elevation—to rise *above*—shortly.

Salzburg, as well as Edvard Grieg's cabin in the western Norwegian village of Lofthus; Dylan Thomas's writing shed or “word-splashed hut” in the Welsh village of Laugharne; Malcolm Lowry's squatter's shack in the Dollarton mudflats north of Vancouver, where he wrote *Under the Volcano*; Virginia Woolf's “Monk's House” cottage in East Sussex and Roald Dahl's Buckinghamshire writing hut dubbed “The Gipsy House”; George Bernard Shaw's shed called “London” but located in rural St. Albans; and, most famous of all, Henry David Thoreau's programmatic house in Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. Should such a history also highlight the travails of Antonio Gramsci and Antonio Negri in their prison cells? What about Ted Kaczynski's notorious Unabomber cabin?) Might we say that the history of this powerful fantasy begins with Saint Jerome's sojourn in the desert, years spent inside a *cave* during which time the Church Father translated the Septuagint into Latin,

thereby giving the world the Vulgate Bible for which he is best remembered today? In the present philosophical exercise, Saint Jerome plays the role of a patron saint of sorts: the first philosopher whose thinking practice was predicated on a *housing* strategy. As one scholar confirms concerning the historical Jerome: “Although Jerome probably did live in a natural cave, it must have been a spacious one, because he tells us himself that he brought his considerable library into the desert with him. Nor was he always alone.”⁸ In many Renaissance depictions of Saint Jerome, we see the original cave transformed into something more akin to a study, a writer’s retreat of sorts—a machine for thinking, prefiguring the outlines of a long history of lived-out philosophical fantasies of escape and retreat: Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s cabin in the forest of Ermenonville, where the philosopher spent the last years of his life, leaving behind, upon his

8 Eugene F. Rice, Jr., *Saint Jerome in the Renaissance* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 10. Jerome became a hermit in the Syrian Desert, somewhere in the neighborhood of Chalcis, between Antioch and Palmyra, living in the wilderness from 372 to 374.

9 A programmatic text, in this regard, is Heidegger’s 1951 lecture “... dichterisch wohnet der Mensch ...” (translated as “... Poetically Man Dwells...”), based on a phrase taken from a late Hölderlin poem. In it, Heidegger noted that “Poetry builds up the very nature of dwelling. Poetry and dwelling not only do not exclude each other; on the contrary, poetry and dwelling belong together, each calling for the other.” In Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 225. Incidentally, Hölderlin also figured prominently in Adorno’s intellectual cosmos, and in the postwar years Adorno, who, as one Heidegger’s most vocal philosophical antagonists, became a member of the Hölderlin Society in June 1963, was even “concerned to snatch [Hölderlin’s poetry] from the jaws of Heidegger’s fundamental ontology,” in the words of one of his biographers. Stefan Müller-Doohm, *Adorno: A Biography* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2005), p. 361.

death in 1778, his incomplete *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*; Alexander Pope’s grotto and Voltaire’s garden; Friedrich Hölderlin’s tower on the Neckar in Tübingen, the poet’s home for thirty-six years after being diagnosed an incurable hypochondriac in 1805 (Hölderlin, of course, was Heidegger’s very own guiding light and patron saint—the Saint Jerome of Todtnauberg⁹); the rooms occupied by Friedrich Nietzsche in the so-called Nietzsche-Haus in Sils Maria, where, in the summer of 1883, much of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* was composed; and finally, a well-known recent incarnation: Arne Naess’s Tvergastein hut high up in the Hallingskarvet mountains in southern Norway, the probable site of conception of his hugely influential concept of “deep ecology.” Building, dwelling, thinking: dwellings built for thinking, all.

Interlude:

of Space

In 1958, the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard published his perennially popular *La poétique de l'espace*, translated as *The Poetics of Space* in 1964. Its opening chapter is titled “The House: From Cellar to Garret. The Significance of the Hut.” In it, Bachelard muses:

[The hut] appears to be the taproot of the function of inhabiting. It is the simplest of human plants, the one that needs no ramifications in order to exist. Indeed, it is so simple that it no longer belongs to our memories—which at times are too full of imagery—but to legend; it is a center of legend. When we are lost in darkness and see a distant glimmer of light, who does not dream of a thatched cottage or, to go more deeply still into legend, of a hermit's hut?

A hermit's hut. What a subject for an engraving! Indeed real images are *engravings*, for it is the imagination that engraves them on our memories. They deepen the recollections we have experienced, which they replace, thus becoming imagined recollections. The hermit's hut is a theme which needs no variations, for at the simplest mention of it, "phenomenological reverberation" obliterates all mediocre resonances. The hermit's hut is an engraving that would suffer from any exaggeration of picturesqueness. Its truth must derive from the intensity of its essence, which is the essence of the verb "to inhabit." The hut immediately becomes centralized solitude, for in the land of legend, there exists no adjoining hut. And although geographers may bring back photographs of hut villages from their travels in distant lands, our legendary past transcends everything that has been seen, everything that we have experienced personally. The image leads us on towards extreme solitude.

The hermit is *alone* before God. His hut, therefore, is just the opposite of the monastery. And there radiates about this centralized solitude a universe of meditation and prayer, a universe outside the universe. The hut can receive none of the riches "of this world." It possesses the felicity of intense poverty; indeed, it is one of the glories of poverty; as destitution increases it gives us access to absolute refuge.¹⁰

10 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 32–33.

Let us now turn to the inhabitants, their poverty and vows.

The Facts:

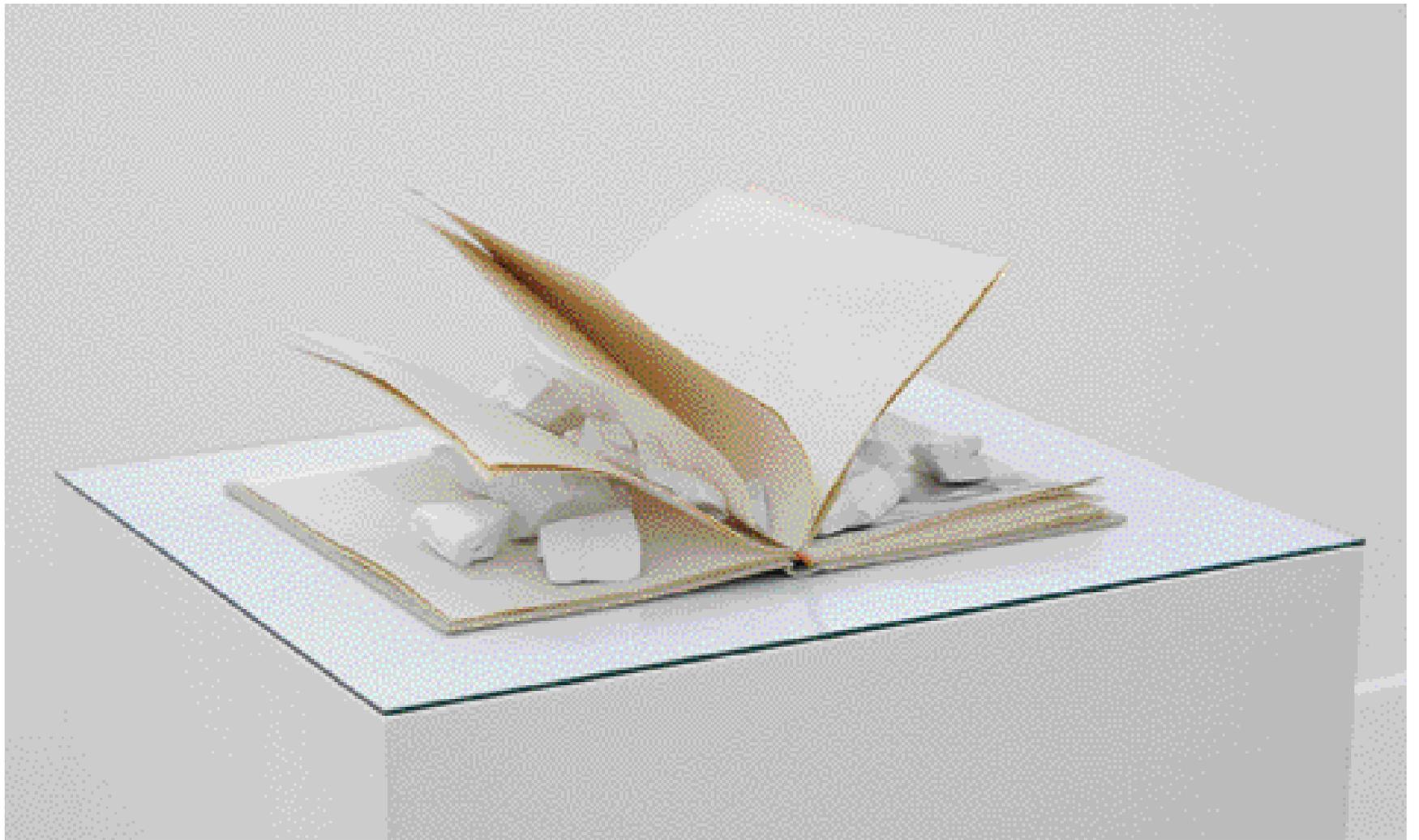


















1.

L.W.

		<i>Writing about Mark Manders' sculptural work in the early 2000s occasioned the author's first in-depth engagement with the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, specifically with regards to the enigma of thingness so central to Manders' world—a universe in which many familiar everyday objects are regularly rendered on a disorienting 88% scale. It is partly in honor of the inspiration derived from Manders' art that the replicas of both Heidegger and Wittgenstein's huts at the heart of this exhibition have been reimagined on the same 88% scale. Concerning the sculpture shown here, the artist has said, "For this work, I ended up giving the femur a small, raised bump so that the cup and the bone could hold a sugar cube. It looks like something has grown out from inside the bone in a way comparable to the relatively slow process during which the handle of the coffee cup evolved. I think it is beautiful how both of them, powerless and armless, hold the sugar cube." The quasi-natural evolutionary process which the artist discerns in the phenomenology of the cup invokes the spirit of Martin Heidegger's widely-publicized fascination with ceramic forms: cups, jars, jugs, pots—vessels of a platonic thingness.</i>	
Previous pages			
Sophie Nys <i>Multiple</i> , 2009	51		<i>a droning voiceover recites fragments from Thomas Bernhard's hypnotic 1985 novel Alte Meister (Old Masters), a pitiless take-down, in part, of Heidegger's petty pastoralism.</i>
Guy Moreton <i>LW 109, Skjolden Norway</i> , 2002 / 2005	52		<i>Guy Moreton's photographs of the landscape surrounding Ludwig Wittgenstein's cabin in Skjolden were made in response to an invitation from the artist and poet Alec Finlay to collaborate on a project seeking to shed light on the thinker's lifelong (and ultimately fruitless) search for his place in the world, philosophical or otherwise. They first appeared in the collaborative project There Where You Are Not, published in 2005 alongside Alec Finlay's poetry and a biographical sketch compiled by Michael Nedo, director of the Wittgenstein Archive in Cambridge—the very place Wittgenstein sought to escape when he first sailed to Norway in 1913.</i>
Mark Manders <i>A Place Where My Thoughts Are Frozen Together</i> , 2002	54		<i>Ludwig Wittgenstein's Head of a Girl is the only sculpture the Austro-British philosopher is known to have made. It dates back to the late 1920s, i.e. around the time Wittgenstein was working on the design of an arch-modernist Viennese townhouse for his sister Margarethe—in whose private collection the sculpture ended up surviving. Both projects, architecture and sculpture, belong to a ten-year gap between philosophical chapters commonly referred to as "Wittgenstein I" and "Wittgenstein II."</i>
Unknown Scholar's rock, n.d.	55		
Sophie Nys <i>Die Hütte</i> , 2007	56, 58		
Goshka Macuga <i>Heidegger</i> , 2018	57		
Jan Bontjes van Beek <i>Bowl</i> , 1960–66	59		
Giulio Paolini <i>L'arte e lo spazio. Quattro illustrazioni per Martin Heidegger (3)</i> , 1983	60		
Gerhard Richter <i>Jan 92</i> , 1992	62		
Guy Moreton <i>LW 205, Skjolden Norway</i> , 2002 / 2005	64		
Ludwig Wittgenstein <i>Head of a Girl</i> , 1925–28	66		

11 Paul Wittgenstein also commissioned single-hand piano compositions by Paul Hindemith, Erich von Korngold and Sergey Prokofiev. Interestingly enough, Ludwig's musical tastes were of a much more conservative bent: he had no interest whatsoever in any music composed post-Brahms (whose clarinet sonatas and quintet were debuted at the Palais Wittgenstein in the Alleegasse, which may well have inspired the philosopher to take up the clarinet himself later in life, as part of his teacher-training in the 1920s), and was especially devoted to the music of the little known, blind Romantic composer Josef Labor. The posthumous anthology of non-philosophical writings *Culture and Value* contains a four-measure composition believed to be the philosopher's own, which one commentator has suggested "the amateur clarinetist probably wrote down as an accompaniment to a recurring phrase of self-doubt." The strongest musical memory associated with Wittgenstein, however, concerns his virtuoso *whistling* skills, which the villagers of Skjolden were apparently especially impressed with.

12 Kimberley Cornish' controversial suggestion, made in his 1998 book *The Jew of Linz*,

Ludwig Wittgenstein was born on April 26, 1889 in Vienna into one of the wealthiest families in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, whose home was frequented by the likes of Johannes Brahms, Gustav Klimt, Arnold Schoenberg and Richard Strauss. As the youngest child in a family of talented and tormented musicians and music lovers—his brother Paul would become famous after losing an arm in World War I combat, as the petulant dedicatee of Maurice Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*¹¹—Ludwig did not initially appear especially gifted. In 1903, he was sent to the Realschule in Linz, possibly crossing paths with Adolf Hitler, six days his senior.¹² Once again, his school marks showed little promise for someone who later came to embody the very idea of tortured genius; remarkably, he only received top marks for *religious* training. (Raised in the family's adopted Catholic faith, Wittgenstein's Jewish ancestry would go on to exert a decisive influence on his later intellectual

that Hitler's juvenile antipathy towards the well-educated scion of a Viennese aristocratic family with Jewish roots played a decisive role in planting the seed of a virulent antisemitism that would lead to *Mein Kampf*, World War II, and ultimately even the Holocaust, has been widely debunked as detective fiction at best.

13 The closest Wittgenstein ever came to life in a religious order was as a gardener in a monastery in Hütteldorf, just outside Vienna, in the spring of 1926, during which time he is said to have lived in a *tool shed*. Years before, during World War I, it had been the experience of reading Leo Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief* while stationed at the eastern front in Galicia that had sharpened Wittgenstein's resolve to give away his vast personal fortune once the war was over (upon his father's death in 1913, Ludwig briefly became the richest man in Austria). To conclude this brief theologico-philosophical excursion: when Wittgenstein finally returned—for good—to Cambridge on January 18, 1929, he was greeted at the station by John Maynard Keynes, who later that day reminisced in a letter to a friend that "God has arrived. I met him on the 5:15 train." Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 255.

development, and religious reflection was to preoccupy him throughout his life: he was a particularly keen reader of Augustine, especially his *Confessions*, and repeatedly toyed with fantasies of *monkhood*¹³.) In 1906, following in the footsteps of his father—steel tycoon and prominent arts patron Karl Wittgenstein—he moved to Berlin to study engineering, followed in 1908 by a move to Manchester, to study aeronautics. Around this time Ludwig began to cultivate an obsession with logic and the philosophical foundations of mathematics, leading to his arrival at Cambridge University's Trinity College in 1911, where he met, and entranced, Bertrand Russell, the presiding doyen of philosophical logic. Russell quickly recognized Wittgenstein's genius—before long the teacher-student relationship was reversed¹⁴. Life in Cambridge would soon prove intolerable for the ascetic, depression-prone and excessively self-doubting Austrian, who, by 1912 was entertaining fantasies of

14 Just three months into his acquaintance with Wittgenstein, Russell wrote in a letter to his lover Lady Ottoline Morrell: "I love him & feel he will solve the problems I am too old to solve [Russell was 40 years old at the time, ed.] ... He is the young man one hopes for." Monk, *op. cit.*, 41.

escape from the constraints of academic life and polite society: somewhere "away" and "outside" that could become a more productive home for his developing brand of thinking—a philosophical revolution in the making.

Wittgenstein first visited Norway in 1913, in late summer in the company of friend and fellow Cambridge student David Pinsent; and a second time in late October, when—boarding a steam ship in Bergen and sailing east—he first set foot in the village of Skjolden at the far end of the Sognefjord. (Skjolden had been suggested to him by the Austro-Hungarian consul in Bergen, Jacob Kroepelien.) Wittgenstein had evidently come to Norway in search of the peace and quiet deemed necessary to prepare for his definitive statement on the logical foundations of language and thought, the *Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung* or *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (the German publication of 1921 was dedicated to Pinsent, who had died in a

piloting accident towards the end of the World War I; the English translation, prefaced by Bertrand Russell, was published in 1922).

Present-day visitors to Skjolden, especially outside of the tourist season, may feel they have reached the end of the world. This was certainly not the case in Wittgenstein's time, when the Lustrafjord, the Sognefjord's northernmost arm, was frequently abuzz with aquatic trade, also of the tourist variety. (Planning this trip with Pinsent, Wittgenstein was adamant they avoid the tourist trail; oddly, they opted for western Norway's well-mapped, thoroughly travelled fjords: prior to World War I, for instance, the German emperor Wilhelm II had visited the fjords for twenty-five consecutive summers.) In any case, during this first stay in Skjolden, while fine-tuning quasi-mystical musings on logic that would culminate, seven years and a world war later, in the *Tractatus*, and hardened in his conviction that he could only do real

15 In letters to his friends in worldly, jovial Cambridge, Wittgenstein would ceaselessly repeat his need for absolute solitude, continually expressing his gratitude for "hardly meeting a soul in this place." This is not exactly true: Wittgenstein made enough friends in the village of Skjolden to become quite fluent in Norwegian over time. As Ray Monk puts it in his authoritative biography: "[Wittgenstein] was not entirely divorced from human contact. But he was—and perhaps this is most important—away from *society*, free from the kind of obligations and expectations imposed by bourgeois life, whether that of Cambridge or that of Vienna." Monk, *op. cit.*, p. 93. It is this hatred of bourgeois society, which evidently also led him to take up a job as an elementary school teacher in a string of Austrian villages in the mid-1920s, that is to say, "after philosophy."

16 In the prologue to his *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein famously claimed that "the *truth* of the thoughts communicated here seems to me unassailable and definitive. I am, therefore, of the opinion that the problem [of philosophy] have in essentials been finally solved." Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. Charles Kay Ogden

philosophical work in exile, so to speak, Wittgenstein decided to build a little house overlooking a body of water called Eidsvatnet, just outside the village proper: a cabin, cottage or hut custom-built on the edge of a mountain for the most demanding of thoughts. (Even the village center had been too lively and loud to Ludwig's liking—a nearby steam-powered lemonade factory in particular would challenge long stretches of concentrated work, come berry-picking season. One day, scouting for a potential construction site, one particularly appealing option was rejected out of hand when he discovered footprints other than his own in the snow.¹⁵) Only in his Norwegian sanctuary, Wittgenstein declared to a puzzled Russell upon returning to Cambridge in October 1913, would it be possible to solve the problems of logic once and for all.¹⁶

(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1922), p. 29. In this essay, I will refrain by and large from discussing the *content* of Wittgenstein's (or Heidegger's, or Adorno's) philosophical thought. In the aforementioned introduction, Wittgenstein helpfully suggests that his book's "whole meaning could be summed up somewhat as follows: What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent." He had in mind the clarity of the villagers' talk and the silence of his hut, no doubt.

Construction began—at the agreed-upon site thirty meters above the water surface; only reachable by a long-winding rocky mountain-path, or by boat across Lake Eidsvatnet, which froze into a walkable surface during winter—under the supervision of Halvard Draegni, the lemonade factory owner, in 1914, and building proceeded largely in the philosopher's absence. The cabin measured seven meters by eight; its dimensions and simple layout (a living room, kitchen, and bedroom) corresponded with that of the area's typical tenant's farm, though the unconventional positioning and gabled roof were somewhat exotic for the befuddled locals, who took to calling the land on which the hut was built "Austria." Even today, maps of the Skjolden area still contain the bizarre marker "Østerrike." No building plans of the house survive; most likely, none ever existed, making it difficult to ascertain Wittgenstein's involvement in its design. (It is hard to imagine the co-author of the afore-

mentioned ultra-modernist Stonborough-Wittgenstein villa, the genesis of which is mired in myriad anecdotes concerning his obsessive, near-fanatical attention to detail, having had no hand in the conception of his Norwegian *machine à penser*. Briefly, in the late 1920s, the former logician was so enamored of the building trade that he styled himself "Ludwig Wittgenstein, architect.") The house was finally finished in the fall of 1914, months after the outbreak of World War I, during which time Wittgenstein volunteered as a gunner in the Austrian army. Another eventful seven years would pass before he finally clapped eyes on his prize; he only returned to Skjolden in 1921, a dramatically changed man: not only had he finished the philosophical work begun in Norway in 1913 and come to the conclusion that his career in philosophy had come to a logical, ethically sanctioned end, he had in the meantime also become an ascetic of necessity rather than choice.

Visiting Skjolden in 1913, he was a fabulously rich man; in 1921, free from the shackles of his family fortune—much of which had been dispersed among luminaries of the Austro-German avant-garde such as Oskar Kokoschka, Adolf Loos, Rainer Maria Rilke, and George Trakl—his was truly a hand-to-mouth existence, kept afloat by work in Draegni’s lemonade factory and odd jobs in a carpentry workshop.

Repeated visits to Skjolden and the hut followed in 1931, 1936, 1937—during which time he was preoccupied primarily with the “philosophical investigations” of everyday language, to be published posthumously, as *Philosophische Untersuchungen*—and, accompanied by a former medicine student named Ben Richards, in 1950. (Only three pictures exist of Wittgenstein’s hut; one of them was taken by Richards while rowing across the lake.) Plans to visit Skjolden again the year after were cut short by his worsening medical condition, and on April 29,

1951, Wittgenstein died in Cambridge, three days after his 62nd birthday. Years earlier Wittgenstein had left the house to Arne Bolstad; his family now took possession of it, and in 1958 the cabin was dismantled, brought down the cliff using the same pulley system installed there in 1921, and reassembled in the village center, where it stood, unrecognizable in its coarse cladding of asbestos and minus the original balcony, for around fifty years. Those who visit “Østerrike” today see little more than the (by now quasi-famous) stone base on which the hut once stood, the breath-taking view of Eidsvatnet, Skjolden, and the pit of the Sognefjord beyond it. Attempts to rebuild the house—whose wooden components I was able to see stored away, like a jigsaw, in Skjolden in October 2017—on its original site may bear fruit.

2. M.H.

Martin Heidegger was born on September 26, 1889 in the small town of Messkirch in the Upper Danube and Swabian Alps region, to the village sexton and his farmer wife. At an early age Martin and his younger brother Fritz were enlisted to help their father out with running the village church, the most fondly remembered task being the ringing of the church bells. Neither rich nor poor but solidly lower middle class, the Heidegger family was encouraged by the parish priest to send their gifted elder son to the Catholic seminary in nearby Constance, and later to the archiepiscopal convent in Freiburg: his was ostensibly going to be a clerical career. In 1909, Heidegger enrolled in the university of nearby Freiburg to study philosophy and theology, where he was first exposed to the work of Edmund Husserl, the founding father of modern phenomenology and eventual dedicatee of his magnum opus *Sein und Zeit*, published in 1927. (This was followed, in 1928, by Heidegger taking over Husserl's position at his alma mater.)

Although he abandoned his plans to become a priest shortly after entering the university, a decisive break with the “system of Catholicism” only occurred in 1919, after he had spent the war years working in the censorship office. In 1923, Heidegger took up an academic post in Marburg—the first time he left his beloved Black Forest region behind for a longer period—where he met and famously fell in love with his student Hannah Arendt, who would much later, with unwarranted generosity, describe her former mentor’s philosophy as a “gale” blowing in from times immemorial, primordial—“not of our century.”¹⁷ At this point in time, Heidegger had already been married for a number of years and fathered two sons, and it appears to have been his wife Elfride who was a driving, guiding force behind the philosopher’s decision, made sometime around the moment of his appointment to the chair in Marburg—indeed, *because* of his impending appointment to a chair in Marburg—to build a hut for himself in the Black Forest village of Todtnauberg.

17 Ursula Ludz (ed.), *Hannah Arendt & Martin Heidegger: Letters 1925-1975* (New York: Harcourt, 2003), pp. 148–162.

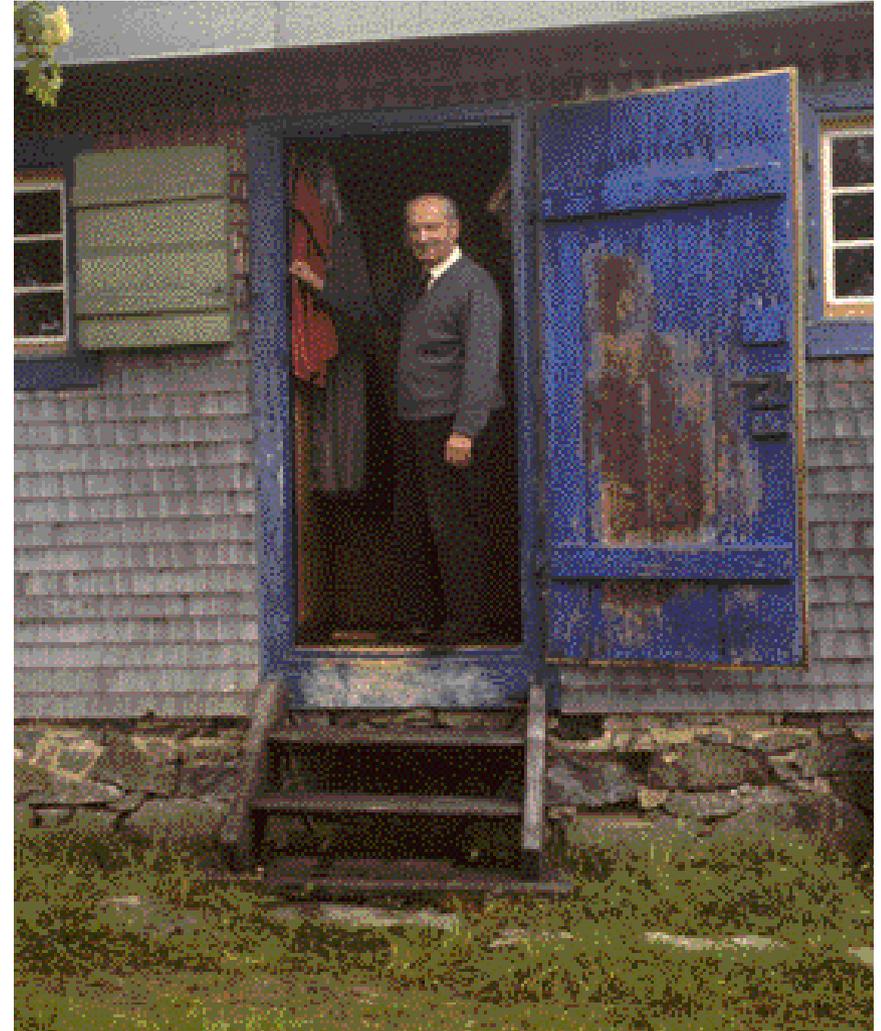
18 This text, originally written as a radio address explaining his reasons for rejecting an offer to join the university in Berlin and stay in his beloved Freiburg instead, is reproduced in this volume on pp. 323–330.

19 Adam Sharr, *Heidegger’s Hut* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006), p. 54. Much of what follows is based on Sharr’s comprehensive study of the building, the dwelling, and the thinking.

(She was certainly the one “organizing and supervising” construction, which Heidegger does not appear to have been involved with much. For a philosopher so singularly devoted to thinking, building, equipment, the present-at-hand and ready-to-hand, he seems to have been rather hands-off here.) The region was of course well-known to the proudly parochial Heidegger—the author, in later years, of a tract defiantly titled “Why Do I Stay in the Provinces?”¹⁸—and a photograph taken of the young philosopher in confident conversation with Edmund Husserl in the summer of 1921 just outside of Todtnauberg confirms that a philosophical context, so to speak, was already in place. (“Also, more practically for a commuting academic, the locality has the only railway in the Black Forest highlands.”¹⁹) In any case, the hut, which was finished and taken into use in the summer of 1922, would provide an all-important refuge for *thinking* now that Heidegger was fully embarked on a career in academic *philosophy*—

20 Heidegger's oft-quoted (but probably much less widely read) contribution to architectural theory and the philosophy of the built environment, *Building Dwelling Thinking*, is a typical example: published in 1954 as "Bauen Wohnen Denken," it was based on a lecture given in Darmstadt in 1951 as part of a colloquium dedicated to thinking "Man and Space." The text contains references to Schwarzwald building traditions, singles out homelessness as a quintessentially modern affliction in both philosophical terms and the acute sense of postwar Germany, and asserts that "dwelling is the basic character of Being in keeping with which mortals exist" — etcetera. Another locally flavored sample sentence or two: "Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build. Let us think for a while of a farmhouse in the Black Forest, which was built some two hundred years ago by the dwelling of peasants. Here the self-sufficiency of the power to let earth and heaven, divinities and mortals enter in simple oneness into things, ordered the house." See Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 158.

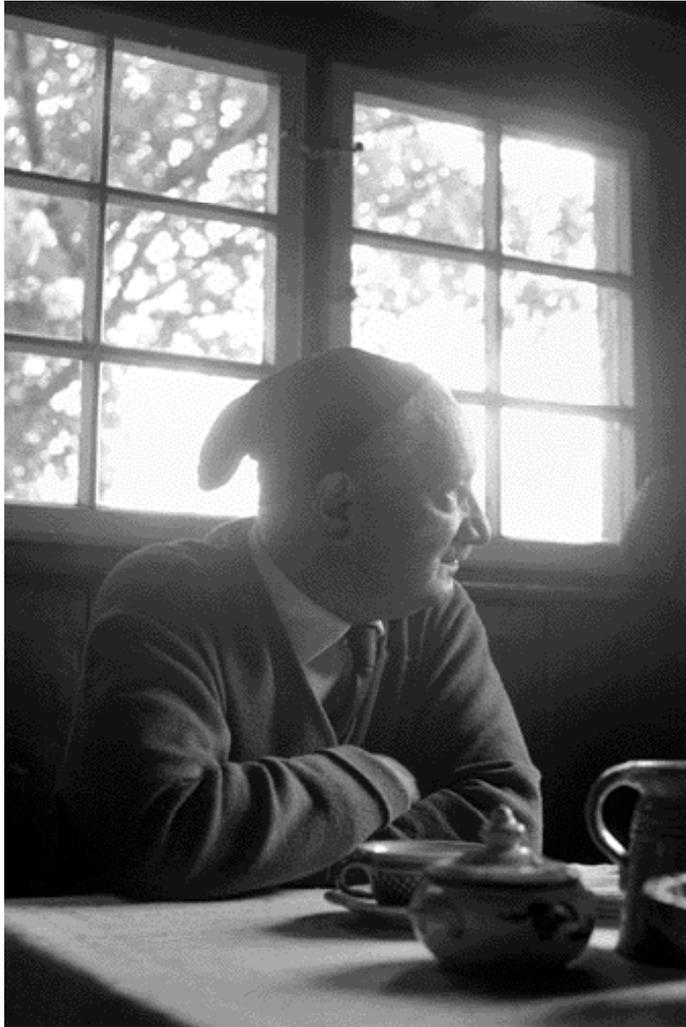
a home for philosophizing away from the bureaucratic toil of the German *Professoriat* in Marburg and later Freiburg. Indeed, it is here, among the gently rolling hills of the *Schwarzwald*, among its peasants and farming families, that much of the groundwork was laid for his most famous and influential work, *Being and Time*, for instance—and from then on, Heidegger's life would unfurl almost exclusively between the symbolic opposites of Freiburg and Todtnauberg, a mere forty kilometers apart—with the nadir of his Nazi affiliation as the university's short-lived rector doubtlessly counting as Freiburg's darkest hour: "city" and "country," inside(r) and outside(r), but also, just as importantly, "lowlands" and "mountains" of course. (*Kultur* versus *Zivilization*? *Gemeinschaft* versus *Gesellschaft*?) The even more enigmatic, gnomic philosophical utterances that together constitute "late," i.e. postwar Heidegger, could scarcely have dreamt of a more fitting place of conception: not just *out* there, but also, notably, *up* there.²⁰











Previous pages:

Digne Meller Marcovicz

Martin Heidegger in his hut in Todtnauberg, 1966–68 83

Martin Heidegger in his hut in Todtnauberg with his wife Elfride, 1966–68 84

Martin Heidegger's desk in the Todtnauberg hut, 1966–68 86

Martin Heidegger with his wife Elfride in Todtnauberg, 1966–68 88

Martin Heidegger in his hut in Todtnauberg, 1966–68 90

Digne Meller Marcovicz famously visited Martin and Elfride Heidegger in their Freiburg villa and Schwarzwald mountain home in the fall of 1966 and summer of 1968 for an extensive photo shoot organized in conjunction with Heidegger's notorious *Der Spiegel* interview—a conversation so candid, in the eyes of the philosopher, that it could only be published after his death in May 1976. Heidegger evidently appears to have enjoyed posing for Marcovicz' camera, playing the rustic hermit with at times uncharacteristically jocular levity.

Heidegger's hut was not just meant to be erected *outside* the stifling circle of polite, academic philosophical society, so to speak, but also *above* the proverbial treeline of urban convention and lowlander pragmatism. (Wittgenstein had his cabin likewise built on a perch.) Here too, the sage of Todtnauberg tapped into a well-established imaginary tradition of opposing the virtues of mountain air to the corrupting miasma of harbors and low-lying metropolises with their roving populations of rootless cosmopolitans of all stripes. The single most powerful summation of this complex, so clearly rooted in Nietzsche's Zarathustra and other tropes of 19th-century romanticism, can be found in Thomas Mann's magisterial Bildungsroman *The Magic Mountain*, first published in 1924, at the height of our philosophical protagonists' intellectual notoriety. (Wittgenstein was already a village schoolteacher in the mountains south of Vienna at the time.) Mann famously set his Nobel-Prize-winning

21 This fascinating encounter is the subject of an entire book, Peter E. Gordon's aptly titled *Continental Divide: Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). Cassirer was trained as a philosopher in the Neo-Kantian bastion of Marburg, where, years later, "Heidegger cut a striking figure [...] in his personal appearance. On winter days he could be seen walking out of the town with his skis shouldered. Occasionally he would turn up for his lectures in his skiing outfit." In Rüdiger Safranski, *Heidegger: Between Good and Evil* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 131. The only photograph documenting the aforementioned meeting shows both thinkers posing in front of a wall full of *skis*. For more on Heidegger's relationship to skiing, see note 30.

22 In a discussion of Heidegger's wish to reorient himself after the disappointments of the post-1933 political scene and the fiasco of his Nazi *Rektorat* in particular—raising the question, not so much of *what*, but rather of *where* to think next—Rüdiger Safranski observes "the places of his thinking can be quite accurately determined: an imaginary and a real place—ancient Greece of his philosophy and his province, more accurately

novel in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos, the setting of a widely reported confrontation, in 1929, between Ernst Cassirer and Martin Heidegger, an urbane Jew representing the sobriety and economic achievement of Hamburg and other cities like it versus the diminutive prophet of philosophical mountain-scaling.²¹ Huts belong to mountains like cities to the plains.

Heidegger made a number of journeys abroad in the postwar period (most notably to Greece, the long longed-for spiritual home²²), and frequent lectures in Bremen, Munich and elsewhere, but overall his was indeed a life defiantly, almost theatrically, lived in the provinces, away from both the traditional centers of power and hubs of forward-looking cultural production, and when he died, aged 86, on May 26, 1976, it surprised no one that his last wishes had included a traditional Catholic funeral and interment in the village cemetery of Messkirch.

Todtnauberg"—which Safranski accurately calls the "snail's house of his philosophy." Rüdiger Safranski, *op. cit.*, pp. 277–279. Let us return, also, to Nietzsche's quote with which this essay begins. "German philosophy as a whole [...] is the most fundamental form of romanticism and homesickness that has ever been. [...] One is no longer at home anywhere." It continues: "at last one longs back for that place in which alone one can be at home, because it is the only place in which one would want to be at home: the Greek world!"

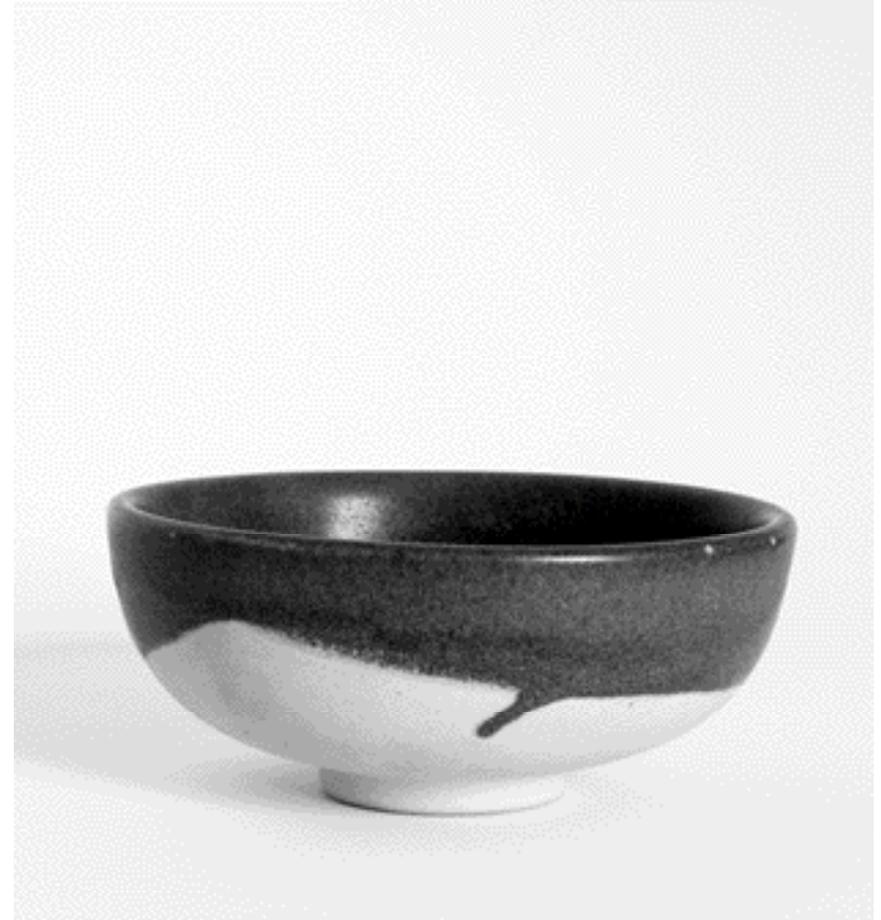
23 *A door handle*. Was the photographer of this image aware of the iconic stature of the door handles in Wittgenstein's modernist Viennese villa? Perhaps not. In an essay titled "Wittgenstein's Handles," Christopher Benfey pointedly asks: "What was it about handles—door-handles, axe-handles, the handles of pitchers and vases—that transfixed thinkers in Vienna and Berlin during the early decades of the 20th century, echoing earlier considerations of handles in America and ancient Greece?" Indeed, Benfey points out, "to details like the door-handles, in particular, Wittgenstein accorded what [Ray] Monk calls "an almost fanatical exactitude," driving locksmiths and engineers to tears as they

Heidegger's hut, which its primary exegete Adam Sharr has accurately termed "a philosophical event as much as an architectural one," still stands today on the edge of a forest about a kilometer outside of the village of Todtnauberg proper, at an elevation of around twelve hundred meters. Its location can hardly be called remote—so much for the philosophical drama of retreat, one might be tempted to think—yet the hut itself is surprisingly hard to find. A loosely circling network of Heidegger paths and Heidegger walking routes is draped across the valley, yet there are no actual signs pointing the way *towards* the hut—only a single board (adorned with a photograph of a door handle, of all things²³) that hints at its presence somewhere behind this clump of trees or that, reminding the eager pilgrim that the hut itself is sited on private property: the hut is not a museum, but still in the hands of the Heidegger family, and clearly still in holidaying use.

sought to meet his seemingly impossible standards. The unpainted tubular door-handle that Wittgenstein designed for Gretl's house remains the prototype for all such door-handles, still popular in the 21st century." See www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/05/24/wittgensteins-handles. I personally first got to see said door handle photographed on the cover of an early Dutch translation of the *Tractatus*, my introduction to Wittgenstein's world.

24 Sharr, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

"No trespassing." (The best way to see the hut is from a trail running along the opposite side of the valley; this view captures something of the original sense of the hut's isolation.) The hut measures approximately six meters by seven and is made of timber, framed and clad with timber shingles underneath a distinctive roof that is almost as high as the walls; "the building surveys the landscape, sheltered and framed by trees."²⁴ When I visited the hut in November 2017, a mere week after visiting the site of Wittgenstein's erstwhile hut in Norway—two very different ideas of retreat indeed—the doors and window panes seemed newly painted in the same deep-bright blue familiar to us from the color photographs made by Digne Meller Marcovicz in the late 1960s, when the German-Jewish photographer and daughter of the Bauhaus-trained ceramist Jan Bontjes van Beek was sent to portray the aging Heidegger couple in their Todtnauberg mountain home



Previous page:
Jan Bontjes van Beek
Bowl, 1953–69 95

Jan Bontjes van Beek was a leading modernist ceramist and the father, through his marriage to German-Jewish interior architect Rahel-Maria Weisbach, of photographer Digne Meller Marcovicz. (A daughter from an earlier marriage, Cato Bontjes van Beek, was executed by the Nazis in Berlin-Plötzensee prison in 1943 for her antifascist activities.) Attentive pottery enthusiasts will doubtlessly notice the strategically placed crockery in many of the photographs Marcovicz made of Heidegger in his hut. Though Bontjes van Beek's stoneware would probably have struck the philosopher as too sleek, too modern, possibly too urban, it is nonetheless worth noting Heidegger's long-standing infatuation with the potter's primal imagery and generalized ceramic metaphors: a seminal post-war text tersely titled "Das Ding" plainly asks, and replies, "What is a thing? [...] The jug is a thing." A more widely read essay on the "origin of the work of art," published in 1936, likewise invoked the figure of the jug as the artful quintessence of thingness.

for a series of photographs meant to accompany a lengthy interview with German weekly *Der Spiegel*. (I am mentioning the fact of Meller Marcovicz' ceramist-father in recognition of Heidegger's well-publicized obsession with the philosophical imagery of ceramics, and of crockery in particular: it is tempting to imagine some of Bontjes van Beek's jars and jugs and vases and bowls aligned on the Heidegger family's dining table.) These photographs now constitute the most extensive record to date of life in Heidegger's hut. The *Spiegel* interview took place on September 23, 1966, and was granted on condition that it be published only after the philosopher's death. It finally appeared in print on May 31, 1976, under the provocative title "Nur noch ein Gott kann uns retten," or "Only a God Can Save Us."²⁵ Partly on the basis of Meller Marcovicz' photographs, it is possible to draw up a floor plan of the hut: a *Vorraum* with a table and chairs,

25 The title for the interview was taken from the following sequence: "philosophy will be unable to effect any immediate change in the current state of the world. This is true not only of philosophy but of all purely human reflection and endeavor. Only a god can save us. The only possibility available to us is that by thinking and poetizing we prepare a readiness for the appearance of a god, or for the absence of a god in [our] decline, insofar as in view of the absent god we are in a state of decline." In Thomas Sheehan (ed.), *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker* (Chicago, ILL: Precedent Press, 1981), p. 66.

26 Besides the image of a young woman in *Schwarzwalder Tracht*, the only other picture found on the walls of Heidegger's hut appears to have been a portrait of Johann Peter Hebel, a local poet best remembered for his *Alemannische Gedichte* ("Alemannic poems") rendered in the juicy dialect of Heidegger's Heimat. Hebel, as it so happens, also ranked among Wittgenstein's favorite writers; the latter frequently gave out copies of Hebel's *Schatzkästlein*, a treasure trove of folksy anecdotes and pastorals, to friends and acquaintances alongside Tolstoy's *Gospel in Brief*. Johann Peter Hebel also makes a couple of appearances, finally,

where guests could be served something to drink or eat; a cooking area that also contains a bed; the main bedroom, tightly packed with four beds, above which at one point a picture of a young woman in traditional Black Forest garb was hung; and the philosopher's study, its bookshelves oddly empty, its window looking out across the eastern end of the valley.²⁶ The first object to encounter the gaze outside this window is almost as famous, or rather emblematic, as the hut itself: the well, with its hollowed-out log and a wood-carved star atop its spout—the *Sternwürfel* ("star-crowned die") immortalized by the great German-Jewish poet Paul Celan in his elegiac *Todtnauberg*, written shortly after visiting the former, unrepentant Nazi party member in his mountain retreat in the summer of 1967:

in Adorno's writings, where he is credited, at some point, with having written "one of the most beautiful pieces of prose in defense of the Jews that was ever written in German." In Theodor Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 54.

27 Taken from *Breathturn into Timestead: The Collected Later Poetry*, trans. Pierre Joris (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014). Not surprisingly, Heidegger's hut has attracted its fair share of literary attention in the German-speaking world after Celan's epochal passing: in 1992, the Austrian Nobel Prize-winning novelist Elfriede Jelinek wrote a play titled *Totenauberg* restaging a meeting between Heidegger and his Jewish lover Arendt in an unidentified Alpine setting; a more widely known caricature of the hut-loving Heidegger is trotted out in *Alte Meister* (Old Masters), a satirical short novel published by Jelinek's compatriot Thomas Bernhard in 1985. Here are two representative excerpts: "Heidegger, after whom the wartime and post-war generations have been chasing, showering him with revolting and stupid doctoral theses even in his lifetime—I always visualize him sitting on his wooden bench outside his Black Forest house, alongside his wife who, with her

Arnica, eyebright, the
draft from the well with the
star-die on top,

in the
Hütte,

written in the book
—whose name did it record

before mine?—,

in this book
the line about
a hope, today,
for a thinker's
word

to come,
in the heart,

forest sward, unleveled,
orchis and orchis, singly,

raw exchanges, later, while driving,
clearly,

he who drives us, the mensch,
he also hears it,

the half-
trod log-
trails on the highmoor,

humidity,
much.²⁷

perverse knitting enthusiasm, ceaselessly knits winter socks for him from the wool she has shorn from their own Heidegger sheep. I cannot visualize Heidegger other than sitting on the bench outside his Black Forest house, alongside his wife, who all her life totally dominated him and who knitted all his socks and crocheted all his caps and baked all his bread and wove all his bedlinen and who even cobbled up his sandals for him. [...] Heidegger in his worn plus-fours in front of that lie of a log cabin at Todtnauberg is all I have left as an unmasking photograph, the philosophical philistine with his crocheted black Black Forest cap on his head, under which, when all is said and done, nothing but German feeble-mindedness is warmed up over and over again." In fact, Bernhard repeatedly returns, in his signature manic style, to the topic of Digne Meller Marcovicz' photographs: "Heidegger is a good example of how nothing is left but a number of ridiculous photographs," and "I have seen a series of photographs which a supremely talented woman photographer made of Heidegger, who in all of them looked like a retired bloated staff officer." Thomas Bernhard, *Old Masters*, trans. Ewald Osers (Chicago, ILL: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

28 Sharr, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

Adam Sharr relates the following account of Celan's meeting with Heidegger, quoting from John Felsteiner's 1995 biography of the poet: "Heidegger told me," says Hans-Georg Gadamer, "that in the Black Forest, Celan was better informed on plants and animals than he himself was." They also talked about contemporary French philosophy, but Celan's attention was elsewhere. [...] The Jewish *Dichter* [poet] accompanied the German *Denker* [thinker] to his mountain retreat at Todtnauberg, noticed midsummer blossomings along the way, took a drink from Heidegger's much publicized well with its star-shaped wooden cube on top, and signed the guestbook "with a hope for a coming word in the heart."²⁸ The "coming word" in Celan's heart (and in that of countless others, no doubt) would have been one of repentance and shame over past sins. But of course Heidegger never expressed any public remorse over his activist role in the early years of the Third Reich—



29 There is no definitive proof that Arendt, a regular guest after the war in Heidegger's Freiburg home, ever visited the hut; it seems unlikely, judging from the tone of her correspondence with Karl Jaspers in the immediate postwar years: "This living in Todtnauberg, ranting against civilization, and writing *Sein* with a 'y' is surely in reality just the bolt-hole into which he has withdrawn, because he rightly assumes that there he needs to see only those people who make a pilgrimage to him full of admiration; surely hardly anyone will climb 1200 meters just to make a scene." Quoted in Safranski, *op.cit.*, p. 374.

30 Heidegger appears to have been especially enchanted with those passages in Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*—a Heideggerian title if ever there was one, of course—in which he philosophized about *skiing*, something Heidegger himself had briefly considered doing in his early Marburg years (but, according to Safranski, "in the end had lacked the courage to do in a published work"). At some point Heidegger wrote to Sartre: "It would be great if you could come and see us in the course of the winter. We might jointly philosophize in our small ski hut and from there make ski tours in the Black Forest." Similarly, in a letter sent to Cambridge don

and Celan committed suicide by drowning himself in the Seine in Paris on April 20, 1970, Adolf Hitler's birthday. In any case, in this guest book, Celan may have come across the names and signatures of other luminaries of German-Jewish culture such as Hannah Arendt and Herbert Marcuse: the hut had already become something like a site of philosophical pilgrimage.²⁹ In earlier years, Husserl, Gadamer, Karl Jaspers and Karl Löwith were all regular visitors; after the war, a planned visit to Todtnauberg by Jean-Paul Sartre was called off at the last minute, though both Alain Resnais (!) and Jean-François Lyotard managed to make the pilgrimage to Heidegger's Black Forest retreat—a telltale sign that the royal road of Heidegger's philosophical revalidation would wind through Paris.³⁰ A guest book that "reads like a veritable catalogue of 20th-century European intellectual history"³¹—a very different kind of retreat, in short, than that envisaged,



G. E. Moore from Skjolden in January 1914, Ludwig Wittgenstein noted that he was learning to ski and found it “great fun.” *A philosophy of skiing* may be worth the initiating effort after all... As for Lyotard’s memory of his Todtnauberg experience: “I remember a sly peasant in his Hütte, dressed in traditional costume, of sententious speech and shifty eye, apparently lacking in shame and anxiety, protected by his knowledge and flattered by his disciple. This picture was enough to prevent me from becoming a ‘Heideggerian’.” Jean-François Lyotard, *Political Writings* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 137.

31 Charles Bambach, *Heidegger’s Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 1.

Previous pages:

Digne Meller Marcovicz
Martin Heidegger collecting water from the well of his hut in Todtnauberg, 1966–68

100

Digne Meller Marcovicz
Martin Heidegger in front of his hut in Todtnauberg, 1966–68

102

realized and practiced by Heidegger’s exact contemporary and seeming philosophical antipode Ludwig Wittgenstein: the idea of Wittgenstein inviting a photographer, say, into his Skjolden abode to chronicle his thinking life there is quite simply inconceivable—leading one to look back at Heidegger’s hut not just as a philosophical statement in wood and stone, but also as a rhetorical device or theatrical ploy: the stage on which the philosopher was able to choreograph the *drama* of retreat for the camera, for the world’s watching eye—escape and exile, in essence, as *performance*.

Sometime in the late 1960s—shortly after Digne Meller Marcovicz’ second and last visit to Todtnauberg, perhaps—as Heidegger’s old age began to make traveling back and forth between Freiburg and the *Schwarzwald* countryside an increasingly challenging prospect, the hut began to recede from the horizon of the philosopher’s daily life, which became largely limited to

his villa in Freiburg. Eventually, a small single-story structure—the cost of which Elfride Heidegger briefly considered to cover with the sale of the *Being and Time* manuscript to an American University—was built in the garden of his residence on the Röt buckweg to provide a comfortable setting for the waning years of his life. It is here that Heidegger must have written down the last utterance, as far as we know, in his own hand—a greeting on the occasion of the awarding of Messkirch’s honorary citizenship to the Freiburg professor of theology Bernhard Welte: “Cordial greetings to the new honorary citizen of their common hometown Messkirch—Bernhard Welte—from an older one... May this feastday of homage be joyful and life-giving. May the contemplative spirit of all participants be unanimous. For there is need for contemplation whether and how, in the age of a uniform technological world civilization, there can still be such a thing as home.”³²

32 Safranski, *op. cit.*, p. 432.







IIO



III



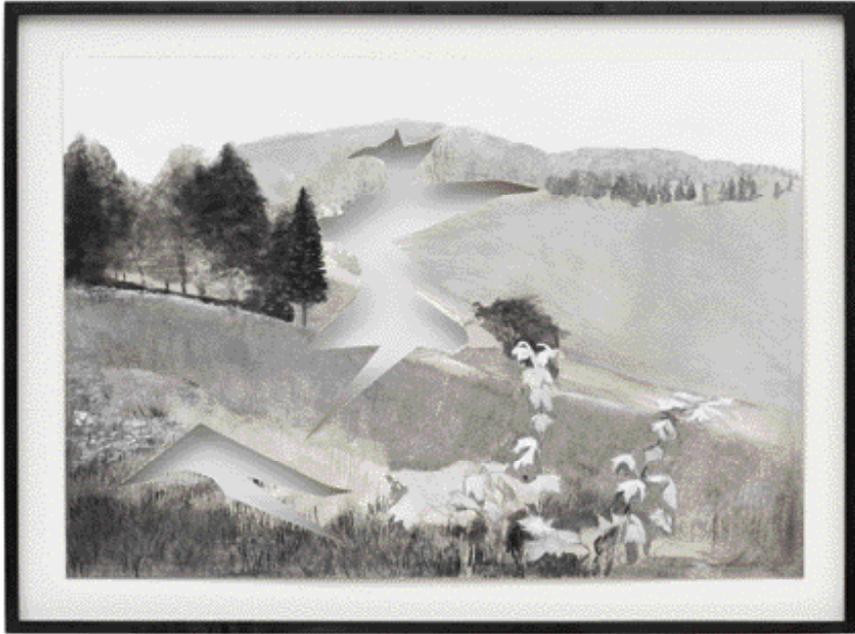
112



113

3.

T.A.



33 Stefan Müller-Doohm, *Adorno: A Biography* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2005), p. 39.

Previous pages

Paolo Chiasera

Condensed Heidegger's Hut,
2009 107, 108, 110

Condensed Heidegger's Hut,
2009 109

Spazierstock, 2009 112

Heidegger's Walk 5, 2009 113

Heidegger's Walk 2, 2009 114

Paolo Chiasera's *Condensed Heidegger's Hut* is a multi-faceted work built around a life-size replica of Martin Heidegger's cabin that was constructed on a vacant lot behind the artist's Berlin gallery in September 2009. In a first phase of the project, the hut was burnt down, the resulting ashes used to produce a monochrome gray painting that conjures the fiery logic of the philosophy of transformation of one of Heidegger's pre-Socratic teachers, Heraclitus (nicknamed "the obscure"). In a second phase, Chiasera created a series of elliptical drawings imagining the Black Forest landscape Heidegger would have taken in during one of the many rambles around his mountain retreat. The ghost of philosophy's deep historical relationship to walking haunts the ensemble's lone sculptural presence, an artist's impression of the oracular thinker's walking stick.

Theodor Adorno was born Thomas Ludwig Wiesengrund-Adorno on Friday September 11, 1903 in Frankfurt am Main to an assimilated Jewish father running a successful wine-exporting business and a Catholic mother of Corsican descent who instilled into their only child a life-long love of music. (He only became Theodor W. Adorno in the course of the 1930s, while applying for US citizenship.) Young Wiesengrund's upbringing and youth were a cosmopolitan, sheltered affair that seems to have been impacted only faintly and indirectly by the upheavals of World War I, the dissolution of the German Empire, and the frenetic, frenzied crises of the early Weimar years. ("Did Adorno even notice that, from the summer of 1922 on, inflation had begun to transform urban life in Frankfurt?" his biographer Stefan Müller-Doohm pointedly asks.³³) In the early twenties, he enrolled in the Hoch Conservatory, studying composition with Bernhard

Sekles and piano with Eduard Jung and dashing off string quartets in the staccato style of the Second Viennese School. The music of Alban Berg would prove especially influential, and in 1925 Adorno departed for Vienna to continue his musical studies there under Berg's guidance—but not before obtaining his doctorate in philosophy at the university of Frankfurt with a thesis on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. Adorno must have been minimally aware of Heidegger's work at the time, in other words, though it wouldn't be until much later that he would engage Heidegger's philosophy head on. (It would have been harder, during his time immersed in Vienna's dazzling musical life, to catch a glimpse of Wittgenstein's presence, if only metaphorically—but not impossible. Berg would certainly have been aware of the Wittgenstein family's musical legacy.) Returning to Frankfurt in the late 1920s, Adorno finally decided to choose the path of philosophy once

and for all with a *Habilitationsschrift* on Kierkegaard—the basis for his first properly philosophical work, published in 1933 under the title *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic*. (Its publication coincided with the notorious Enabling Act of 1933, awarding the newly elected chancellor Adolf Hitler full dictatorial powers.) In the meantime, Adorno had befriended the likes of Walter Benjamin and Max Horkheimer; the latter had been appointed director in 1930 of the Institut für Sozialforschung, the institutional home of what was to become the so-called Frankfurter Schule of Critical Theory with which Adorno's name would forever after be associated. Because of the Institute's solidly Jewish pedigree and its members' Marxist leanings, its work was forced underground soon after the Nazi seizure of power, its leading theorists scattered abroad in exile in the UK and US—an experience of radical, violent uprooting and homelessness that would haunt Adorno's

34 Müller-Doohm again, with exquisite terseness: “[Adorno] now took the opportunity created by his stay in Oxford to become better acquainted with modern analytical philosophy, in particular that of G. E. Moore, as well as the history of logic. It is not clear how deep his studies went. He did not come in contact with Wittgenstein, who was a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.” *Op. cit.*, p. 193. A. J. Ayer, another figurehead of the Anglo-Saxon analytical tradition in philosophy, “recalled in his autobiography that no one in Oxford took [Adorno] seriously but regarded him as a dandy.” Stuart Jeffries, *Grand Hotel Abyss: The Lives of the Frankfurt School* (London: Verso, 2017), p. 122. Jeffries likewise dwells on the sadly missed opportunity of Adorno meeting Wittgenstein while in shared exile: “A great shame: they had so much in common—their negative philosophical sensibilities, cultural iconoclasm and pessimism. What's more, given Wittgenstein's temper and Adorno's waspishness, the former's lack of interest in dialectical method and the latter's scorn for what he took as English philosophy's positivism, the results of any meeting between the two would probably not have been pretty. Wittgenstein was charged with having attacked Karl Popper

thought in particular until his death in the Swiss Alps (!) decades later. (“The highest form of morality is not to feel at home in one's own home.”)

Adorno's first port of call on his fifteen-year odyssey through an Anglophone world that would in essence always stay foreign to him was Oxford, where he was once again returned to a study of Husserlian phenomenology. Working closely with the analytic philosopher Gilbert Ryle there, Adorno must have been exposed to the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who was back at Trinity College in nearby Cambridge at the time—though there are no records of them ever meeting.³⁴ (Ryle and Wittgenstein were on friendly terms for most of the 1930s, though Ryle would later come to lament Wittgenstein's “detrimental” influence on his students.) During his four-year stay in the UK, he also met with Heidegger's old philosophical antagonist Ernst Cassirer. In February 1938, following in the footsteps of his primary

with a poker during a meeting at the Cambridge Moral Sciences Club; what he would have done to Adorno is anybody's guess."

35 Adorno's address in New York was 290, Paul Wittgenstein's 310, and Arendt's 370 Riverside Drive. They never met: "der kommt uns nicht ins Haus," Arendt is reported to have said about her contemporary; she denounced the entire Frankfurter Schule coterie as "truly an abominable crowd." Safranski, *op. cit.*, p. 417.

interlocutor Max Horkheimer, Adorno sailed for New York, initially taking up residence on Riverside Drive, where he may or may not have bumped into Paul Wittgenstein, another recent transatlantic arrival. Hannah Arendt was another forced newcomer to New York's Upper West Side during his sojourn there (they all lived literally blocks away from each other), though it is unlikely that they would have sought out each other's company much: Arendt famously lashed out at Adorno, describing him as "half-Jewish and one of the most repulsive human beings I know," in a letter to Karl Jaspers about the postwar fate of their former friend and mentor Martin Heidegger.³⁵ In any case, soon after, in winter 1941 Adorno journeyed further west, to Los Angeles, where he would settle down in the city's Pacific Palisades neighborhood, later dubbed "Weimar on the Pacific" because of its dense population of German literary and musical luminaries exiled to this sun-kissed, palm-tree-lined edge of the

36 The daily lives of the German émigré community of 1940s Hollywood—really the subject for another essay, another exhibition—is the stuff of legend, chronicled most compellingly in Ehrhard Bahr's *Weimar on the Pacific: German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008) and, less scholarly but no less enlighteningly, John Russell Taylor's *Strangers in Paradise: The Hollywood Emigrés, 1933–1950* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983). Another key source is Salka Viertel's memoir *The Kindness of Strangers: A Theatrical Life, Vienna – Berlin – Hollywood*, published in 1969. Viertel was the sister of the Polish-Jewish pianist Eduard Steuermann, Adorno's old music teacher in Vienna and a prominent advocate of Schoenberg's twelve-tone composing technique in America later on.

37 *Minima Moralia* was published in 1951, the same year Heidegger delivered his "Bauen Wohnen Denken" lecture. In the short vignette "Refuge for the Homeless" (reproduced in its entirety elsewhere in this book), Adorno bluntly states: "Dwelling, in the proper sense, is now impossible. [...] The house is past." Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*:

old Western world after 1933. Indeed, Adorno lived a literal stone's throw away from Bertolt Brecht, Hanns Eisler—with whom he co-wrote a book, published in 1947, titled *Composing for the Films*—Otto Klemperer, Thomas Mann, Arnold Schoenberg and other aristocrats of the Austro-German Geist.³⁶ One could speculate that Adorno's perfectly nondescript bungalow located on 316 South Kenter Avenue is perhaps the closest the cantankerous critic ever got to a hut of his own; it certainly has something of the Hieronymian desert oasis about it, a perfect "refuge for the homeless," as the title of one of his entries in his acerbic anthology *Minima Moralia* would have it.³⁷ (In a letter to the American composer Virgil Thomson dated October 21, 1942, Adorno wrote: "We live in a quiet nice little house in Brentwood, not far, by the way, from Schoenberg's place."³⁸) Accepting the fundamental and irreconcilable absurdity of having to live and work under

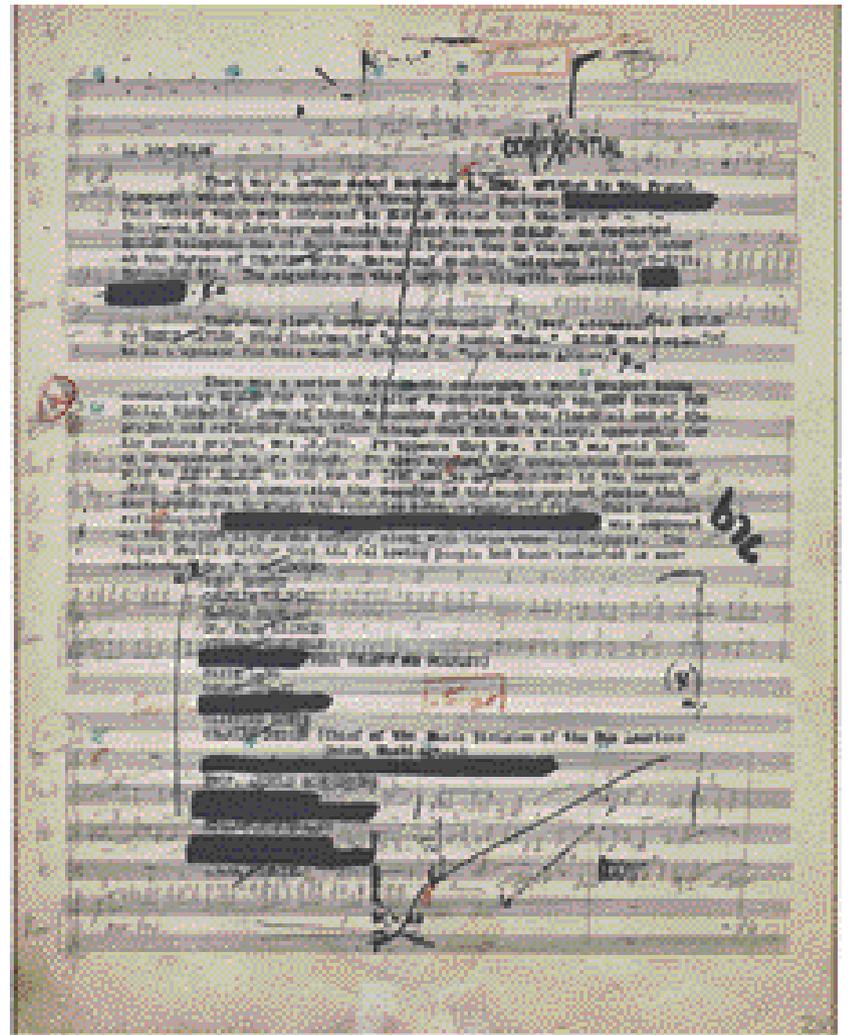
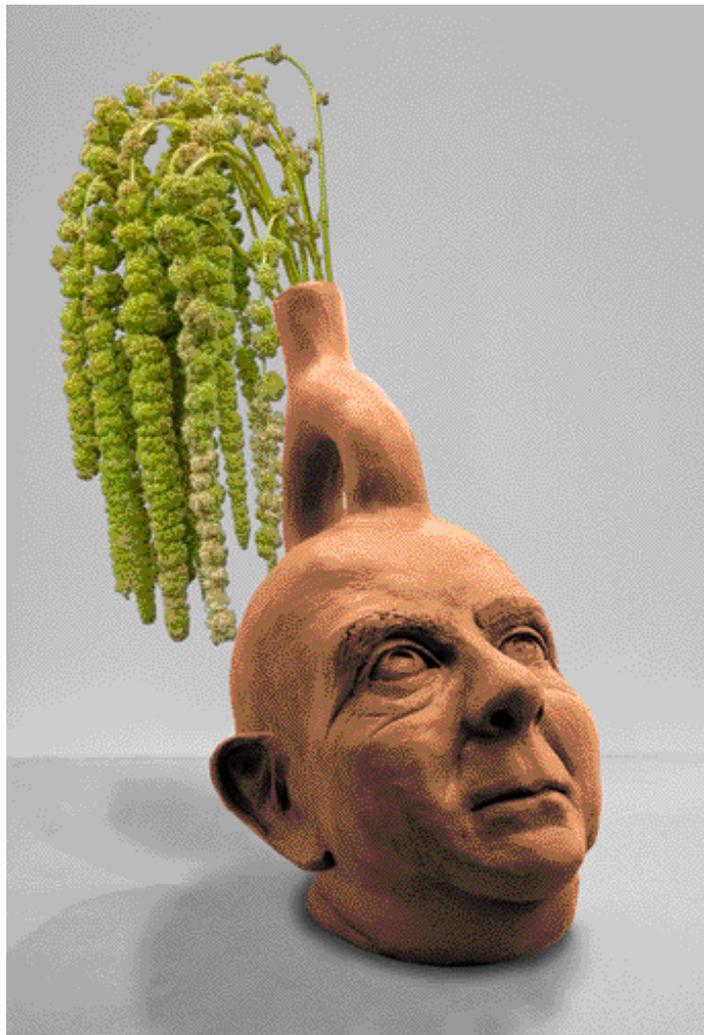
Reflections from Damaged Life, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1974), p. 38. The publication of *Minima Moralia* upon his return to West Germany helped cement his reputation as the damaged nation's moral compass; he himself explained the book's remarkable critical and commercial success by claiming that the German audience had grown tired of incessant "Heideggererei."

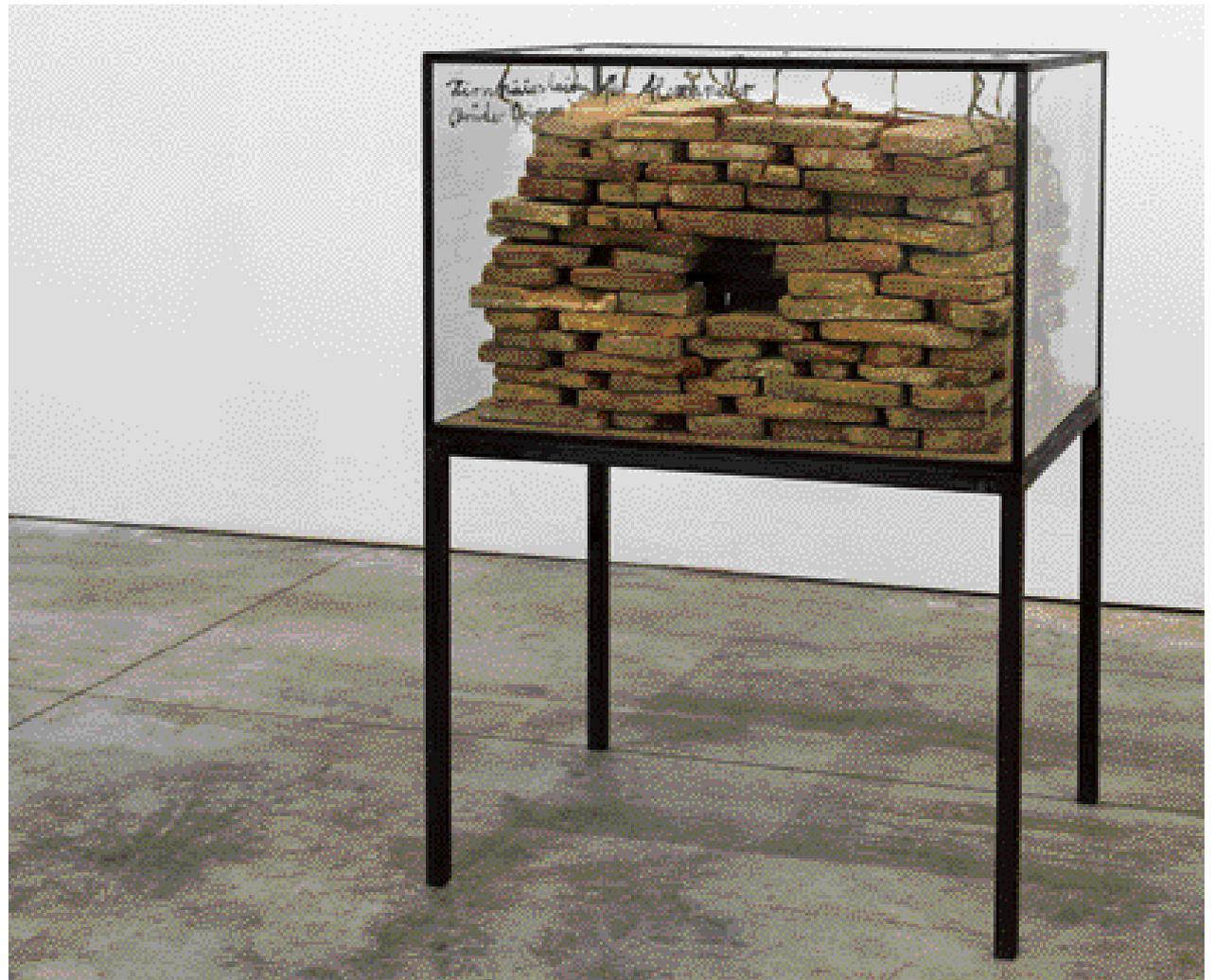
38 Virgil Thomson, *Selected Letters of Virgil Thomson* (New York: Summit Books, 1988), p. 181. While living in Brentwood, Adorno acted as his neighbor Thomas Mann's principal musical adviser for the latter's 1949 masterpiece *Doctor Faustus*, the composer-protagonist of which was clearly modeled after the figure of another neighbor, Arnold Schoenberg (who had little appreciation for the ploy).

39 Müller-Doohm, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

the never-setting sun of the emerging entertainment capital of the world, Adorno finally returned to Germany in 1949, just in time to witness the birth of the Federal Republic, and spent the last twenty years of his life teaching at the university in Frankfurt and gathering acclaim for such classics of 20th-century philosophy as *Negative Dialectics* and *Aesthetic Theory*—the latter only published posthumously in 1970, a year after his premature death on August 6, 1969, an event some say was brought on by one particularly graphic incident in the long summer of student discontent when the grand old man of Critical Theory was “attacked” at the lectern by three young women baring their breasts at him. (“Following inconclusive discussions between the few supporters of this disruption and their critics, the lecture hall emptied. The Grassroots Sociology Group distributed leaflets with the title ‘Adorno as an Institution is Dead.’”³⁹) After that, not even mountain air could save him any longer.











Interlude:

Previous pages:

Ewan Telford
Captive Audience (Scientific Experiences of an Exile in Los Angeles). Theodor Adorno House, 316 S. Kenter Ave, 2018
 123

Goshka Macuga
Adorno, 2018 124

Susan Philipsz
Part File Score IV and VII, 2014 125

Anselm Kiefer
Hirnhäuslein (für Alexander), 2017 126

Alexander Kluge
Triptychon, 2018 128

Franz Hubmann
Portrait of Theodor Adorno, 1958 130

Susan Philipsz's Part File Score is based in part on the travails and tribulations of leftwing German-Jewish composer Hanns Eisler who, while living in exile in Los Angeles's Pacific Palisades neighborhood in the 1940s, co-authored the treatise *Composing for the Movies* together with fellow expatriate Theodor Adorno. This book included the composition *Fourteen Ways to Describe Rain* by way of exemplary exercise, a piece that constitutes the sonic backbone—given the dodecaphonic treatment so current and politically topical in Adorno

and Eisler's day—of Philipsz's installation. Part File Score also includes a suite of prints derived from Eisler's FBI file compiled at the height of the "red scare" early in the Cold War, one page of which prominently lists the contact details of other denizens of "Weimar on the Pacific." Eisler and his wife were eventually expelled from the US and settled back in East Berlin in 1948, where he would go on to compose the nascent GDR's national anthem in the decidedly non-modernist popular idiom that he had switched musical allegiances to years before.

Being and 1922

Heidegger's hut was built and readied for occupation in 1922, the year of his appointment to a chair of philosophy at the University of Marburg and of the publication of his first major philosophical work, the two-volume *Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles*. In 1922, Wittgenstein no longer considered himself a philosopher—he was a teacher at village schools in Trattenbach, Hassbach and Puchberg at this point in time, locales not incomparable perhaps, to Todtnauberg—though he remained deeply involved in the translation of his *Abhandlung* into the *Tractatus*, finally published that same year. Adorno was just nineteen years old in 1922, though reading Georg Lukacs' landmark *History and Class Consciousness* published that year would exert a decisive influence on the development of Adorno's own fundamental contribution to the tradition of "western" Marxism. (One word: *reification*.) An eventful year, in short, from the perspective of our current

project—but not just from our perspective alone. 1922, in retrospect, appears to have been enough of a halcyon year to warrant its own monograph: a book titled *Constellation of Genius*, the subtitle of which names 1922 “Modernism’s Year One.” Its author, Kevin Jackson, primarily dwells on the Anglophone literary sphere—with good reasons: 1922 was book-ended by the publication of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, and the former in particular was taken by Ezra Pound to be the beginning of a new age. (On May 18, 1922, so Jackson tells us, a dinner was organized at the Hotel Majestic in Paris bringing together Clive Bell, Sergei Diaghilev, Joyce, Pablo Picasso, Marcel Proust, Erik Satie and Igor Stravinsky. On the other side of the globe, 1922 is also celebrated as Brazil’s “Modernism Year One.” Etcetera.) In the German-speaking world, the all-consuming concerns were of course political and economic first and foremost:

1922 first witnessed the assassination of the Weimar republic’s figurehead Walther Rathenau—the first major blow to Germany’s faltering experiment in democratic politics—followed soon after by the spiraling inflation crisis that would culminate in the notorious billion and trillion Mark notes of 1923. A fitting backdrop for the release of F. W. Murnau’s expressionist masterpiece *Nosferatu: eine Symphonie des Grauens*, in other words, or for the jarring dissonances of Paul Hindemith’s 1922 piano suite, which Adorno (a Frankfurter like Hindemith) would doubtlessly have heard and condoned—soundscapes and visions that are unlikely to have traveled to the Black Forest highlands or rural Lower Austria.

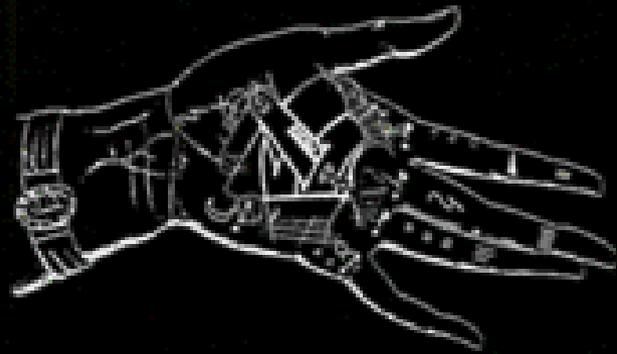
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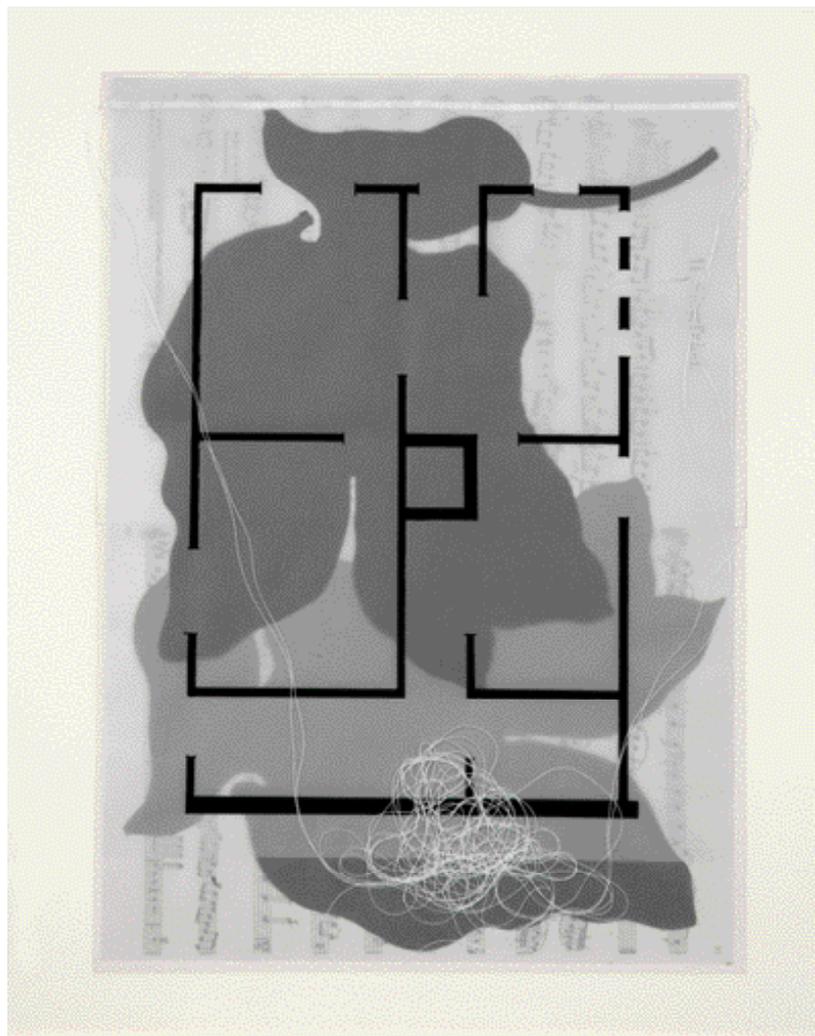
The Tangle

Contemporaries, hut-dwelling colleagues, self-made post-philosophical mystics: their obvious biographical and temperamental differences notwithstanding, it seems only natural to assume that Heidegger and Wittgenstein had *something* to say to each other, and Wittgenstein's interest in the work of Heidegger in particular is fairly well, if mostly indirectly, documented. (How tantalizing to imagine an actual *meeting*... In whose hut would they have convened?) Still, we know of only one occasion when Wittgenstein actually addressed Heidegger's philosophy more or less head on—in a remark dated December 30, 1929, made in the home of either Moritz Schlick or Friedrich Waismann, leading members of the Wiener Kreis or Vienna Circle, the coterie of logicians and philosophers of science called into life in the course of the 1920s with the almost exclusive initial goal of dissecting Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* for everyday epistemological use. The remark goes as follows:



eindringen /







«...dichterisch
wohnet
der
Mensch...»





Previous pages:

Joseph Semah
*Tracing Martin Heidegger's hut
and Paul Celan's clouds: [...]*,
2010 139, 142, 143

Alexander Kluge
Triptychon, 2018 140, 144

Ian Hamilton Finlay
Adorno's Hut, 1986–87 146

The present selection of artworks is part of a larger, multimedia body of work conceived by Dutch-Israeli artist Joseph Semah in direct response to the unsettling memory of Martin Heidegger's meetings with the Romanian-born Jewish poet Paul Celan in Freiburg and Todtnauberg in 1967. Celan had survived World War II in a Nazi labor camp in his native Czernowitz region, an experience immortalized in his oft-quoted Todesfuge (Death Fugue) poem, written around 1945. The shadow of the Shoah haunted Celan until his suicide in Paris in 1970—a shadow that can be discerned in Semah's reimagining the contours of Heidegger's hut as lugubriously twinned to those of a Nazi-built crematorium. Celan's meeting with the former NSDAP member concluded with an oblique plea on the poet's behalf for some explication or other for past errors, but no such closure ever appeared to have been on Heidegger's mind.

On Heidegger

I can very well think what Heidegger meant about Being and Angst. Man has the drive to run up against the boundaries of language. Think, for instance, of the astonishment that anything exists. This astonishment cannot be expressed in the form of a question, and there is also no answer to it. All that we can say can only, a priori, be nonsense. Nevertheless we run up against the boundaries of language. Kierkegaard also saw this running-up and similarly pointed it out (as running up against the paradox). This running up against the boundaries of language is *Ethics*. I hold it certainly to be very important that one makes an end to all the chatter about ethics—whether there can be knowledge in ethics, whether there are values, whether the Good can be defined, etc. In ethics one always makes the attempt to say something which cannot concern and never concerns the essence of the matter. It is a priori certain: whatever one may give as a definition of the Good—it is always only

40 Quoted in Paul M. Livingston, “Wittgenstein Reads Heidegger, Heidegger Reads Wittgenstein: Thinking Language Bounding World,” in Jeffrey Bell (ed.), *Beyond the Analytic-Continental Divide: Pluralist Philosophy in the Twentieth-First Century* (Oxford: Routledge, 2017), pp. 222–223. According to Livingston, the remark was first published in the January 1965 issue of the *Philosophical Review*. Livingston’s essay begins on a taut dramatic note: “This is a tale of two readings, and of a non-encounter, the missed encounter between two philosophers whose legacy, as has been noted, might jointly define the scope of problems and questions left open, in the wake of the 20th century, for philosophy today.”

41 Monk, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 243. The writings of Tagore rank among the handful of books that Wittgenstein was fond of gifting to his friends, like Tolstoy’s *Gospel in Brief* and the stories of Johann Peter Hebel. Around this time—the mid 1930s—Wittgenstein jotted down a remark that was only to see the light of public scrutiny much later, namely in *Culture and Value*, the body of “vermischte Bemerkungen” compiled and edited by Georg Henrik von Wright, Wittgenstein’s

a misunderstanding to suppose that the expression corresponds to what one actually means (Moore). But the tendency to run up against shows something. The holy Augustine already knew this when he said: “What, you scoundrel, you would speak no nonsense? Go ahead and speak nonsense—it doesn’t matter!”⁴⁰

It is certainly amusing to imagine the scene. As Ray Monk noted, “Saint Augustine, Heidegger, Kierkegaard—these are not names one expects to hear mentioned in conversations with the Vienna Circle—except as targets of abuse.”⁴¹ Monk recalls that Moritz Schlick’s attempts, starting in the summer of 1927—Schlick first met Wittgenstein in February at the house of the latter’s sister Gretl, a couple of months after the iconic building’s completion—to persuade Wittgenstein to attend the meetings of the Wiener Kreis, had included the assurance “that the discussion would not have to be philosophical; he could discuss

successor in Cambridge, in 1977: “Philosophie dürfte man eigentlich nur *dichten*” (alternately translated as “really one should write philosophy only as one writes a *poem*” or “philosophy ought really to be written only as a *poetic composition*”) Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, trans. Peter Winch (Chicago, ILL: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 24. Compare this to a poem written by Martin Heidegger in 1947 that lists, in verse, the following “danger that threatens thinking”: “The bad and thus muddled danger / is philosophizing.” In writers such as Rainer Maria Rilke and Georg Trakl, Heidegger and Wittgenstein definitely shared idiosyncratic lyrical enthusiasms.

whatever he liked.” And indeed, “sometimes, to the surprise of his audience, Wittgenstein would turn his back on them and read poetry. In particular [...] he read them the poems of Rabin-dranath Tagore, an Indian poet much in vogue in Vienna at that time, whose poems express a mystical outlook diametrically opposed to that of the members of Schlick’s Circle.”⁴²

It would take another forty years for Heidegger to return the favor, so to speak; the only recorded remark about the philosophy of Wittgenstein dates back to the very end of Heidegger’s active teaching life, namely to the seminars conducted in the French Provençal town of Le Thor in the years 1966 to 1969. (These seminars were initially conducted at the house of the French poet and Resistance veteran René Char.) Here is the fragment in question, dated September 2, 1969, worth quoting in its entirety to better convey the magnitude, in fact, of Heidegger’s fundamental misreading of Wittgenstein’s:

What does “the question of being” mean? One says “being” and from the outset one understands the word metaphysically, i.e. from out of metaphysics. However, in metaphysics and its tradition, “being” means: that which determines a being insofar as it is a being. As a result, metaphysically the question of being means: the question concerning the being as a being, or otherwise put: the question concerning the ground of a being.

To this question, the history of metaphysics has given a series of answers. As an example: *energeia*. Here reference is made to the Aristotelian answer to the question, “What is the being as a being?” –an answer which runs *energeia*, and not some *hypokeimenon*. For its part, the *hypokeimenon* is an interpretation of beings and by no means an interpretation of being. In the most concrete terms, *hypokeimenon* is the presencing of an island or of a mountain, and when one is in Greece such a presencing leaps into view. *Hypokeimenon* is in fact the being

as it lets itself be seen, and this means: that which is there before the eyes, as it brings itself forth from itself. Thus the mountain lies on the land and the island in the sea.

Such is the Greek experience of beings.

For us, being as a whole—*ta onta*—is only an empty word. For us, there is no longer that experience of beings in the Greek sense. On the contrary, as in Wittgenstein, “the real is what is the case” (“*Wirklich ist, was der Fall ist*”) (which means: that which falls under a determination, lets itself be established, the determinable), actually an eerie (*gespenstischer*) statement. For the Greeks, on the contrary, this experience of beings is so rich, so concrete and touches the Greeks to such an extent that there are significant synonyms (Aristotle, *Metaphysics A*): *ta phainomena*, *ta alethea*. For this reason, it gets us nowhere to translate *ta onta* literally as “the beings.” In so doing, there is no understanding

43 Martin Heidegger, *Four Seminars (Studies in Continental Thought)*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell and François Raffoul (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012), pp. 35–36.

of what is being for the Greeks. It is authentically: *ta alethea*, what is revealed in unconcealment, what postpones concealment for a time; it is *ta phainomena*, what here shows itself from itself.⁴³

“The real is what is the case” (“*Wirklich ist, was der Fall ist*”), Heidegger is quoting Wittgenstein as saying—an obviously erroneous reference to the famous opening sentence of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, which really states that “the world is all, that is the case” (“*Die Welt ist Alles, das der Fall ist*”).

Interestingly enough, a much earlier reference to Wittgenstein in Heidegger’s writings recently came to the surface in the notorious “Schwarze Hefte” or “black notebooks,” diaries kept by Heidegger starting in 1930 until the end of his life, with much interest evidently directed towards the ponderings jotted down in them during the Third Reich’s twelve-year rule he so

enthusiastically embraced. An undated remark, almost haiku-like in its ordering, made sometime in 1938 or 1939 simply states:

Wittgenstein—/
In a lecture in Vienna:
“*The absolute is the proposition.*”—
i.e., the *assertion*.

44 Martin Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI: Black Notebooks 1938–1939 (Studies in Continental Thought)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2017), p. 203.

The editors helpfully add a footnote stating that “neither the “lecture,” nor the quotation, nor Heidegger’s source is known.”⁴⁴ Did Heidegger attend a lecture by Wittgenstein in Vienna? Or rather a lecture by one of his disciples, schooled in the ways of the Wiener Kreis? The former seems unlikely: Wittgenstein had become a British citizen after the Anschluss of March 12, 1938, and it is hard to imagine him lecturing in the Austrian capital at a time of extreme distress for his brother and sisters. (“One morning in late March, Paul [Wittgenstein] came into the room where Hermine

45 Alexander Waugh,
*The House of Würtgenstein:
 A Family at War* (New York:
 Anchor Books, 2008), p. 205.

was sitting, his face white with horror, and said to her: “Wir gelten als Juden!” (We count as Jews!).”⁴⁵) As for the latter: the Vienna Circle had effectively ceased existing after the Nazi annexation of Austria, and its spiritual leader Moritz Schlick had been assassinated two years earlier on the central staircase of Vienna’s main university building by a former student whose deed was later celebrated by the rising tide of Austrofascism as an attack on “Jewish doctrines alien and detrimental to the nation.” (Schlick himself, it should be noted, was not Jewish.)

There are no noteworthy traces of any sustained intellectual engagement on Heidegger’s part with the philosophy of Adorno. In an interview with the philosopher Richard Wisser conducted in 1969, Heidegger simply said the following: “When Adorno came back to Germany, he said, ‘I was told: In five years, I’ll have cut Heidegger down to size.’ You see what kind of man he is.” He then admits: “I have

46 Richard Wisser (ed.),
Martin Heidegger in Gespräch
 (Freiburg: K. Alber, 1970).
 Hermann Mörchen, a student
 of Heidegger’s from his
 Marburg days, wrote two
 books about Adorno and
 Heidegger, the second one
 of which, published in 1981,
 was titled *Untersuchung einer
 philosophische Kommunikations-
 verweigerung: a study of
 a “philosophical refusal
 to communicate.”*

never read anything of his. Hermann Mörchen once tried to convince me to read Adorno. I didn’t.” About *Negative Dialectics*, which he didn’t read but heard Wisser speak about at evidently tiring length, Heidegger merely notes, with the unshakeable condescension of his highland living: “So he is a sociologist and not a philosopher.” The conversation ends with a question: “With whom did Adorno study?”⁴⁶

We already discussed the missed opportunity of a meeting between Adorno and Wittgenstein during the former's English exile. It appears fairly certain that Wittgenstein never read any of Adorno's writings and may never even have heard of Adorno; he was not known to follow contemporary philosophical developments all that closely. It is best to imagine that, should they ever have met, they would have stuck, wisely, to discussing *musical* matters.

The relationship, conversely, of Adorno to Ludwig Wittgenstein is best summed up in an underhanded comment recorded in *The Jargon of Authenticity*, which was really a screed directed against the stifling grip of Heideggerian philosophy on the postwar German imagination: "the term 'commitment' unites Heidegger and Jaspers together with the lowest tractatus-writers."⁴⁷ Indeed, further on in the same book, Adorno refers to Heidegger's writings compiled, in 1957, under the rubric

47 Theodor Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 69.

Identität und Differenz as his "tractatus": Adorno's blistering critique of Heidegger is a critique of both Heidegger and Wittgenstein. Elsewhere in his writing, we come across the following fragment: "It no doubt sounds very heroic when Wittgenstein declares that one should say only that which can be said clearly. It also conveys a mystical-existential aura that many today find appealing. But I believe that this famous Wittgensteinian proposition is of an indescribable spiritual vulgarity inasmuch as it ignores the whole point of philosophy. It is precisely the paradox of this enterprise that it aims to say the unsayable, to express by means of concepts that which cannot be expressed by means of concepts."⁴⁸ Or, in *Against Epistemology*: "As long as philosophy is no more than the cult of what 'is the case,' in Wittgenstein's formula, it enters into competition with the sciences to which in delusion it assimilates itself—and loses. If it dissociates itself from the sciences,

48 Theodor Adorno, *Philosophische Terminologie I* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1973), pp. 55–56.

49 Theodor Adorno, *Against Epistemology*, trans. Willis Domingo (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1982), p. 42.

however, and in refreshed merriment thinks itself free of them, it becomes a powerless reserve, the shadow of shadowy Sunday religion.”⁴⁹ And finally: “Wittgenstein’s maxim, ‘Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent’, in which the extreme of positivism spills over into the gesture of reverent authoritarian authenticity, and which for that reason exerts a kind of intellectual mass suggestion, is utterly antiphilosophical. If philosophy can be defined at all, it is an effort to express things one cannot speak about, to help express the nonidentical despite the fact that expressing it identifies it at the same time.”⁵⁰ Too many misreadings to disentangle here: exile resembles a Tower of Babel, misunderstanding a method of choice.

50 Theodor Adorno, *Hegel: Three Studies*, trans. Shierry W. Nicholson (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1971), pp. 101–102.

51 Safranski, *op. cit.*, p. 413.

About Adorno’s relationship to Heidegger, finally, one can be brief—all the more so since it is the subject of an entire book of Adorno’s, namely the aforementioned *Jargon of Authenticity*. The pathos-laden, frequently self-defeating animosity of the younger thinker towards his ageing foe can hardly obscure the bare facts of a shared agenda. (Only privately does Adorno appear to have admitted—as in a letter to Max Horkheimer in 1949—that Heidegger was “in a way [...] not all that different from us.”⁵¹) It is Rüdiger Safranski who perceptively noted that the inevitable rapprochement of these polar opposites in some way *had* to occur in the sphere of art—*ours*, i.e. the sphere of the image of the hut—rather than that of academic philosophy or even public opinion:

52 *Ibid.*, pp. 408–409. Note Safranski’s paraphrase of the rote opposition of the mountain peaks of deep philosophical reflections to the lowlands’ lowly ethos of everyday busy-ness. Referring back to our earlier remarks about Heidegger and Wittgenstein’s shared love of mountain air, it is worth noting that Adorno was likewise an enthusiast of amateur alpinism (if of a far less physically demanding variety), and especially fond of holidaying in Sils Maria, Nietzsche’s philosophical home in the Swiss Engadin. It is in Sils Maria, interestingly enough, that a meeting between Adorno and Paul Celan should have taken place in August 1959. The planned encounter never came to pass, and shortly thereafter Celan wrote a darkly comic short story inspired by the non-event and titled “Conversation in the Mountains,” published in 1960.

The Cassandras up on the mountain peaks of bad prospects are calling to each other, exchanging their gloomy insights across the lowlands where efficiency and “Carry on as you are” hold sway. The 1950s and early 1960s have given rise to a disaster discourse that coexists peacefully with reconstruction zeal, with smug prosperity, with optimism in small things and in the short term. The critics of culture provide a gloomy minor-key accompaniment to the cheerful hustle of the prospering Federal Republic. [...] Heidegger, the critic of his time, suffered a fate similar to Adorno’s—he was being listened to like an artistic oracle. Not the academies of sciences but the academies of fine arts were wooing Heidegger, just as they would soon woo Adorno. Fundamental critique, which did not wish to become political and which was fighting shy of religiousness, was inevitably received on the aesthetic plane.⁵²

“Adorno’s hut,” after all, could only ever be imagined as a *work of art*.











Previous pages:	
Robin Gillanders	
<i>Eclogue</i> , 1995–98	163
<i>Aircraft Carrier</i> , 1995–98	164
<i>Hegel Stile</i> , 1995–98	165
<i>Golden Head</i> , 1995–98	166
<i>Temple</i> , 1995–98	167
<i>Panzer</i> , 1995–98	168
<i>Herdin</i> g, 1995–98	169
<i>Ian Hamilton Finlay</i> , 1995–98	170

From 1995 until the poet's death in 2006, Robin Gillanders was Ian Hamilton Finlay's photographer of choice for the realization of a number of collaborative projects as well as the documentation of Finlay's sculptural work, most notably the sculpture garden of Little Sparta in Dunsyre, south of Edinburgh, which Finlay famously styled "an attack, not a retreat." Many of the artworks documented in these photographs attest to Finlay's obsession with both the iconography of warfare and the tragic trajectory of German philosophy. Gillanders' elegiac black-and-white images powerfully capture the militant melancholy animating Finlay's aphoristic art of "silence, exile, and cunning."

The places!, and spaces!, one runs into Heidegger, one way or the other—as an epigraph, most recently, prefacing Homi Bhabha's milestone of postcolonial studies *The Location of Culture*, for instance: “a boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presenting”—a quote taken from his “Building, Dwelling, Thinking” essay so beloved of aspiring architect-theorists.

While visiting Ian Hamilton Finlay's “retreat,” Little Sparta south of Edinburgh in September 2017, another book title caught my eye in the late poet's sizable library: Charles Bambach's *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks*. Its introduction starts with a consideration of “the hut,” worth quoting in its entirety here:

The hut is still there. It still stands unobtrusively at the top of a long sloping hill some 3000 feet in elevation, nestled just below a densely clustered patch of dark and towering fir trees. The small ski hut, built for Heidegger in 1922 when he was a young professor, still bears witness to the lost world of a rural peasant farm community of the 19th century. No number marks its front doorway; no telephone, gas, or electric lines obstruct its view of the valley below. High above the small village of Todtnauberg in the southern Black Forest, the cabin still proclaims its proud independence from the interlocking structures of modern existence with its urban-industrial vision of implacable progress and irremediable consumerism. In the early days, Heidegger would retreat to Todtnauberg during semester breaks and prepare for the rigorous regime of thinking and writing by chopping wood for the fireplace. When he was still at Marburg, students in Youth Movement circles would come out to ski, hike, camp, play guitar, sing, and

philosophize. The list of visitors to the cabin—Hans-Georg Gadamer, Karl Löwith, Hannah Arendt, Alfred Baeumler, Ernst Tugendhat, Günther Anders, Jean Beaufret, Paul Celan, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, and others—reads like a veritable catalog of 20th-century European intellectual history. But what marked the life-world of the hut more than its social interactions or philosophical tête-à-têtes was its isolation and solitude. And it was this sense of solitude that marked Heidegger's work-world at the cabin. As Heidegger himself expressed it:

People in the city often wonder whether one gets lonely up in the mountains among the peasants for such long and monotonous periods of time. But it is not loneliness, it is solitude. In large cities one can easily be as lonely as almost nowhere else. But one can never be in solitude there. Solitude has the peculiar and originary power not of isolating us

but of projecting our whole existence out into the vast nearness of the presence [*Wesen*] of all things.

To the outside observer, the hut presented itself as a small three-room cabin with a low-hanging roof that stood against the outline of a scenic mountain landscape: a charming cottage with kitchen, bedroom, and study for summer vacationing and winter sports. For Heidegger, however, it stood as an entryway into the nearness and abiding simplicity of authentic existence—a site for dwelling and thinking that safeguarded the old world of the peasant community against the incursions of modernity. “This cabin-Dasein,” as Heidegger called it, did not merely constitute a pleasant background for his work but became for him an essential element in the experience of thinking.⁵³

53 Charles Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 1–2. The Heidegger quote is taken from *Denkerführungen, 1910–1976* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983). It is also here that Bambach comes across the notion of “Hüttensein,” or “cabin-Being.”

After leafing through this book (which also references the poignant formula coined by Ernst Bloch of a “*pastorale militans*,” a militant pastoralism), I wandered about Finlay’s deserted sculpture garden for an hour or so in the Scottish afternoon gray. I had come to visit the place in part to solve the mystery of the Finlay installation, referred to in the beginning of this essay, that was so enigmatically titled “Adorno’s Hut,” and so hard to find traces of out there in both the analogue and digital world. (I was half successful—something to do with the bicentennial of the French Revolution, the French art-critical establishment, and the artist’s polarizing interest in Nazi aesthetics...). I did come across other hut-like structures on the grounds of Little Sparta, and many a nod to German intellectual history—one in the shape of a stone-carved fragment from a Hölderlin poem paying homage to “the plowman’s cottage”—but it was the experience of Finlay’s house and

garden as a whole, of course, that provided conclusive enlightenment, not just about *Adorno's Hut*, but about the huts under consideration in this essay in general. The crucial insight is encapsulated in the notion that, as Finlay put it only half-ironically in his “Detached Sentences on Gardening,” “garden centres must become the Jacobin Clubs of the new Revolution”⁵⁴—that the garden, or the hermit’s cave, or the philosopher’s hut, the writer’s cabin and the composer’s cottage, is not a *retreat*: it is an *attack*.

54 Alec Finlay (ed.), *Ian Hamilton Finlay: Selections* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), p. 179.