

The Management of Time: New Orders for Executive Education

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PhD Thesis

Word Count, Copyright & Declaration

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Abstract

The non-credit bearing and ongoing education and development of mid- to late-career corporate executives is known by the compound term *executive education*. Reductively stated, executive education, for its corporate consumers and its business school providers, is predicated on the relationship between an order (as a command) and its execution (its carrying out); a relationship I call the “order-execution cognate”. With the word execution derived from Greek for *sequence*, and with the sequence of an execution following-on from its corresponding order, sequentiality is the essence of execution, and the cognate. Executive education involves the amelioration of this order-execution cognate, to the ends of increased profits and competitiveness for the corporation concerned, and increased career prospects for the individual executive. Concerning sequentiality, and as a thesis on the philosophy of executive education, I apply a strand of ontological reflection to examine this cognate, namely philosophy concerning time and temporal succession. To aid in this task I use the English translations of writings on time by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Emerging from Heidegger’s thought are two temporal types that acknowledge and critique temporal succession; chronological (chronic) time and *Kairotic* time respectively. By associating Heidegger’s philosophic method with that of early German Romantic philosophy, I articulate how it is possible to reconceive the temporal sequence of the order-execution cognate as a productive oscillation between chronic and *Kairotic* time; I call this oscillation “ironic temporality,” and its productivity “ironic productivity”.

My philosophical analysis of commercially lucrative and neoliberal executive education is at odds with traditional knowledge-based analyses, affording a critique of the capitalist order which the educative event serves. Disrupting temporal notions of that event then becomes a dangerous political act; becomes the means to frame the educative event for the management of our age; and becomes the *new orders* for executive education.

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Introduction

However, time in the sense commonly understood, which is our topic here, is indeed only one derivative, even if legitimate, of the original time, on which the Dasein's ontological constitution is based

(Martin Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p. 325)

Executive Summary

Order and execution are *cognates*¹: they are born together, in that orders are the basis of executions. In the primary sense of orders as commands, and in the corresponding sense of executions as the carrying out of those orders, order and execution are co-constituted, or what I'm terming, "cognates". In other words, orders do not pertain without their execution at least being implied. The relata of this relationship emerge, I propose, only as poles of the overall interactive structure of this cognate. Held in tension by these poles is a *temporal* precedence of one or other of the relatum in this structure, thereby establishing the basis of a temporal *sequence* that becomes both the commanding force of this cognate, and my reason for studying it. This temporal sequence is, unsurprisingly, chronological in nature and conception. The purpose of this thesis is to violate this standard chronological conception of sequential time, and to begin to imagine more opportune temporal conceptions.

The question remains, as with twins, even if the relata of the cognate are apparently born together, which was actually born first; order or execution? By way of an early bid to establish

¹ The sense of the cognate I am concerned with here is not etymological, nor is my interest in the specifically linguistic sense of the term cognate: I am interested not just in how the two terms "order" and "execution" relate, but how they better support each other in their being conjoined, into a cognate. I am indebted to Janet Roitman, and her book *Anti-Crisis* (2014: p.8), for bringing to my attention the concept of cognate, taken as it is from the work of the Heidegger-inspired historian Reinhart Koselleck, in a book, the title of which introduces his own cognate (translated from the German) called *Critique and Crisis* (Koselleck, 1988). My interest in the work of Koselleck – given that it was specifically Heidegger's exploration of time throughout his oeuvre that motivated Koselleck – is touched on briefly in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

which pole is prior, it is worth noting that the Latin transitive verb *sequor*, which means “to follow” or “to come after,” lies in the midst of the word *executive*, as in *ex-sequi*. Thus, with *ex-* meaning “out of” and *sequi* meaning “to follow up” or “carry out,” the notion of sequentiality (L. *sequens*) is at the very root of the word *executive*, as in the individual case of the corporate executive, the subject of my study. While not precluding the possibility that an execution could still be prior to an order, it would seem that execution, and therefore the actions of an executive, follows an order. I would like to establish, at this early stage, the notion of time as an important – and overlooked – constituent in any analysis of the interactive structure of the cognate I have introduced. So, by way of drawing on the dreamy double genitive in the thesis title, who are these managers of time, these executives, and which orders do they represent and prepare to execute?

Briefly stated, in this thesis I seek to understand the kinds of work that a philosophical reflection on this cognate can do, principally in the context of philosophy of education; specifically in the context of philosophy applied to the education of late-career corporate executives – a process otherwise known by the compound term *executive education*; and more specifically still by using, as a framework for an analysis of the temporal constituents of this cognate, the English translations of writings on time and temporality conducted by the philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) in his book *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962), published in Germany in 1927, as well as other works across the span of his philosophical career. While the downside of restricting my conceptual analysis to Heidegger’s identification of “time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of being” (*ibid*: p.1) lie with the famously difficult prose style of translations of his thinking, my hope is to offset this negative against the positive of employing his thinking to usher in a novel ontological re-conception of the purpose of executive education. And rather than see this prose style as a barrier to be surmounted, I’d like to put this so-called negative aspect of his writing to work to effect this ontological re-conception. This will be an ontological re-conception that represents a departure from the standard ethics-based criticisms of

managerialism², and an equal departure from a heavily psychological framing of management³ studies⁴; one that is at odds with the singular instrumental *telos* of executive education, capitalism; and where this novel ontological approach also brings into question practical applications of this *telos*, namely improvements in individual executions of orders, as well as improvements in corporate productivity, which in turn service the capitalistic imperative that motivates all corporations, the pursuit of greater profits; in lieu of more pressing societal ills, such as the effects of extreme wealth inequalities. My ultimate purpose is to investigate an ontological ground – namely the ontology of time – from which business school-based executive education can challenge its existence, begin to redeem itself philosophically, and as a result offer wider society the fruits from new orders of executive education.

Background to the Study

Before we begin to unpack the obvious burden of explanation demanded from the variety of concepts introduced in this executive summary, some background as to the context from which this thesis has been written is in order, if only to ease the reader in to the site of the work I hope to undertake in the this thesis. After this initial contextual overview, I will begin to unpack the individual constituents of the order-execution cognate.

I work at the *Cranfield University School of Management* (hereafter, Cranfield), a graduate-only business school in the UK. The Management School is one of the schools within Cranfield University, the UK's only wholly postgraduate university, which specialises in the disciplines of engineering, energy, agrifood, aerospace, transport, manufacturing, defence and security, and

² I'm aware of the strength of anti-managerial feeling in the academy, and the overwhelming suspicion with which my juxtaposing of "education" and "business" is viewed by some critics, who have reason to claim that the existence of a "business school" is itself an oxymoron, or logical *non sequitur*. For instance, Marina Warner, who was sufficiently dissatisfied with the "for-profit business model" of universities in the UK for her to resign her chair in literature at Essex University in 2014, in her article "Learning My Lesson" in the *London Review of Books* (Warner, March 2015), reveals this strength of feeling, thus: "The new managerialist *philistinism* is spreading. Even as it claims to be keeping universities alive and well and inclusive, it is wrecking the ideal of *emancipation* through learning. If universities continue to go the way of the corporations, a fine system of public stewardship, evolved over the decades to educate citizens for their good and the good of society in the present and the future, will have been perverted and disfigured" (*ibid*: vol.37, n.6, p.8-14, my emphasis). This thesis is situated at the heart of this debate. It is a response to this accusation of "philistinism," and offers as a form of "emancipation" what I will call *ironic temporality*. This "emancipation through time" is offered as an equivalent mode of degeneracy to Warner's "perverted" and "disfigured" corporatisation of higher education, but a form of degeneracy just as equivalent to what business world would class as the degenerate *non-productivity* of philosophy.

³ The reader may be confused about the distinction between manager and executive. Quoting from James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution* (Burnham, 1942), the author revealingly restricts the title of "manager" to those in charge of technical production processes, and the cherished title of "executive" to the highest paid and highest ranking company official in charge of guiding the company to profit (Burnham, 1942; pp.72-73). Even today this distinction is representative.

⁴ For examples of standardly conceived ethics-based critiques of management studies discourse, see Mats Alvesson and Hugh Willmott's *Critical Management Studies* (Alvesson & Wilmot, 1992), Christopher Grey and Hugh Willmott's *Critical Management Studies: A Reader* (Grey & Willmott, 2005), and the fiercely provocative book by Peter Fleming and Marc Jones, *The End of Corporate Social Responsibility: Crisis and Critique* (Fleming & Jones, 2013).

management. The School of Management at Cranfield confers its own degree-awarding programmes (Masters degrees in management, finance, marketing, supply chain, organisational performance and leadership: and a doctoral programme of PhDs in management-related topics, as well as a part-time Executive Doctorate programme), though Cranfield also run a wide range of unaccredited programmes of executive education⁵ that are of roughly equal proportion in revenue and student numbers to the accredited programmes. Within the field of executive education at Cranfield my role is as Director of Networked Learning in Cranfield's Centre for Customised Executive Development. This centre (who, I should say, are the sponsors of my studies and of this thesis) provides non-credit-bearing executive education and development for the management and senior executive⁶ populations of large, mostly international, corporations. The teaching faculty for these customised programmes is drawn from Cranfield's academic faculty who teach on Cranfield's flagship Masters of Business Administration (MBA), as well as from the other programmes mentioned above. My current role in the Centre for Customised Executive Development at Cranfield is as the person responsible for co-designing and incorporating onto these non-accredited and customised programmes of executive education forms of technology-based material and support that are deemed appropriate for that programme and population, decided in consultation with the corporate client. Thus, as executive education, this thesis will only be considering these *non-accredited* and *customised programmes* of executive education. A typical (if parodied) individual consumer of this executive education – in distinction to the corporate consumer who may commission such a programme for a population of senior executives – is often though not always male, early-forties to fifty-something in age, grey haired, wearing a dark suit, working for that large corporation, highly paid, and principally as someone who gives and receives orders.

In order to build on the unusual and non-credit-bearing status of the executive education that I'm involved in running, and which forms the context of my argument here; and in order for the reader to gauge the nature of education referred to in this thesis – if the reader, in fact, deems this education at all – it is worth reiterating (for the sake of mainstream educator say, or possibly those unaccustomed to non-credit-bearing graduate-only teaching, or those unfamiliar with customised education for executives in corporations) that while I am based in higher education I am not addressing in this thesis the executive as the business-studies *student* normally conceived: not undergraduates, nor postgraduate students, nor part-time students. My referencing of the

⁵ While this may only become apparent to the reader of this thesis in the course of their reading, I will use my institution's form of executive education as representative of what can be considered a global phenomenon of executive education, as designated by the influential *Financial Times Executive Global Education Rankings* published annually, i.e. as a standard form of executive education, in this case arraigned before my argument concerning its ontological re-conception.

⁶ See footnote 2 above, for an explanation of the distinction between manager and executive.

executive's late-career juncture is not simply to differentiate amongst institution-oriented provisions of executive education – where, say, some institutions, for whatever andragogic reasons, favour *training* a workforce in preparation for their subsequent employment, versus those which offer ongoing *education* to those already in employment – but rather to differentiate between the different attitudes towards the workplace, and towards the society in which work in general does or does not make sense for them, and how these depend on successive life stages. As will be seen later, the (sometimes comic) spectre of a mid-life crisis, and a late-career executive's corresponding appetite for existential reflection in the midst of their hyper-capitalist endeavours⁷, are all important contributing factors in how and whether executive education is conceived. Crudely speaking, our appetites for existential reflection increase along with our age, placing my study here firmly at the far end of a simplistic educational spectrum that begins with primary, then secondary, thence to tertiary and higher, but proceeding to what I am tempted to call “terminal” education – a coinage in contrast to the more palatable descriptors in common use such as ‘life-long learning’⁸ or “adult education” or “professional-“ or “workplace-learning”. As bleak and as nihilistic as the terminal note sounds, the subject of this thesis – given the Heideggerian theme that I will be using as a framework to examine the order-execution cognate – will not flinch from such time-related topics as death and finitude as they operate on the corporate executive tasked with executing, not to mention operating under, the capitalist order. Quite the contrary; as the reader will have glanced from the contents page, my analysis of the order-execution cognate will emerge through the rather melancholy-sounding Heidegger-inspired themes of death, anxiety, boredom, as well as through the less melancholy but still time-related themes of technology, history, and the event.

So, to recap, a typical client of executive education would be a large multinational corporation, whose Human Resources department is often responsible for commissioning a programme, and for whom there is often a highly senior company official, a senior vice president, acting as a sponsor to the development initiative. A typical participant of a programme of executive education would be the forty-something senior executive, who are usually drawn from populations of between one-hundred and up to one-thousand executives: the cohort size of a typical programme is around twenty; and the content of the programme will vary depending on the client, but usually include management-oriented themes such as strategy, finance, supply chain, marketing, leadership, and change. What then is the purpose of one of these programmes of executive education? As an initial example, a corporation may be moving into new geographic

⁷ See Thomas Piketty's book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2014), one that I will be referring to shortly.

⁸ See John Field's book *Lifelong Learning and the New Educational Order* (Field, 2006) for a spirited defence of the integration of lifelong learning into UK government policy.

areas and markets, thereby revealing a shortfall in the competence of its existing executive echelon to service either these new opportunities, or to back-fill responsibilities in the established markets and geographies left vacant by moving the best people to the new territories: or it may be responding to concerns of its shareholders as to the longer-term viability of its overall management competence. Whatever the stated intention of such a programme, all programmes of executive education are intended to improve the corporation's competitive advantage in its marketplace: a basis of productivity which I will challenge, using Heidegger.

The Problem

After this brief exposure to a typical executive education programme, and whilst the readers' opinions are still in the process of forming – possibly crystallising around questions such as whether this is, in fact, more a form of craft-skills training, or indoctrination, or corporate-sanctioned tourism, or just a clever scam on the part of business schools – I would like to begin to articulate why I believe the so-called executive education that I am involved in running is in radical need of revision, at the same time as identifying just what this thesis is a reaction against. The following reflections are presented at this stage as cursory and in need of refinement, which is the purpose of the thesis, but I offer them as an early explanation as to why I feel the need to question what executive education – and quite possibly business schools generally, though this is an out-of-scope topic given their wider remit than simply delivering executive education – is doing with, for, to and on behalf of the senior executive populations within the multinational corporations that act as its clients. My identification with a need for revision is expressed in 3-ways; as a concern, as a relation and as an expectation.

Firstly, it is expressed as a *concern* that the monological, hegemonic and iniquitous nature of contemporary western capitalism has become the only ordering principle of our times. Although a huge topic and one beyond any detailed analysis in this thesis, as a basis of this so-called master order, I will align with the thesis put forward by Thomas Piketty in his book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, that financial inequality in the twenty-first century is on the rise and gaining pace (Piketty, 2014: p.27); that the majority of us in the future will be much poorer in every way (*ibid*: p.122); that this rising inequality will have tempestuous political implications (*ibid*: p.269); and that this order is the single and most supreme motivating force in our current age, to the exclusion of any alternative world view (*ibid*: p.451).

Secondly, expressed as a *relation*, my identification with the need to revise the thinking of executive education stems from its relation to this iniquitous master-order that Piketty has

evidenced, most notably a relation that is framed by the rise of what Piketty calls “super-managers” (*ibid*: p.265) – the absurdly and unjustly rich chief executive officer (CEO) class of senior corporate executives, vying with the property-owning and asset-owning class of billionaires to compete on who produces and deserves the most wealth – in a form of “meritocratic extremism”⁹ that stands as the highest good an executive should strive to achieve. The extravagances of ever-increasing executive salaries are often the topic of scrutiny in our newspapers. I am not claiming a causal connection between executive education and meritocratic extremism, nor am I establishing dependence between the former and capitalism, between as it were, the classroom and boardroom. Rather, I wish to establish that a relationship between executive education and capitalism is the most prevalent reason to explain the existence of executive education *at all*, and that capitalism is the *sole organising principle* for such educative programmes, whether knowingly addressed or not.

Thirdly, my expression of a revisionist agenda is motivated by an *expectation* that education, the processes of education, the investment in and outcomes from education, can and should act as an appropriate site for the task of reconceiving (whether and) how that relation can mitigate, arrest and/or transform the negative effects of that order. And this, ultimately, so that I can isolate the highly influential senior corporate executive – one that is ten-or-so years from retirement, slightly more relaxed in attitude, sufficiently skilled managerially and experienced commercially to effect, individually or collectively, radical changes to their enterprise or collective sectorial enterprise – as the prime agent of change. This thesis will build on an example of just such an influential individual.

To achieve this highly ambitious revision, via a specifically philosophical analysis,¹⁰ I will be using a reductive approach that attempts to formulate the manifest activities of executive education – of the style mentioned above – into a single explanatory unit: what I am calling the order-execution cognate, which I will introduce more fully in the following section. I do not think of myself as a reductionist thinker, preferring to believe instead that we should always let a thousand flowers bloom, that the universe is a richer place than our nascent reductionist impulses suggest: however, my involvement with executive education has made me realise that philosophically, dealing in reductive essences, distinct to complex compounds, for my audience, is the most effective way of opening a space to think *philosophically, at all*. Essentializing a complex topic is, in fact, a skilful means of instruction for the time-poor executive education audience,

⁹ Quoted by Thomas Piketty in an interview by Andrew Hussey, published by the Observer newspaper on 13 April 2014, as the cover story for *The New Review* section, under the title “It Just Doesn’t Add Up”.

¹⁰ That is, a philosophical analysis distinct from a political analysis or an economic reappraisal, or an activist destabilisation, or a revolutionary decentralisation and restructuring of capital-dominated power relations: all of which are outside the scope of this thesis.

notwithstanding the preferences of the instructor who may deem such dealings in simplicities as untruthful to the topic under examination, or disrespectful to the more thoughtful learner in possession of more time: there is an intellectual probity to this kind of foundational thinking. As something of a dealer peddling a reductionist fix using this approach, as it were, the successful executive education lecturer¹¹ is someone who opens a space with his or her learners using an approach which outlines a convenient 'essence' of a chosen topic; only after which he or she further engages his or her audience in a broader and deeper dialogue. There will be time later to consider why I am suggesting this reductionist approach is prevalent in current executive education, alongside an appraisal as to the suitability of my single explanatory unit of the order-execution cognate as a device to conceive, and reconceive, executive education *philosophically* for those late in their corporate careers, using Martin Heidegger's understanding of the role of time in our being.

Before turning to how (and whether) Heidegger even establishes time as a framework worth considering in my chosen context, and while I am still in the mode of introduction to what must appear to be a rather odd caravan of concepts, let me expand on my reductively conceived cognate and begin to unpack its component parts. There are three main constituents in my opening introduction to the order-execution cognate: the two respective relata, together with the articulating concept of sequence.

The Order-Execution Cognate

Firstly, to consider the relata "order," it is necessary for the reader to gain a broader awareness of the meaning of the term order. Even a relatively quick dig into the *Oxford English Dictionary (The Compact Edition, 1979)* reveals forty-two discrete senses of the word, only a portion of which can be grouped under what is my primary and overarching sense of order as 'command' referred to earlier. Senses under this grouping include orders of battle; marshal orders; orders of business; bringing to order; law and order; ordering as controlling, such as a court order; and martial orders of the day. Secondly, there are a range of other senses, which could be conveniently grouped under the overarching senses of "rank," "grade" or "class" which are also pertinent to my study. These include the mathematical sense of order as in a rank, a series or an array; monastic or holy orders; a class of authoritative institution; a class of mis-functioning or a

¹¹ I am talking about first orders of success here, where what constitutes a successful lecturer is gauged by the (positive) satisfaction as stated by those whom the lecturer is addressing, distinct from any more widely conceived measures of success for an organisation or a society.

grade of conduct, such as “out-of-order,” or “out of order” in relation to an authoritative direction; or to conduct, or “to order oneself”. And, of course, there are very many ancillary and order-related terms such as ordinal, denoting a place in a series; ordinary, such as in conformity with the general, rather than special, rule or custom; co-ordinate, primordial, disordered, to name but a few – and at risk of boring the reader, I should emphasise that this is hardly an exhaustive etymology. Suffice to say that even this shallow etymological excavation at least serves to illustrate both a degree of commonality across the term, as well as a distinctive breadth in which the term could be used, and which I will use.

Drawing on this breadth, and drawing breath, at this stage I will refrain from selecting a precise definition of order from the above, and instead ask the reader to carry into these chill early pages his or her own senses of the term against which the order-related aspects of my argument can be gauged. Far from a cop-out, but in keeping with the existentially oriented and terminally minded nature of time that I will be using in my upcoming temporally oriented analysis of the order-execution cognate, all of the following uses of order in the context of execution make sense: “I was only following orders”; “making profit is the order of the day”; “globalisation and neoliberalism are the new world orders”. Yet the senses of these (truncated and admittedly orphaned) phrases betray a wide array of meaning, such as, *inter alia*, in the first instance a disturbing lack of moral courage that has a profound historical precedence; in the second instance, a governing rationale that indemnifies against a range of societal ills, including grotesque imbalances in wealth and humanitarian provision; and in the third instance, a myopia that prevents consideration of the promotion of alternative political, cultural, economic and environmental potential world cultures. Without laying the blame for these ills, deficiencies and artful deceptions at the door of corporate executives, or any educative process these executives may or may not undergo, nor denying that executions in response to the orders represented in the above three examples could be altered or abated via the educative process, it is difficult to imagine – as I hope the reader will attempt – to conceive of these three senses of order without a corresponding intention of execution. For instance, in the troubling first example, a Hamlet-like inaction¹² is just as much a form of execution as action in this case; in the second, execution can take the form of simply adopting, unquestioningly, the norms of a society; and in the third, gracing and legitimising these particular banalities via academic discourse, say, is just as much a form of execution as defending the barricades in the streets outside of a G20 summit.

¹² See Simon Critchley and Jameson Webster’s *The Hamlet Doctrine* (Critchley & Webster, 2013) for an extended portrayal of Nietzsche-inspired justification for inaction in the guise of Shakespeare’s famous Prince of Denmark.

This, secondly, brings me onto addressing the related “execution” in my order-execution cognate. Along with the figure of the handsomely paid corporate executive - for whom few have much sympathy – let us think of other figures involved in execution *per se*, before we come on to examine how these acts of execution can be partly explained via the notion of sequence, if only to broaden what an examination of execution could involve.

For instance, think of the *executive* branch of government, those high ranking senior officials tasked with carrying out the orders of the current government; or the state employed *executioner* tasked with carrying out the capital punishments of the courts of law; or the lawyer as *executor*, tasked with carrying out the wishes of the deceased; or the (theorized) *executive* function of the brain, tasked, as it were, with the carrying out of our individual cognitive processes; or the musical *executant*, tasked with playing the score of a composer vocally, or on a musical instrument. Simply put, and for the sake of introducing the reader to the execution pole of the order-execution cognate, the common theme running behind all of these examples of execution is that of sequences of “following through,” or sequences of “carrying out”. While the next section will provide a more detailed treatment of sequentiality *per se*, remaining for the moment with the foregoing roll-call of the senses of executive, and leaving out the figure of the corporate executive for the time being, the (simplified) natures of the sequences of carrying out are as follows: with respect to the senior official in the executive branch of government, the sequence of carrying out is in the form of initially understanding the specific policy, then of setting this policy in train via appropriate channels in the daily administration of a country’s affairs: with respect to the state executioner, the carrying out sequence takes the form of understanding the verdicts of the courts and undertaking the capital punishment that proceeds from the sentencing of the accused; for the legal executant, carrying out takes the sequential form of discovering and interpreting the directions of the wishes of the deceased, and effecting those wishes in accordance with the law for the sake of the deceased; for the executive function of the brain, the carrying out is purported to be the response to a particular stimulus (so called); and for the musical executant, carrying out manifests itself in the sequence that starts with gaining mastery of the musical instrument or voice, through engagement with a composer’s score, to a technically proficient and, one would hope, pleasing executions¹³.

Space will not permit a detailed examination of any of these other forms of execution, e.g. the governmental and legal, etc. Suffice to say that the purpose of presenting these rather stilted, unelaborated and hopelessly simplified examples is so that the reader gains an understanding of

¹³ See Edward Said in *Music at the Limits* (Said, 2008) for eleven such examples of the use of the term “execution” to describe the art of music performance. See also my forthcoming paper in Kyoto University’s journal of the philosophy of education, the *Record of Clinical-Philosophical Pedagogy*.

the wider provenance of the terms “execution” and “executive,” against which the sense of “corporate executive” can stand in my analysis of the order-execution cognate. Specifically, I am interested in the notion of sequences as they relate to orders becoming executed, since it is here that the philosophical work of examining the cognate delivers (what I hope to be) its maximum ontological utility with respect to reconceiving the time of executive education, which is the purpose of this thesis. Once the notion of sequences is introduced, I will move on to why I believe the interactive structure of the cognate is the optimum loci for a philosophical examination of executive education, and just how I propose to use Heidegger’s temporal understanding in *Being and Time* as a beneficial framework for what will be a departure from, and not a resolution to, the normative and teleological aspects of executive education that are couched as generally improving vocational and professional capability¹⁴.

Time for Some Sequences

It should be apparent to the reader by now that my philosophical interest is piqued not in the content or appropriateness of the actual order, or the specific practicalities of the execution of that order, nor specifically in the quality of that execution, nor its fidelity to the original order: to concentrate thus would require a different, and evaluative, tack to the one I am taking here. My interest is in the fact that the sequentially laden (L. *sequens* as “following”) etymology of execution, on such prominent display in terms like executive and executive education, can offer itself up for an outright philosophical analysis that sets, at the same time, the agenda for an analysis of the *telos* of an education in its own name. It is the philosophical equivalent of finding a jewel washed up on a beach: how could one fail to be tempted to look into the sequence-like structure both of the carrier-out (the executive) and the carrying out of an educative process (executive education) aimed at assisting the carrier-out to carry out? The question remains; what is being carried out and why?

Thus, let us spend a while considering that which I propose articulates the relatum of the cognate, namely the sequence. In the case of the cognate the sequence runs from order to (and through) execution, however that process of execution, or the person(s) of the executive, is conceived. It makes no sense to say that such a sequence exists in space – aside from the spatial dimensions of the actors, actants and actions involved – though it does make sense to say that such a sequence exists in time. Being able to attribute temporal predicates to the cognate, such that

¹⁴ See Gerard Lum’s book of that title, *Vocational and Professional Capability* (Lum, 2009), which credits a liberal education, distinct from a purely instrumental instruction, as contributing to comprehensive vocational preparation (Lum, 2009: p. 183).

order A was given at time T^1 , and execution B was carried out at T^2 , makes more sense than suggesting that something substantial and extended was transported between A and B. This does not preclude the possibility of execution B at T^2 being ineffective in meeting order A: neither does it mean that execution B is the perfect – however that is measured – execution of order A, nor the possibility of there existing multiple executions of order A, all carried out simultaneously at T^2 , such as may occur in the field of battle. In the case of so-called “standing orders,” even where there appears to be spontaneity of action, which could only loosely be called execution, it is still possible to attribute a causal sequence that can be expressed as an extended sequence of moments, however brief, between an order and its execution. This counting of time as a numerical succession of moments is a way of reckoning with time, with chronology, that we have inherited from Aristotle (Aristotle, *Physics*, 4.10.217^b29 – 4.14224^a17, in McKeon, 2001). For Aristotle, time is an infinite one-dimensional line of isolable moments, at one end of which time runs off into the past, where at the other end moments come towards us. It takes a considerable effort to envisage time in any other way than this, such is the hold that the Aristotelian notion of time has on our temporal reckoning. Now I am typing *this*^{T¹} word: and now I am typing *this*^{T²} word. The first of these was typed at time T^1 , and the second at time T^2 . I will go on to type lots more words, each one following on after another in a temporal sequence of before’s and after’s, of what can be called instances or “nows”. But what is this singular now? Is that now an instant, say, of infinitesimally small duration, followed soon after by another such now of equally small duration? Is that now, as in the minute-long span of the description, somehow a span of minute – miniature – proportions? Is it, say, a nanosecond¹⁵ in duration? A picosecond¹⁶; femtosecond¹⁷ or attosecond¹⁸ in duration? Or is it duration-less, so as to be a single non-dimensional point in time? Or is that “now” just the orthodox, and thereby conventional, singular, designation of the conditions of the universe at that moment – which itself is of an infinitely small duration?

Lack of space in this thesis prohibits an extended discussion of the contribution that the respective fields of quantum physics and cosmology, for which the measurement and understanding of time as sequences is core, would make. But that is not the case for a brief venture into the study of military doctrine, which is a slightly more pertinent field to a consideration of what constitutes an order and its execution. Returning to the earlier example of the sequences of

¹⁵ A billionth of a second. “A typical personal computer will take one third to two nanoseconds to execute a single instruction, such as adding two numbers” (David Labrador, *Scientific American*, vol.21, no.1, Spring 2012, p.58).

¹⁶ A thousandth of a billionth of a second.

¹⁷ A millionth of a billionth of a second. “A femtosecond is a very, very small amount of time. More femtoseconds elapse in each second than there have been hours since the big bang” (*Scientific American*, vol.21, no.1, spring 2012, p.67).

¹⁸ A billionth of a billionth of a second. “Although the interval seem unimaginably brief, it is an aeon compared with the Planck time – about 10^{-43} second – which is believed to be the shortest possible duration. See Lee Smolin’s *Time Reborn* (2013) for an engaging defence of the reality of time, against the consensus in contemporary physics of time as an illusion.

executions undertaken in a battle-space: aside from the spurious comfort of establishing, in the military example, what appears to be a definite instance of an order, what can we learn about the cognate from an arena where the following of orders is often a matter of life and death? Symptomatic of the shift in military thinking in the last 20 years is the debate which contrasts traditional conceptions of war with contemporary conceptions tempered by experiences of counter-insurgency: for instance, between the conception of military theorist Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831) in his book *On War* (Clausewitz, 1830), and a modern day military theorist Emile Simpson, in his book *War From the Ground Up* (Simpson, 2012). Says Simpson of the Clausewitzian paradigm:

...conventional war is often understood as a decisive, finite, event; the flow of direction is one way, from policy through various levels to tactical execution; the military execute, but do not question policy...that view is misguided; policy makers should be as close as possible, realistically, in the vicarious sense, to the political pulse of the conflict on the ground (Simpson, 2012; p.92).

The sentiment expressed here serves to blur the boundaries between what constitutes an order, or in this case its genus in the guise of political expedient called “policy,” and likewise its execution: it even hints at a reversal of direction, with tactical execution informing policy. With the one-way relationship between policy and unquestioning tactical execution itself under question, given the exigencies of guerrilla warfare in Afghanistan and the need for the top brass to experience the local political conditions from the ground up for the policy they set to make sense, does this sunder the sequence in our order-execution cognate, and perhaps shatter it altogether? The threat does not stop there. Is the overall interactive structure of the cognate made equally redundant by the etymological ambiguities attendant on “order” in our brief excursion into military theory, where military force, however it is conceived, is equated with “establishing order,” “maintaining order,” or with “order as political equanimity” (Simpson, 2012; p.79)? How can one even posit, let alone defend, the sequential nature of relata that do not relate? Executing policy is one thing, but executing political equanimity? The latter is surely missing a trigger (no pun intended), an instruction, namely that on the basis of which political equanimity is founded.

It is at this point, with the notion of sequence on hold, as it were, that I can begin to champion a different utility redolent within a distinctly temporal conception of sequence; the possibilities offered by a disruption to the Aristotelian notion of one-dimensional line of isolable moments (Aristotle, *Physics*, 4.10.217^b29 – 4.14.224^a17, in McKeon, 2001) that constitute our common conception of linear time. This leads me to introduce the reader to the philosopher Martin Heidegger, and his work on time. Since the bulk of the remainder of this thesis will involve a

weighty, arcane and sometimes tortuous analysis of large tracts of Heidegger's difficult thinking on the subject of time and being, and since we are in the last throat-clearing phase of introducing the overall topic of my so-called order-execution cognate, I wanted to take this opportunity to give a more folksy account of my own introduction, over the years, to the philosophy of Heidegger, which may serve the reader by explaining the source of some other motivations running throughout this thesis.

I first encountered Heidegger's writing in my early twenties when I was an undergraduate studying philosophy. At the time I was preparing to enter a Zen Buddhist monastery¹⁹ in the north of England, and I came across repeated references in Heidegger commentaries about the proximity of his thinking to that of (intellectualised) Zen Buddhism²⁰. I spent a lot of my undergraduate time investigating and corroborating these connections prior to actually entering the Zen monastery²¹, though at the commencement of my monastic career no further study of Heidegger was possible, or defensible. After six years I left the monastery and pursued interests that eventually led me to work at Cranfield School of Management, by which time my dalliance with Heidegger's thinking had not only returned but been strengthened. In recognising the potential for executive education to impact the lives of a highly influential class of individuals, I saw in Heidegger's work the possibility for a philosophical reconsideration of the purpose of such a late occurring – career-wise that is – educative undertaking. Thus it is, as part *bildungsroman*, part anthropological approach, that I commend this thesis to the reader, who may begin to understand my wish to have executives understand their role in affecting unthinkable changes in our world order.

I have no misconceptions about the restricted palatability of Heidegger's thinking, or his person, on even the most pro-philosophy audience, least of all on the anti-philosophic and motley group of stakeholders addressed by my argument, most of whom would not expect to hitch their profit-making horse to such considerations as mine. I beg the reader's patience in what I hope will be regarded as a gentle introduction to the time-oriented thinking of Heidegger, spread as it is across most of his philosophical career, and headed by six comprehensible themes of Heidegger's own, which I take to be highly illustrative of his unique thinking about time: these six time-related

¹⁹ The reader should be aware that whilst this thesis will not explicitly foreground (the philosophy surrounding) Buddhism, there remains an abiding, though *hidden*, sympathy throughout these pages between Zen Buddhism's arch doctrine of "no-self" (*Anatta*) and Heidegger's staunchly anti-Cartesian rejection of a "subject" or self: this sympathy is what drew me to Heidegger in the first place – though my engagement with Zen Buddhism is spiritually oriented and not philosophically oriented, hence I will not be pursuing the philosophic parity between these apparently aligned themes, hence its "hidden" status.

²⁰ At heart the practice of Soto Zen – founded by Dogen (1200-1253) in Japan – is a fierce anti-intellectual emphasis on pure meditation.

²¹ I was a postulant, then a novice monk, between 1988-94, in the "Order of Buddhist Contemplatives" – www.throssel.org.uk. For those wanting a textual reference to the practices of this order, see Roshi Jiyu-Kennett's *Zen is Eternal Life* (third edition: 1987).

themes are death, anxiety, boredom, technology, history, and the event. I will split these six themes into two parts. The first part includes the chapters on death, anxiety, and boredom, all of which have a certain melancholy to them, which, far from being co-incidental, allows me to make a connection between chronological time ordinarily conceived and the Romantic²² mood of melancholy this *chronic* conception of time betrays. The second part includes the chapters on technology, history and the event, which, in distinction to the melancholy of Part One, are suffused with a brighter sense, one of opportunity, or *Kairos*²³ in Greek. I will now give a brief overview of each chapter.

Thesis Overview

My primary focus for this thesis is on an executive education provision offered from a university-based business school, to a specific, or series of specific, multinational corporations. A wider definition of executive education would include all tertiary, graduate, post-graduate, life-long, and non-certified open-enrolment programmes with a “business” oriented theme, or with decidedly market-oriented values. But given the pervasiveness of corporate values across most education provisions at the time of writing,²⁴ such a wide scope for executive education is unworkable for my thesis. Which leaves me in a position of defending the corporate, that pantomime villain we all love to hate, the generator of immense wealth and power across all societies, as both the cause and effect of executive education.

When is it justifiable to critique the “corporatisation” of a form of education that is dedicated to servicing corporates? Or put another way, what threshold is reached when an avowedly instrumentalised understanding of education, as executive education is, becomes untenable? Or again, on what grounds can a challenge be mounted against a non-state funded education provision customised for, and paid by, multinational corporations? The strongest answer to these questions²⁵, despite its circularity, comes from the position of the corporate itself, that

²² Throughout this thesis I will be referring to Romanticism with a capitalised “R”. As a precedent to this usage, I follow Stephen Prickett’s example, in his *European Romanticism: A Reader* (Prickett, et al, 2014), who, given the enormity of his task, rightly acknowledges a “family resemblance” (*ibid*: p.15) between widely differing Romantic works of this period, across Europe. He also defines Romanticism as a language” (*ibid*: p.14), allowing him to capitalise the term.

²³ I will likewise be using a capitalised “K” in referring to *Kairos* throughout this thesis, following the precedent set by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (*OCD*, Third Edition, Hornblower, 1996) personification of the term. I will also italicise the term *Kairos*, given that the *OCD* offers it in untranslated form.

²⁴ A non-exhaustive list of critics and supporters of a neoliberal educational agenda are well represented in the edited collections *Neoliberalism and Education Reform*, by Wayne Ross and Rich Gibson (2007); *The Assault on Universities*, by Michael Bailey and Des Freedman (2011); *Politics for a New Generation*, by Nick Pearce and Julia Margo (2007); *Neoliberalization: States, Networks, Peoples*, by Kim England and Kevin Ward (2007); *Contesting Neoliberalism: Urban Frontiers*, by Helga Leitner, Jamie Peck and Eric Sheppard (2007); *Working the Spaces of Neoliberalism*, by Nina Laurie and Liz Bondi (2005).

²⁵ Routinely evidenced in nearly all requests into Cranfield for customised executive education.

body served by executive education, and goes like this: When that educative provision does not meet the needs of the corporate. And how so this? Because the knowledge and information included in that provision is not relevant to the specific corporate, or their market; because the academic research as the basis of this provision of knowledge and information is “too free,” that is, insufficiently pre-determinable by the buyer; and because the knowledge and information of the provision cannot be readily instrumentalised, or executed on, by the body of executives under orders by the corporate, to any standardly measureable effect. My dissatisfaction with this corporate solipsism is targeted at the standard and academically sanctioned disciplinary-based approaches to executive education provision – for instance, psychology, sociology, economics, and ethics – offered not just by business schools²⁶, all of which make claims to redress the issue of relevance, and attempt to justify or critique the circularity of the provision. My choice of philosophical ontology is a deliberate methodological outlier to this disciplinary hegemony, offered as an experiment. Weakly stated my argument will be instantly dismissible for its outlying status; strongly stated, it poses a political threat to the hegemony, by lifting the veil of executive education. My argument is structured as follows.

Chapter One begins my existentially-tinged argument with an examination as to why Heidegger chose the oppressive theme of death as a promising start to his overt reflections on time, in Division Two of *Being and Time* at least. Heidegger’s distinction between “death” and “demise” offers me the first chance to use his philosophy of time to prize apart the relata of my cognate, by orphaning execution as a pure ability, distinct from execution as a response to a specific order. Of all the possible cognate-shuffling permutations, such as order-less order, or execution-less order, or order-less execution, I’ve based the Death Chapter on execution-less execution so as to begin to lift the veil on the above circularity, to reveal what a melancholy meditation on our mortality can do for the “executioner” of execution. The reader is introduced to Sanjay, an ironic figure, promised earlier, a self-mocking, melancholic, and impossible example of an influential senior corporate executive, a primal “ur-executive,” onto which I can drape the cloth of my argument.

In Chapter Two we reconnect with Sanjay, this time attired as a budding Chief Human Resources Officer, undergoing a bout of anxiety. Heidegger is well known for his writing on the mood of anxiety, and this chapter traces this concept’s connection to time and temporality through

²⁶ This disciplinary hegemony is upheld by a wide source of executive education provisions; from global consultancy companies, from the corporation’s own corporate “universities” and equivalent internal training bodies, from training and development companies, not to mention e-learning providers, and the business media. In a way, these “cultural circuits of capitalism,” as Nigel Thrift calls them, in his book *Knowing Capitalism* (Thrift, 2005: p.6), look to academic research by university based business schools to ratify the findings from each discipline, as well as sanctioning the disciplinary divisions themselves.

a melancholy-inducing confrontation with nothingness, as well as via Heidegger's straightforward sounding, though shibboleth-like notion of "care". What time makes available for me depends on what I care for, and so care and time, for Heidegger, are intimately connected. A familiarity with this particular rendition of "care" helps us to re-order time, to isolate time from its merely sequential character, thereby giving us another opportunity to halt our "chronically" chronological sense of time and look to alternative, and opportune, moments of vision through the melancholy mood of anxiety.

Chapter Three continues the melancholy manner of investigating the chronically sequential time of the cognate, this time via the long-while (German: *Langeweile*) that is boredom. It is unusual to come across an extended treatment of the vaguely comic mood of boredom in the context of education, and I offer Heidegger's not especially education-oriented views as a framework to reveal boredom's *timely* character. Our familiarity with being bored, even if it is a mood we'd do anything not to be in, reveals our uncanny familiarity with time, even if it is something we're trying to kill. As such, Heidegger's point is that time has an educative potential, one that reveals to us, annoyingly, time stripped bare. Having Sanjay exposed to this raw time provides another opportunity to reconsider our executions from boredom, if not our boring executions, and the boredom in which we hold the orders under which we operate.

With a change of tempo, I open Part Two of the thesis, introducing the sublimity of a *Kairotic* sense of time, in distinction to the merely sequential, and frankly melancholic, conception of chronological time. *Kairotic* time is equivalent to what Heidegger calls the "moment of vision," or *Augenblick*, and points towards something he calls "originary temporality," on which our sense of clock time is based. Starting with Chapter Four I show that his attempt to un-couple, to un-hitch sequential time, is not a form of temporal nihilism. I unearth this arch-concept of time and put it to work reframing Heidegger's own famous essay concerning the enframing tendencies of technology, using his strange sounding concept of the "fourfold" of earth, sky, divinities and mortals. Heidegger's fourfold is a decidedly temporal device, one that can rescue the executive from enslavement by the time of the corporation. Rather fantastically, I have Sanjay attempt just such a rescue, and leave the reader asking themselves whether "temporal truancy" in a corporate setting is actually possible.

Chapter Five addresses Heidegger's head-on temporal theme of history. By now I have introduced the reader to a parallel narrative that has begun to emerge through the chapters of Part One, that of German Romanticism. I start out by describing Romanticism as simply the intellectual headwaters of Heidegger's thought, but soon move on to ascribe aspects of *Kairotic* time as justifiable, even necessary, under the Romanticist heading. I begin to introduce the positive

transposition between Heidegger's concept of "formal indication" and "Romantic irony," where irony not only allows me to explain the contrariness of much of Heidegger's thinking – time, history and temporality included – using Romanticism, but where Romanticism itself becomes a defence of *Kairotic* time. Sanjay is himself transposed into a decidedly Romantic register in this chapter, piling the pressure on the reader to relinquish the sanctity of the sequence of the cognate.

Chapter Six takes Heidegger's difficult concept of *Ereignis*, translated as event of appropriation, as a proxy for the executive's newly ordered educative event, the mode of experience in which *Kairotic* time can come to appearance for the executive. Picking up the Romanticist narrative, and the concept of Romantic irony, I present how I believe Heidegger himself may have positioned the chronic time of the sequence against the opportunity of *Kairotic* time, in the form of an oscillation between the two temporal types; as playing one type off against the other. Sanjay is once again pressganged to act as mascot for what I call "ironic productivity" in the face of the order-execution cognate, this time facing his mortality via his doctors' orders.

The concluding chapter summarises how I believe ironic productivity has emerged from my exploration of Heideggerian existential temporality, and why this pseudo-productivity is nonetheless a useful manifesto for resistance to the order-execution cognate, and the one-dimensional time of corporations and their educative practices. It is possible to find a way of living that embodies an understanding of being, *as time*.

I am under no illusion as to how heterodox this study may seem – put against contemporary executive education practice – with its Bohemian carnival of players, concepts and methods the reader is about to meet, which begs two questions; Who is my intended the audience for this thesis as a whole, and; What proposition am I putting forward for consideration by this audience? Firstly, this is not a thesis wholly suitable for hard-core Heideggerians, who can rightly criticise my having cherry-picked elements from his thinking at the expense of a lack of fidelity to his broader thought across his collected works (*Gesamtausgabe*), and who may well be uncomfortable with my having glossed over considerable subtleties therein: nor is this a text wholly suitable for senior executives, on grounds of its verbosity: which then beckons an unusual strain of "intermediate reader," someone prepared to temporarily suspend the sharply delineated disciplinary regimes of scholarship and/or profit-making respectively. Which leads me to propose, secondarily, that the method under greatest scrutiny in this thesis is that of *philosophy* itself – its troubling tendency to make itself irrelevant to everyday concerns via its often hermetic jargon, at the same time as its capacity to reveal the world anew - and it is this that I commend to this hardy reader. To be indulgent of philosophical whimsy, yet merciless to our own capitalist and neoliberal whimsy, is the first step out of the prison of our own *Zeitgeist*, via thinking the unthinkable.

Part One

Melancholically Chronic

1

Death and the Execution-less Execution

Mortals die their death in life

(Martin Heidegger, *Elucidations in Hölderlin's Poetry*, p.190)

1.1 Introduction

There is no easy way to put this: *when* our flow of blood stops, we die. Even using the language of business, this is still our final deadline; one we cannot miss, fail to execute, or see pursued to the end. Or rather, a little less brutally put, *if* our blood flow stops, then we die; where this adjustment for the sake of propriety, here, serves to mitigate our anxiety at the prospect of our worldly demise: not many in business, it seems, like to dwell on the business of death – the fact of my being “not dead yet” seeming to act for me as a powerful enough decoy against the distant and unpleasant prospect of my demise. The innocent seeming “when/if” distinction here has a temporal dimension to it: temporal both in the sense of flagging our worldly end as distinct from, say, our spiritual end – where worldly denotes secular, coming from *saeculum* for century or common age – as against a religious time of those who claim to live closer to an eternity; as well as in the sense of indicating our time not yet come, our own future, all the possibilities still left to us. The “when” heralds an absolutely certain future state, which happens to be still outstanding; with the “if” hinting at a wheeling, a hedging, or securing against a merely *potential* loss (hence its relative palatability), with a balance of life still owing until the debt is finally liquidated. Despite such finality, couched in robustly financial sounding terms, death has been the source of fascination and creativity for artists and spiritual leaders since time immemorial – literally, since time out of mind, since the beginning of humankind’s reckoning with time. In conjunction with religious and eschatological concerns of our fate, and from the aspect of an aesthetic sense, the face-off against finitude is the supreme motivating factor behind our species’ greatest artistic achievements.

What then of those more profane, non-sacred, apparently non-artistic, business and commercial-related aspects of our collective historical endeavours facing off against finitude and

confronting death? Consider the figure of a corporate executive on their way to work, in a crowd flowing over London Bridge¹. What of his or her motivations, achievements and executions against this final deadline? What impact does the prospect of death have on them? Have the vectors of their achievements been similarly powered by the anxiety-inducing motivational force of the “when” – the fact – of our death, as it has been for spiritual and artistic leaders, rather than the “if” of trading on its future and not yet realised potential? Or are we justified in our expectation of a significant asymmetry in the artistic or spiritually sanctioned achievements between the sacred and the profane, between the prophets and the men (usually) of profits?

In this chapter, as part of an uncovering of the kinds of work that a philosophical reflection on the order-execution cognate can do, I will attempt to establish that *executive education* (in contradistinction to any other form of education for those in other of life’s stages) is an especially productive site for understanding Heidegger’s non-commonsensical notion of death, outlined in §46-54 of Division II of *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962: p.279-311). I will establish this fortunate concurrence in four stages: firstly, by briefly introducing the furore surrounding Heidegger’s confusing §46-54, with its poorly matched interpretative factions emerging within the secondary literature as a result; secondly, and via justifying my siding with the more experimental of these factions, by confirming a link between the forward “projecting” temporal aspects of existence (*standing-out*) and the forward projecting temporal aspects of execution (*sequencing-out*); thirdly, by equating Heidegger’s (re-) conception of death with “execution-less execution”; and lastly, in returning to the order-execution cognate, laying down a case for executive education becoming the site for loosening the grip between the cognate’s relata, thereby releasing execution *per se* for other, more timely, “profits”. The reason death is so important to Heidegger, in *Being and Time* at least, is that death discloses our futurity, “which is itself the first horizon we encounter of originary temporality, that fundamental structure of intelligibility that makes possible any understanding of being at all” (Thomson, 2013: p.261). Since we are on the hunt for Heideggerian time, which goes by the name of originary temporality, or “primordial authentic temporality” (Heidegger, 1962: p.399), our clearest glimpse of it, and often our first serious contemplation of it, comes from our looking ahead to our own death, and so, strangely, it makes sense to start with death.

¹ Cue the apt lines from T.S. Eliot’s 1922 poem *The Waste Land* “Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,/A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,/I had not thought death had undone so many” (Eliot, 1974: p.54). As will be seen later in this chapter, this *Dantean* evocation of the “undoing” via death, and the possible reappropriation of these crowds to a new and reawakened purpose, will make (some) sense when death will be introduced as an execution-less execution.

1.2 Demise and Death in *Being and Time*²

Even operating under the favourable conditions of a sharply delimited doctoral thesis, the incongruity of the above agenda – its antecedents and omitted explanatory preconditions – is a telling burden for me. That said, the path I feel delivers the most justice to the majority of constituents in my overall argument – e.g. the reviled figure of the corporate executive with their excessive pay, the figure (not so saintly himself) of Heidegger, the pessimistic perspective on excesses of instrumentalized, professionalized, vocationalized and technologized so-called *executive education* – is a direct confrontation with that ultimate leveller and end-stop of all enterprises, corporate or otherwise, human demise and death. Sadly Heidegger's exposition of death, in *Being and Time*, by the account of most commentators, is incredibly confused, but goes something like this.

Motivated to reawaken in us the question of the sense of being, the entire project of *Being and Time* pivots on this imperative of Heidegger's, not least when it comes to appreciating the conditions required to live in a manner that embodies an understanding of being: this particular embodiment Heidegger calls *Dasein*³, which as a verb in German means "to be there". The exotic sounding term is sometimes portrayed as synonymous with the entity of an individual person, and sometimes as that which is distinctive of humanity in general. But for our purposes I will follow John Haugeland's usage, proximal as it is to Heidegger's abiding motivation, of defining *Dasein* as a "way of living that embodies an understanding of being" (Haugeland, 2013: p.81-82), which at least allows a modicum of sense to be read into Heidegger's own definition of death, given as follows:

death, as the end of Dasein, is Dasein's ownmost possibility – non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped. Death is, as Dasein's end, in the Being of this entity towards its end (Heidegger, 1962: p.303, emphasis in original).

Peering through this tortuous phrasing is what seems to be a promise of an absurd seeming reprieve from death, of a "living of death in the being of *Dasein* towards its end": a nonetheless miraculous reprieve that must surely require a new definition of death; which is exactly what Heidegger attempts to provide, and which is exactly the cause of such consternation in the secondary literature, and bewilderment amongst non-Heideggerians. As Iain Thomson (*ibid*)

² This title is a transposed lift of Iain Thomson's chapter title in Mark Wrathall's *Cambridge Companion to Being and Time* (Wrathall, 2013: p.260). I am indebted to Thomson, and his particular chapter, for helping me make sense of the many interpretations of Heidegger's §46-54 death chapter I have come across in researching my analysis.

³ Of the three principle elements of *Being and Time* – being, time and *Dasein* – the one not mentioned in the book's title takes up the majority of its text (Haugeland, 2013: p.76). Consequently, *Dasein* has received many interpretations: but, for this thesis, I will use John Haugeland's controversial definition.

recounts, at the instance of a fellow (and incredulous⁴) Heidegger scholar confronting such a redefinition: “(as Hoffman once objected to me): ‘One can stretch the meanings of words, but only so far: *Up* cannot mean *down*; *black* cannot mean *white*, and *death* cannot mean *something that you can live through!*’” (Thomson, 2013: p.263, emphasis in original). I ask the reader to suspend judgement on the viability of this troublesome reassignment of “death” until such time as I have introduced the vital distinction Heidegger does concede, between “demise” and “death”: a distinction which frees, and focuses, Heidegger’s own site of philosophical work to concentrate on what it means to champion *Dasein* – namely “a way of living that embodies an understanding of being” (Haugeland, 2013: p.81-82) – and a distinction that also allows me to begin to champion *execution* as an embodied understanding of being, likewise.

Along with his career-long motivation to reawaken the question of the sense of being, Heidegger needs to provide a complete account of the being of *Dasein*, which must therefore include an account of its end, as a condition of its “completeness”. However, if *Dasein* has future possibilities open to it as long as it exists, then how can it ever be grasped as a whole, since that would be tantamount to precluding *Dasein*’s freedom by prematurely delimiting its future possibilities? This is the stated purpose of his §46-54 on death, to provide that *whole* account of how *Dasein* can embody its understanding of being in the face of its not-being, or its end of all possibilities. However, by attempting such a complete account, and in keeping with the overarching, though revised, phenomenological method against which his philosophy is aligned, it becomes impossible for a *Dasein* to encounter its own death comprehendingly, as it were, which is demanded of the phenomenological method in philosophy *per se*. As Stephen Mulhall notes, “For when *Dasein* reaches its end, when it is no longer essentially related to what is not yet, and hence no longer essentially incomplete, it is also no longer there. Death is not something that any *Dasein* has or could directly experience” (Mulhall, 2007: p.299). Foreseeing this impossibility and absurdity, Heidegger substitutes our common sense notion of death for an intermediate phenomena he calls *demise*, thus:

The ending of that which lives we [call] ‘perishing’. *Dasein* too ‘has’ its death of the kind appropriate to anything that lives... In so far as this is the case, *Dasein* too can end without authentically dying, though on the other hand, qua *Dasein*, it does not simply perish. We designate this intermediate phenomenon as its ‘*demise*’ (Heidegger, 1962: p.291).

Even Hubert Dreyfus, as close a reader of Heidegger as any commentator, and at a loss to find an explicit gloss from the author as to the distinction between perishing and demise (Dreyfus, 1991: p.309), concludes on Heidegger’s behalf that only the elevated status of a *Dasein* could possibly

⁴ Not to mention non-Christian, judging from the object of his incredulity.

experience their own end as demise, whereas organisms, for instance, merely perish (*ibid*) in a purely biological sense. Where Ian Thomson marks out the distinctions between perishing, demising and dying under the rubric “*Pears perish, but Daseins demise and die*” (Thomson, 2013: p.265, emphasis in original), the average reader is understandably left confused as to the exact meaning of Heidegger’s term “death”. To clarify let us return to that portion of the Heidegger’s definition of death which raised suspicions earlier, the part which reads “*Death is, as Dasein’s end, in the Being of this entity towards its end*” (Heidegger, 1962: p.303, emphasis in original). It turns out to be possible to give an account of the whole of *Dasein*, including its death, if the death referred to is a condition in which *Dasein* can find itself *in life*, through which it can pass, and after which it can reflect on its own passing. Says Heidegger of this non-commonsensual death, “Death is a way to be, which Dasein takes over as soon as it is” (Heidegger, 1962: p.289). What exactly does Heidegger mean by death?

By far the best extant summary of the secondary literature’s wide variety of explanations of Heidegger’s notion of death is the one given by Hubert Dreyfus (Dreyfus, 2005: p.xxxi), in his foreword to Carol White’s posthumously published book *Time and Death* (White & Ralkowski, 2005). After having read the majority of the commentators trading their interpretations, to have come across this elegant summary was a relief. My purpose in sharing this summary, in overview only, is to show how narrow and unlikely a path the reader must follow in order to reveal, what I believe to be, the most promising interpretation of Heidegger’s notion of death, and not surprisingly in my case, one that helps deepen the notion of execution, thereby contributing towards my redeeming of “executive education”.

Dreyfus orders his summary of interpretations by rank of their increasing plausibility, an index that is itself the product of his own Heidegger scholarship. The exegetical journey starts with the least plausible assumptions; that by death Heidegger means either an *event* at the end of a human life, or that “*dying is a way of life that takes account of the certainty of that final event*” (*ibid*). These are the cherished and longstanding interpretations of Heideggerian death attributable to Jean-Paul Sartre (Sartre, 1957) and Charles Guignon (Guignon, 1983) respectively⁵. Leaving these interpretations behind, as we have seen above, precludes all of the commonsensual readings of Heidegger on death. Next to be left behind are interpretations of death that see it as the closing down of possibilities, rather than having anything to do with demise (Taylor Carman, 1998); or as a hunkered-down readiness for the inevitable attack of anxiety that comes in prospecting death (William Blattner, 1994). Pressing on, no sooner arrived at than passed, so to speak, is one heroic

⁵ Since my purpose here is only to review an overview of a set of sub-optimal interpretations that will have little bearing on my argument, in order to reach the most productive set, I will not unpack the respective theories of each of the commentators Dreyfus mentions in his survey.

and one romantic interpretation, the heroic of which acknowledges that our individual identities can be lost (Dreyfus' own interpretation, from Dreyfus, 1991); the romantic of which acknowledges that we *disclose* the world around us ourselves, and that only once this is realised can we die a "good death" (Julian Young, 2001). All of which brings us speedily to the two interpretations on which my thesis is based, where it is worth quoting Dreyfus in full. Of the two most plausible interpretations, he introduces them thus:

Death is equated with world-collapse, and dying is understood as readiness for world-collapse.

- a) Death is equated with the sort of world-collapse that can befall individual human beings, and dying is staking all on one's current world, while sensing its vulnerability and being ready and able to give it up if it can't be made to work [John Haugeland, 2013].
- b) Death is equated with the sort of world-collapse that can befall a cultural epoch, and dying is striving to preserve the culture's understanding of being while being ready to sacrifice it when confronted with anomalous practices that portend the arrival of a new cultural world [Carole White, in White & Ralkowski, 2005] (Dreyfus, 2005: p.xxxi, in White & Ralkowski, 2005).

Though Haugeland's interpretation⁶ is predominantly specific to a *Dasein*-oriented *Being and Time*, where White's ranges more fruitfully across the less *Dasein*-oriented entirety of Heidegger's works in the wake of *Being and Time*, their co-incidence is striking: striking enough to make me believe, firstly, that useful philosophical work could be conducted on reconceiving the figure of the executive (in instance a. above) as someone prepared for such "world-collapse"; and secondly (in instance b.), on reconceiving the homogenous "body executive" – the executive function conceived primarily in the context of the corporation – as a body prepared for such an epoch change; and where the site for these ambitious preparations is the executive educative process.

As to why it falls to a consideration of death to precipitate such an agenda for executive education, my suggestion is that it has to do with our *making a stand* in the face of death (either in the a. or b. sense of death above – it doesn't matter which); specifically, our standing out into an *intelligible* world, as *Dasein* does in its way of living that embodies an understanding of being. *Dasein* embodies this *standing out* by choosing future oriented projects and executing on them, or carrying them out, bringing the "future" of those projects into fulfilment. As we learned earlier, it pro-jects – in the sense of favouring the throwing forward of – its dealings into future possibilities open to it as long as it exists, which is why Heidegger had to account for "Dasein's Possibility Of

⁶ I hold Haugeland's definition of *Dasein* as "a way of living that embodies an understanding of being" as part of the working through of his interpretation of death as world-collapse for an individual *Dasein*.

Being-A-Whole, And Being-Towards-Death”, as the title (sic) of §46 has it (Heidegger, 1962: p.279). At which point, let us move to the second stage in my fourfold outline of how a philosophical examination of the order-execution cognate is an especially productive site for understanding Heidegger’s now (hastily) qualified notion of death.

1.3 Standing-Out and Sequencing-Out

It is a truism to say of a project that it projects into a future. And while the term “project” is native to my argument’s constituents – within the mostly profit making contexts of multinational corporations, whose vast constellation of projects undertaken within and on behalf of the corporation’s shareholders, and whose overarching projects define the corporation’s purpose of maximising shareholder return – we all of us have forward looking projects: your project right now is reading and making a judgement about this thesis, as well as possibly earning a living, being a parent or lover, “a pet owner or any other identity-defining self-understanding”, as Ian Thomson calls such projects (Thomson, 2013: p.269). Remaining with Thomson, it is his critique of Haugeland and White’s coincidental and co-sustaining take on Heidegger’s death concept (see footnote 33, p.287, *ibid*) that has made me realise that the very notion of executive as *ex-sequi*, as *sequencing-out*, is extremely close to what *Dasein* is doing in *standing-out* (Latin. *ek-sistere*) in its temporally structured way of living that embodies an understanding of being. That in *sequencing-out* of our future facing life’s projects we are at the same time standing-out, or properly speaking *existing*, where “[e]xistence’ means a potentiality-for-being” (Heidegger, 1962: p.276), which is *Dasein*’s authentic and future-oriented mode of being; namely where “[t]he primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the *future*” (Heidegger, 1962: p.378, my emphasis). Making this connection clearer (no small task) will require us to return to the demise/death distinction, the a) and b) interpretations of Haugeland and White, as well as examining Thomson’s critique more carefully. It will eventually provide us with a link to engage with what Heidegger calls the *ecstasies* (Latin. *ek-stasis*) of temporality, and puts us on a course for realigning our analysis of the order-execution cognate with Heideggerian temporality.

Where to begin? It would be worth building up a case of how “world-collapse” could possibly come about, since I have rather skipped over the competing interpretations of Heidegger’s death concept. In which case I will look at “world-collapse” from the perspective of the figure of a fictional corporate executive (much in the manner of a typical, though para-fictional, “case study,” as used commonly in executive education by business schools) thereby providing a provisional basis from which to explore what Heidegger’s non-commonsensical notion of death could possibly mean, at the same time as introducing the reader to a typical consumer of the executive education

process. Whilst the incorporation of the device of a fictional corporate executive is intended for pedagogic purposes – to encourage, nay force, the reader to become embroiled in the complex set of ideas this thesis grapples with – this device is nonetheless a compromise: it attempts to balance a radically simplified and overdrawn take on Heidegger’s thinking with a nod towards the executions of profit-making undertaken by executives. Assuming the reader to be of the unusual “intermediate” variety⁷, I ask that you carry these provisos and these disciplinary temperings into the following pages, at least until you’ve faced-off your own disciplinary daemons.

In order to set the scene and settle the reader in, consider the figure of Sanjay⁸, a 52-year old corporate executive, born in the slums of Gurgaon in northern India, near New Delhi. He has done well for himself. Let us have him quartered in Europe as the respected Senior Vice President for the Indian-based business process outsourcing operation of X-Corp, itself a New York Stock Exchange listed Software Company, specialising in outsourcing and offshoring of services. Imagine that Sanjay has a 30 year old son, living and working as a call centre manager in Gurgaon, just as he himself⁹ did many years ago. Let us also have him acting as the high ranking corporate patron of an executive education programme, designed to educate and develop his globally dispersed team – of direct reports within X-Corp – to lead the future business: all in all a fairly typical, if high level, picture of the basis of customised executive education, an assurance especially directed to those readers unfamiliar with this type of corporate focused *bildung*, or executive formation. Given Sanjay’s upbringing in the slums, he is no stranger to death (so my story goes), having spent most of his childhood living in anticipation of his grandparents dying (his parents already dead when he was a baby), in which early times he had scant hold on a means of survival. Sanjay is less afraid of dwelling on the topic of death.

With this picture set, relative to Dreyfus’s earlier dismissal of Sartre’s and Guignon’s simplistic though common conception of death as an *event*, and a way of life with that event in mind, Sanjay clearly rejects this interpretation. Neither is death for Sanjay a closing down of opportunities (Carman), since Sanjay has seized all the opportunities placed in front of him to get himself where he now stands: nor does the prospect of death motivate him in readiness for an

⁷ See the last paragraph of the Introduction for why I invoke this particular strain of reader.

⁸ Though mine is not an empirical study, this character has emerged from my research into differing workplace temporalities around the industrialised world, with half an eye to the inequalities and subsequent politics of so called 24/7 working practices, particularly in globally dispersed call centres. See Winifred Rebecca Poster’s chapter (‘Saying ‘Good Morning’ in the Night: The Reversal of Work Time in Global ICT Service Work’) in Beth Rubin’s book *Workplace Temporalities* (Rubin, 2007: p.55). With the character of Sanjay I need also to acknowledge that I’m playing with fire, so to speak, in that Sanjay will probably be interpreted as an instance of a “subject” in direct contradiction to Heidegger’s disavowal of subjectivity *per se*: it is not my intention to portray Sanjay as a “knower” standing against “the known,” (the death concept, for instance) which was a general view of “truth” that Heidegger was at pains to reject – see Richard Polt’s *The Emergency of Being* (2013: p. 90). Rather, my intention is to allow the reader to take a view point that will foster sufficient recognition to render the more arcane aspects of Heidegger’s thinking accessible.

⁹ See previous footnote regarding the caution with which “self,” e.g. “himself”, should be interpreted.

anxiety attack prefiguring death (Blattner), since this seems to Sanjay rather cowardly and faintly absurd. Since also having embodied a range of identities that have animated his various causes, those which have helped him to climb out of the Gurgaon slums and into material and monetary wealth, death as the heroic relinquishing of an identity (Dreyfus's own interpretation) means nothing to him, since he would then have been dead many times over, making a mockery of any genuine pathos he has had the right to feel, given the hardships he and his wider family has suffered. However, given his religious upbringing, dying a "good death" (Young) is important, though his spiritual world view starts, rather than ends, at the suggestion of our disclosing the world around us, and grows into a Buddhist cosmogony that is exceptionally richer than Heidegger's: this particular death concept is likewise dismissed. So, before further appropriating Sanjay's *Dasein* – his (fictional) way of living that embodies an understanding of being, an embodiment which is markedly at odds with our modern notion of a "self"¹⁰ – to our preferred interpretation of Heideggerian death, let me take stock of whether what is happening in the foregoing play of Sanjay is, methodologically, permissible.¹¹

What phenomenological sense can rightly be claimed of our encounter with Sanjay, given that *Being and Time*, at least, is famous for its non-Husserlian and non-Cartesian remake of the phenomenological method¹² brought to bear on *Dasein*. This method Heidegger defines as *hermeneutic* (Heidegger, 1962: p.62) and styled on letting "that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself" (*ibid*: p.58), which is a case of describing phenomena in their own terms, "as a way the authentic sense of being is made known to *Dasein*", as Daniel Dahlstrom describes it (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.158), or to use Michael Zimmerman's rendering, as an ontology of "that kind of interpretation which allows an entity to show itself in the way appropriate to that entity itself" (Zimmerman, 1990: p.138). It would seem that so long as our analysis focuses on *existence* as the determining character of *Dasein*, and as the source of the phenomena to be studied (*ibid*: p.33, 61), all will be well. But all is not exactly as it seems with explicitly revealable "existence," especially when by "the phenomenon" Heidegger also includes those classes of phenomena which are *hidden*. Revealing what is *not* seen – and therefore contra

¹⁰ See footnote 7 of this chapter: the reader should be aware I am taking liberties with my reading of Heidegger, principally for pedagogic reasons, reasons that allow me to put forward an interpretation, on behalf of the reader, of an executiveness that shows its way of being in a manner appropriate to "executiveness," in the fashion that Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology method supports. I am not suggesting that Sanjay's *Dasein* is his "true self," whatever that could mean.

¹¹ As a taste of where my dalliance with fiction is going in this thesis, and as a reminder of the power of the narrator in fiction, consider Erich Auerbach's description of the freedom of Proust as narrator in his *À la Recherche du temps perdu*: "[t]he narrator is free to roam the world, uncoupled from the pitching deck of time as it unspools, and deeply immersed in the internal course of his emotions and in the melody of their expression" (Auerbach, 1925: quoted in Porter, 2014: p.161).

¹² It is commonly acknowledged that Heidegger's relationship with, and exposition of, phenomenology changed over the course of his work. At this stage of my argument, I will concentrate on his phenomenology of the 1920's.

Kantian styled phenomena which need to be directly apprehended – will have a bearing on the import we can give to demise and death, when we look squarely at what exactly it is we are fearful of regarding death *as*. Is it the pain of death, the loss of loved ones, our no longer enjoying life, to name but a few? Is there something else that we are anxious about regarding our death? As we will see, the hidden phenomena under examination later will be framed by a mood of an “anxiety about demise and death” that we (generally) do not acknowledge, much like how the phenomena of the *being* of beings remains hidden to most of us. Says Heidegger on the object of study of phenomenology, “[m]anifestly, it is something that proximally and for the most part does *not* show itself at all: it is something that lies *hidden*, in contrast to that which proximally and for the most part does show itself” (*ibid*: p.59, emphasis in original). This talk of the “hidden” is problematic for Sanjay, who not only does not exist (outside of his fictional status in this thesis) and so cannot rightly be said to have either explicitly apprehendable phenomena or hidden phenomena, but for whom I posit that which is hidden in my construction of him. Throughout this thesis my intention is to align, as a parallel discourse to the body and intent of my argument, a more methodologically oriented track that puts under scrutiny the place of the illusory or non-existent, i.e. the *hidden*, with respect to the order-execution cognate, in the light of Heidegger’s own dalliance with fictional characters¹³ and particularly with his play on time in his concept of *Augenblick*, the moment of vision: but more on this later. Let us now take a closer look at what it means to press forward into future projects, using Sanjay, as I am keen to reveal what Heidegger deems to be the source of our anxiety about death.

To stand-out into ones’ projects, however they manifest, means that we have identified a future purpose towards which we have decided to strive: that we have ascribed value to the projects we have chosen, believing their execution to be worthy of our attention, and which provide some meaning, however provisional, to our lives. In a very real sense our projects become our *existential* possibilities, in that it is they into which we pour our identities, via roles and commitments that make us who we are. These projects shape and bound how we live our lives because they matter for us; because we *care*¹⁴ for them; because they are the future towards which we ourselves pro-ject. We can rightly say that our projects “stand” for something into which we project ourselves via execution, or via our carrying them out: and so it makes some sense, when speaking of *Dasein existing*, that *Dasein stands-out*. Ian Thomson renders “existing,” via the Latin as *ek-sistere* which means “standing-out,” into “temporally structured intelligibility” (Thomson,

¹³ I am thinking of the three imaginary conversations had, with characters Heidegger conjured, that make up volume 77 of Heidegger’s complete works, translated as *Country Path Conversations* (Heidegger, 2010).

¹⁴ Heidegger’s revealing concept of *care* (*Sorge*) is lurking in the wings of this discourse at this stage. The concept of “care” will play a prominent role in the next and subsequent chapters.

2013: p.264) whenever glossing any occurrence of Heidegger's formidable phrase "*Dasein's* primordial kind of Being" (Heidegger, 1962: p.291). What Thomson is referring to is Heidegger's acknowledgement of the close etymological connection between *ek-sistere*, and *ek-stasis*, between existence and ecstasy. Whilst the latter term has not been fully introduced to the reader yet, *ecstasis* will have an important bearing on our discussion of temporality later when we realise that by the term "ecstases" Heidegger is referring to time and to temporality, and *ipso facto* to the nature of being that Heidegger is hunting down. It is worth bearing in mind that "[t]he primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the *future*" (Heidegger, 1962: p.378, my emphasis), hence my interest in establishing what it means to exist via one's projecting into future facing executions.

Consider Sanjay: it makes sense to say that throughout his early life Sanjay projected himself into a future, into a markedly better future than the slum circumstances he was born into. It is not a trivial point to make such a claim about projection, even though our common sense tells that we all proceed (or flop, depending on how *resolute* we're feeling) into a future, since in Sanjay's case his projects did not just present themselves unbidden; he had to engineer and manoeuvre himself into opportunities that were not naturally forthcoming, given the poverty of most of his early life. Building up a picture of the projects Sanjay had set himself to execute, let us imagine Sanjay growing up in the slums of Gurgaon; aspiring to get the money for his Grandma's cataract operation; seeing his brothers and sisters enslaved by his Grandfather's pottery kiln, themselves shunning education; joining the fight against the developers who were gradually stealing slum land; finally making it into the education system, and eventually securing a place at a renowned Indian university, going on to gain his MBA from an equally prestigious Indian institute of management.

Setting aside for the moment issues concerning the fidelity this story has to what may actually pertain, it would seem as though this rags-to-riches "story" identifies a right and proper set of projects to execute: that these were somehow the inevitable and justified projects for Sanjay to have chosen to press forward into, and that, via his choices, he has completely banished once and for all any anxieties he may have about the apparently justified "ultimate purpose," or teleology, of his struggled-filled existence via these executions. And yet those projects are (doubly¹⁵) contingent, in that a whole host of other project possibilities were possible¹⁶. In steering the argument back onto a heading towards what would constitute "world-collapse," and remaining with this notion of contingency for a moment, consider the hypothetical question "what *should*

¹⁵ Not forgetting that I am the author of all of Sanjay's travails.

¹⁶ See Taylor Carman's contribution to Dreyfus's survey of the secondary literature in my earlier overview of the senses of Heideggerian death.

Sanjay have done with his life?"; or transpose this question to your own life. It helps in this regard to introduce a term Heidegger uses, "uncanniness" (*unheimlichkeit*) or "not-being-at-home," to describe how there can be no seamless connection between *Dasein's* existing and the projects we (or Sanjay) choose to make sense of our existing. As unsettling as this initially sounds, for me this turns out to be one of the gems of Heidegger's discussion on death, since by introducing "uncanniness" we are left pondering what exactly our "home" is; where the dislocating question "what should I do with my life?" all of a sudden reveals an abyss above which our projects precariously "stand," or shudder, or teeter; such a grave consideration reveals the "groundlessness" of our executions and our existence. Positively stated, by even tentatively entertaining the thought that what we "stand for" – in the completest sense of the term – can collapse, such a collapse, as Thomson says, is "the fundamental existential homelessness that follows from the fact that there is no life project any of us can ever finally be at home in, because there is ultimately nothing about the ontological structure of the self that could tell us what specifically we should do with our lives" (Thomson, 2013: p.270). Using Sanjay as an example, things could have been otherwise for him. At this stage I would like the reader to begin to imagine Sanjay's tenacity to project himself into executing future projects, as this brief caricature has shown, as a capacity *in its own right*; not even as a capacity as such, but more as a mode of his being, in keeping with John Haugeland's definition of *Dasein*; as if he could project himself without there being discrete projects into which he can *pro-ject* himself towards. I will return to this thought experiment in the next section.

I need first to make the connection between our tentative encounter with a scare-quoted¹⁷ "world-collapse" and how *sequencing-out* is a modal variation of *standing-out*; and how all of this is relevant to our overall discussion of demise and death. The foregoing has established as a preliminary definition of Heidegger's notion of death, "world-collapse"; a global collapse of my world's¹⁸ mattering to me, distinct from merely an event at the end of my life. We have seen how our *existing* is equated with our "making a stand," and we have also encountered Heidegger's insistence that it is on the basis of the future temporality (not "past" or "present" temporalities)

¹⁷ I will persist with my oven-glove scare quotes around "world-collapse" until such point in my argument where I can stand the heat and defend the term.

¹⁸ As one of the staples of Heidegger's philosophical vocabulary, as Daniel Dahlstrom warrants (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.237) it, the term "world" in Heidegger has a precision of meaning that is not captured by our common sense of the term as the totality of facts (Witgenstein, 1951), or our global environment. As Dahlstrom notes of the term as used in *Being and Time*, "Heidegger distinguishes four meanings of 'world': (1) the totality of entities on-hand within the world, (2) the manner of being of entities on-hand within the world (or a certain region of such entities, e.g. the world of mathematics), (3) the place in which, being-here (*da-seiend*), we factually live and dwell (e.g. the public world, a household), and (4) the manner of being proper to being-in-the-world" (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.237, emphasis in original). Uses (1) and (3) are closest to our everyday, ontic, uses of the term, whereas uses (2) and (4) carry an ontological sense. In my usage of the term to which this footnote refers, I am using senses (1) through (3), in the dissolution, via "world-collapse", of everything that affords meaning to my life. It will take the balance of this thesis to show what Heidegger means by (4).

that our most authentic standing-out as *projecting* should be considered. My modest claim at this stage is that the activities of “projecting” and “sequencing” are synonymous: that by laying out, by planning and executing a sequence of actions towards a future state, one is effectively *making a stand via this execution*; one is acting out one’s existence, demonstrating a living embodiment of one’s understanding of being: in short, that in sequencing-out (in executing) one is being *Dasein* explicitly.

1.4 Execution-less Execution

All I am left with, once the arbitrariness of my projects are revealed, once I am prepared to acknowledge that it is at least possible to be unable to project myself into projects that would normally give my existence meaning; all I am left with, then, is mere projecting. That this is a tricky paring-down even to imagine, least of all live through, assigns weight to the term “*world-collapse*”; it is a complete breakdown: it is, short of our blood flow stopping, fundamental, and goes some way to explain why Heidegger (though not unprecedentedly¹⁹) did not think our current biological conception of death up to this most severe of all rebirths. As difficult as it is to conceive of existing when all you have stood for no longer has meaning; as difficult as it would be to conceive of your yearly, monthly, or minute-by-minute rhythm of sequenced executions purportedly leading you towards the ends that give your life meaning, as somehow no longer providing any meaning whatsoever; given the horror of this, it is at least *possible* to conceive of – albeit amidst your anxiety of this state of affairs ever becoming an actuality. I ask the reader to dwell with this anxiety a little longer than is comfortable, if your interest is to get to the bottom of what Heidegger means by death and why he is even talking about it, since this effort will, *inter alia*, help surface the distinction between his confusing terms of “demise” and “death” and serve to loosen one’s assumptions about the sanctity of our death taboos. Revisiting the said quote above (Heidegger, 1962: p.291), where our incredulity about living through death all started, the horrific sweeping away of all meaning, as if you were witnessing your home and your town being swept away by a tsunami, is exactly what Heidegger means by death. Remaining with the tsunami²⁰ metaphor, “demise” would be your being swept away and losing your life by drowning in the catastrophe we would normally call death;

¹⁹ The state of enlightenment in Zen Buddhism, otherwise known by the terms *kensho*, *satori*, or realisation, is a longstanding example of such a living death. This is one of the points in the narrative that beckons an engagement with the formal discourse on the influence of Eastern modes of thought on Heidegger’s own. See, for instance, Reinhard May’s *Heidegger’s Hidden Sources: East Asian Influences on His Work* (May, 1996), and John Caputo’s *The Mystical Element in Heidegger’s Thought* (Caputo, 1986).

²⁰ See *The Tsunami and the Cherry Blossom*, a “Sundance” 2012 film by Lucy Walker, for a graphic and moving account of quite what “total world-collapse” might begin to mean (and look like). It is worth noting, however, that even the depictions in this movie do not latch on completely to what Heidegger is aiming at in his reconception of death: not all instances of survivors living in a state of Heideggerian “death,” properly speaking, were depicted as, or could be called, authentic.

existential death would be losing the grip of a loved one in the deluge, witnessing their demise, and surviving with nothing that you “stand for” left intact. Here then also, amidst the metaphorical mangle of debris caused by this sweeping away of meaning-affirming existence, lies the source of confusion that Heidegger has (unwittingly) unleashed, between death as demise and death as existential death, in §46-54 of *Being and Time*. For the survivors of the Japan tsunami of 11 March 2011, it may well have been preferable to have been killed – to have demised – than to have had to live through seeing the meaning of their lives swept away in front of them. And yet, seemingly perversely, being landed back into a world stripped of your familiar meaning-making projects, with only your *ex nihilo* ability to continue to execute intact, Heidegger identifies positively this kind of death as:

death, as the end of Dasein, is Dasein's ownmost possibility – non-relational, certain and as such indefinite, not to be outstripped. Death is, as Dasein's end, in the Being of this entity towards its end (Heidegger, 1962: p.303, emphasis in original).

That this kind of reconceived and existential death announced in this quote is not only survivable, but also already part of what it means to live in a way that takes complete account of what it means to exist knowingly, gives meaning to his phrase “being-towards-death” (Heidegger, 1962: p.279). The question still remains, is it possible to *exist* after this form of death on the sparse diet, as it were, of empty executing, of being willing to execute, but with nothing to execute? Not only is Heidegger's answer to this a resounding “yes”; this affirmation becomes both the sole purpose for living *authentically*, as well as the rationale for the often misunderstood second Division of *Being and Time*, allowing a subtle re-appreciation not only of the first Division, but of the unfinished, though fragmentarily published, third Division²¹. As Carol White says of her long time engagement with §46-54, “[t]he new meaning taking shape in the chapter on death began to reach out into the surrounding chapters, especially the ones on *Dasein's* experience of time. The ontological level of the whole discussion in the second half of *Being and Time* shifted from the personal and subjective to the cultural and historical” (White & Ralkowski, 2005: p.I). (I have found Carol White's observations singularly constructive, consoling, and brave, with respect to appreciating Heidegger's notion of death, as I'm sure she did prior to her own death after a longstanding illness.) Her point about broadening the focus from the seemingly subjective *Dasein*, outwards to cultural and historical horizons, will have considerable implications in justifying this thesis's overarching intention of proposing a suspension (if that makes any sense at this stage) of a purely sequential, or more properly, chronological sense of time in understanding the order-execution cognate. To

²¹ Narrative in the remaining chapters will draw from these (Division III) works, which, in English translation, will include *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (Heidegger, 1995) and *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (Heidegger, 1982).

set the stage for this so-called suspension of a chronological sense of time using the foregoing, I can now show that the congruence between *standing-out* and *sequencing-out* allows me to claim that not only is “projecting” the basis on which my existence can continue to make sense in the face of, and subsequent to, Heideggerian death, but that death, properly speaking, is “project-less projecting” (Thomson, 2013: p.278, emphasis removed) in the face of world collapse: *mutatis mutandis*, that Heideggerian death can therefore equally be termed “execution-less execution”.

While there is the fortunate concurrency²² between the terms “execution” and “death,” and now that I have committed myself to an interpretation of what Heidegger calls “death” – namely, the project-less projecting we experience in the wake of “world-collapse” – it still does not quite make sense to say that suspending or arresting execution is itself a form of (Heideggerian) death; that *execution-less execution is a form of death*. An executive’s failure to carry out an order, while quite possibly incurring opprobrium, is not itself deathly. Simply claiming execution-less execution to be a form of death is a confusing locution, one which smacks of cod-Heideggerian blather from, what’s more, an ultra-orthodox neophyte. That said however, head bowed, I would still like to examine further the implications of this bastard and provisional phrase, if only to convince the reader that it is possible to conduct philosophical work on something so inane seeming and inviolable as my order-execution cognate. There are three approaches to examining this swapped out phrase *execution-less execution* that I would like to engage with to commence this job of work; these are normative, teleological and anxiety-based approaches.

With the last of these first, I will defer an extensive discussion of the anxiety-based approach to my next chapter, as there will be more to explore – with the help of Sanjay – about whether anxiety can or should be induced in the form of an executive education that prefigures *execution-less execution*. For the moment it is worth giving a preliminary introduction to Heidegger’s concept of anxiety (*Angst*) first, in a discussion around his analysis of death, since angst (hidden or otherwise) regarding our death has an impact on our preparedness for world-collapse, or as he calls it our “being-towards-death” (Heidegger, 1962: p.277). In that book, one of Heidegger’s few concessions to engaging the reader is the trope of a fake (usually leading) question, one of which he deploys with regard to angst, thus: “[h]ow is it that in anxiety *Dasein* gets brought before itself through its own Being, so that we can define phenomenologically the character of the entity disclosed in anxiety, and define it as such in its Being...?” (Heidegger, 1962: p.228): how indeed? Fortunately, having wrestled with his death concept thus far, we can relatively

²² Fortunate because apophantic, in the sense that Heidegger uses it (Heidegger, 1962: p.56) to mean letting something be seen as objectively true, distinct from deriving that truth via subjective judgements. For instance, it makes more sense to transpose the terms “execution” and “death” than it does “execution” and “life”: the former has an apophantical signification which the latter does not (though this did not stop Heidegger proceeding to mean by death a form of life).

easily, and in leisured fashion, gloss his fake question thus: “in glimpsing the nothingness of our familiar world via world-collapse, what is it that *compels* us to continue to embody our being, our *Dasein*, in project-less projecting, or in execution-less executions?” The not surprising answer to this is; our *angst*: which is reason enough to cue up a fuller examination of angst later. But he does not mean by this our fear of our eventual demise, going so far as to call such fear “cowardliness in the face of anxiety” (Heidegger, 1962: p.311). What I take it he means here is that our fear in the face of our impending demise is but a shield to block the even more horrific prospect of our actually surviving “world-collapse”: such standardly conceived fear is only a decoy to this horror. As Ian Thomson has it,

Heidegger’s startling claim – that our fear of our eventual demise is really just a way of fleeing our anxiety about the core self laid bare by the global collapse of worldly projects in what he calls “death” – is so strange that, as far as I know, no interpreter has explicitly thematized and addressed it. Instead, it is most often miscognized: death is misunderstood as demise (Thomson, 2013: p.279).

This is a rousing call, and one I would like to answer. As such, this observation of Thomson’s is the reason I have remained close to his interpretation of death in particular, in this thesis chapter. As I mentioned at the start of the “Standing-Out and Sequencing-Out” section, Thomson has taken the risky step of jumping over, in the fashion of Hubert Dreyfus (Dreyfus, 2005: in White & Ralkowski, 2005: p.xxxi), an array of interpretations of Heidegger’s death concept that fell short of engaging fully with the candidature of “world-collapse” as the potential meaning of death: risky since non-commensensical, or non-phenomenological, in the eyes of the “also-rans” – e.g. how can you survive death and who could make such a claim²³? Though it is Thomson’s critique of the champions of that interpretative struggle, John Haugeland and Carol White – the duo backed by Dreyfus (*ibid*) – that establishes the role played by angst as the pivot around which demise and death gain their new, post-commonsensual, senses. Of these two interpreters he says, “rightly insisting on the difference between death and demise should not lead us to err in the opposite direction, as Haugeland and White clearly do, prying death and demise so far apart that they entirely overlook the crucial interconnections linking the two phenomena together” (Thomson, 2013: p.275: see also see footnote 33, p.287). By completely un-associating demise from the existentially conceived death of “world-collapse”, as Haugeland does (Haugeland, 2000: p.66), it becomes difficult to reconcile Heidegger’s recurrent (in *Being and Time*) and angst-related themes

²³ Cue a Christian argument that places Christ in just such a position, thereby rescuing Heidegger’s discussion of death away from desacralized accusations of nihilism: see George Pattison in his book *Heidegger on Death: A Critical Theological Essay* (Pattison, 2013). I have a problem with taking this type of death (and resurrection) at face value, and so will not be pursuing Pattison’s argument.

of *fleeing*, *Das Man*, and *authenticity*²⁴ with the central role that death plays in his argument, especially when existential death is “the project-less projecting we experience in the wake of the global collapse of the inauthentic one-self [*Das Man*] each of us continually accrues [*flees*]” (Thomson, 2013: p.278, my emphasis). The fear we have of demise is perfectly justified; only we should see, says Heidegger, that particular fear as “noise” attenuating a barely perceptible, because preternatural, angst that accompanies existential death.

1.5 The Moment of World Collapse

It is tempting to imagine dastardly cartoon villains, or arch “baddies” in Bond movies, or hapless placard-wearing doom mongers, when considering something so absurdly totalising as “world-collapse,” especially in the context of our genteel philosophical lives – the lives of you as reader and me as writer of a philosophically oriented thesis. The fact that Heidegger is (deadly) serious might come as something of a shock²⁵. In setting out for us, in a chain of intricately interconnected arguments across the breadth of his philosophical writing, using freshly minted technical vocabularies, how we can come to terms with our own death and live more authentic lives, Heidegger certainly gives us pause to think more deeply about what the finitude of our existence reveals concerning the remaining *possibilities* of our existence. This deeper thinking about finitude makes most sense, not surprisingly I’d say, in relation to time. My engagement starts, in *Being and Time*, with the term *Augenblick*, translated as “the moment of vision,” which has two meanings in that text: the authentic present (Heidegger, 1962: p.387) and the unity of authentic time generally (Heidegger, 1962: p.376). At this early stage I’ve not had the chance to marshal my argument sufficiently to justify the value that *Augenblick* will bring to my time-focused analysis: suffice to say that “authentic time,” addressed by the term, affords, unsurprisingly, an appreciation and analysis of non-authentic time in its (negative) definition. As the Introduction stated, these two types of time I have assigned to the two parts of this thesis: chronic time, or less pejoratively, chronological or sequential time, to the three chapters of Part One; and *Kairotic* time, or the time of the “moment of vision,” to the three chapters of Part Two²⁶. My point, at this early stage, in jumping ahead to

²⁴ Concepts that I have not glossed, assuming some familiarity on the part of the reader with these in Division I of *Being and Time*.

²⁵ Though, as Andrew Haas suggests in his book *The Irony of Heidegger* (Haas, 2007), “what if all this were not so serious? And what if the feign to philosophical seriousness was merely a ploy?” (*ibid*: p.3). I’m sufficiently intrigued by the power of irony that I’ll use ironic readings of the more arcane and impenetrable portions of Heidegger’s texts to bring to attention what I take to be left-over, or remaindered (as the title of my Conclusion has it) interpretations from both uncritically orthodox and critically prejudiced receptions of his work.

²⁶ The “chronic” and “*Kairotic*” distinctions also form part of Frank Kermode’s argument about time, in his book *The Sense of an Ending* (2000), where, in the context of literary fiction, these same terms serve to contrast the reason of “*chronos*” from the imagination of “*Kairos*” (*ibid*: p.63), in order to highlight the mere successiveness in the interval between “tock-tick” (*ibid*: p.46) in works of literary fiction. Says Kermode, “the interval must be purged of simple chronicity, of the

the Part Two themed “moment of vision” (*Augenblick*) is to establish what Heidegger is trying to show us in the death/demise distinction: that it is possible to conceive of time as non-sequential, as not just the passing of “nows,” one after another, chronologically speaking, until the sequence of “nows” ends with our demise; but that, with existential death, what is revealed is an opening onto a different, a non-chronological notion of time, “a kairological time – in which a new order becomes possible, in which new possibilities for life, knowledge and the whole of human conduct open up” (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.1).

My demise comes at the end of my life, where my life is characterised chronologically, as a sequence of days, months, years, as well as a sequence of experiences, of relationships, of high points and low points, brutally put. My existential death comes when everything that gives my life meaning is swept away – which the tsunami metaphor illustrates equally brutally – and where I have to begin again in the wake of this catastrophic loss. Only in this second instance, in existential death, do I get the chance to see, and to subsequently act in the shadow of, my own totality, my own finitude, and experience what Felix Ó Murchadha, in his book *The Time of Revolution: Kairos and Chronos in Heidegger*, terms “Kairological time” (*ibid*). This experience is of “world-collapse” in all its horror, a world-collapse ripped of its scare quotes; a world-collapse all the more horrific because we survive it. At this stage of my argument, what I believe Heidegger is showing us in the death/demise distinction, *inter alia*, is an opportunity to acknowledge not just our finitude, which can come to us most days, in nothing like an extreme case of world-collapse; rather, the opportunity to acknowledge time differently, to experience a rupture in our standardly conceived, chronological and sequential conception of time. In short, that we can make some sense of what “authentic time” might be by dwelling on what existential death means. As we’ve seen, Heidegger calls this mode of preparedness “being-towards-death”.

Assuming that I can equate existential death with execution-less execution, and that I can dress this up to make sense: what use would that have for our executive Sanjay, exactly? Sanjay’s coming to terms with his being-towards-death – him confronting his anxiety about surviving a collapse of his world of meaning making, while still finding a way of living that embodies an understanding of being (the meaning of *Dasein*) – is not a big deal for him. He only has to look at where he’s come from to see the contingency of his existence thus far. As a sickly *Dalit*-caste child in the slum he has been close to demise several times: he’s also directly experienced his family losing everything they’ve owned, when the greedy property developers demolished their shack, kiln and entire livelihood. He and his family came through this episode, despite witnessing the

emptiness of *tock-tick*, humanly uninteresting successiveness” (*ibid*: p.46): echoes of Walter Benjamin’s “empty time” in *Illuminations* (Benjamin, 1999: p.263).

ongoing destruction all around them, where they never felt safe thereafter. And so what Heidegger is articulating in §46-54 of *Being and Time* about death is not much of a rupture for Sanjay; it's all rather normal, if a tad convoluted. The point at which it begins to resonate with Sanjay comes with Heidegger's talk of "authentic present," a moment which accurately describes how the young Sanjay, and his extended family, confronted the moments of their existential deaths. At no point during the immediate aftermath of their shack's destruction did despair or any notion of victimhood disrupt the resolve he felt towards his future existence. In his subsequent late adolescence, during his uptake of charity from an educational aid organisation, and his steady climb back into higher education as a consequence, Sanjay can ascribe the basis of this resolve, its source of energy, to his so-called moment of vision through his "existential death". This is a helpful articulation for Sanjay. Now, "magically," as a successful senior executive in X-Corp, he is disappointed not to have the stories he tells to his staff about his past precipitate a deeper understanding of how time is conceived, and how it could be re-conceived, inside that corporation. Time is running out for him to convey his resolve to his peers. As for execution-less execution, whilst it seems to describe a readiness for goal-less action, Sanjay is perfectly aware of the pressing orders that need executing against X-Corp's strategic imperatives of increasing shareholder return, and can make no sense of at the moment of an order-less execution.

Leaving Sanjay's narrative at this point, and as an update on the confession I made at the start of this chapter – the one that acknowledged the incongruity of the agenda that I have set myself the task of justifying, and how telling a burden this is for me – I would ask the reader to view my efforts in the light of providing alternative (and burdensome, because philosophical) ways of examining this phenomena called "executive education". The alternatives considered here are Heidegger's overlapping onto-ontological analyses of being that (unfortunately, unsurprisingly) betoken their own derision in the instrumentalized and vocationalized circles that purport to educate the patrons²⁷ of our globally neoliberalized society, alternatives which nonetheless face-off the standardly deployed counter-arguments couched in the ethical, psychological and scientific discourses, none of which are especially suited to uncovering a way of living that embodies an understanding of being (*Dasein*) of our executions. The rest of my burden refers to conducting this reappraisal while looking out from *within* the glass-walled towers of said circles, as one of the plotters²⁸ and not as one of my disaffected compatriots in the public spaces down below.

²⁷ I do not mean to preclude all of us as partaking of the fruits of such a society: we are all accomplices and patronisers of the neoliberal end game. I am not referring to some conspiratorially minded elite, either, as the rulers of such a society, as tempting and as convenient as this would be. The onto-ontological lessons of Heidegger and his interpreters apply equally to the Davos-attending chief executive and any mean-spirited banker, or member of the so-called one percent, as they do to any believer in existential death.

²⁸ See the Introduction chapter as a reminder of my own role in the provision of executive education.

With not much for you to go on at the moment, it still makes some initial sense to say, then, of our standardly chronological conception of time that it is askance of whatever Heidegger means by “authentic time,” the time of *Augenblick* or the moment of vision, or Kairological time. It also makes initial sense to say that our normative conceptions of “order” in the order-execution cognate, normally conceived, is a lexical representation of a modern-day skilful expedient that routinely sees orders executed, sequenced-out, in a timely (sequential, and therefore chronological) fashion. The ends towards which, and in the service of which, executions are sequenced-out are orders predicated on the *viability* of such sequencing. As the previous chapter’s list of modes of execution revealed, all examples of execution are based on a judgement of the likelihood of that order’s sequencing-out being sequenced-out, irrespective of value judgements surrounding the intent of the order or the competence of the mode of execution. Thus, a symphony being playable, a policy being implementable, a piece of software code being runnable; all of these executions are viable sequences. What, then, of this viability when it does not pertain to an actual execution, as in the case brought about by Heidegger’s concept of existential death; what would an *execution-less execution* reveal of the sequencing and of the original order? What would remain; and to whom should a schooling in this superseded execution fall? What sort of executive education curriculum would this constitute, if in fact it is even amenable to being the subject of an education?

Given the proximity of anxiety to one’s fear of death, and how, as Heidegger said in this chapter’s opening epigram “mortals die their death in life,” in the next chapter I will explore whether anxiety can or should be induced in the form of an executive education that prefigures execution-less execution; quite what profits this will secure; and against what resistances the vim of a Kairotic (non-chronological) take on time will be set.

Anxiety is Nothing

[A]nxiousness as a state-of-mind is a way of Being-in-the-world; that in the face of which we have anxiety is thrown Being-in-the-world; that which we have anxiety about is our potentiality-for-being-in-the-world. Thus the entire phenomenon of anxiety shows *Dasein* as factually existing Being-in-the-world. The fundamental ontological characteristics of this entity are existentiality, facticity, and Being-fallen.

(Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p.235)

2.1 Introduction

One of the motivating factors of this thesis is my concern about how the monological, hegemonic and ultimately iniquitous nature of contemporary western capitalism provides the main ordering principle¹ with which the figure of the corporate executive should make sense of their on-going professional development. Executive education, as part of this development process, is geared towards optimising an executive's capacity to execute against the corporate imperative, in turn, making the corporate more competitive in the market; executive education is therefore complicit in the iniquities of capitalism. I believe the state of "anxiety" to be one that adequately represents a fundamental orientation for this executive towards his or her hyper-capitalist existence. With only the race-to-the-top as that against which to judge one's success as a senior corporate executive, the losers are not only those executives that do not want to aspire to higher status or riches – suffering as a result the contempt of the paradigm cases of successful executives who (should) do – but all ordinary people whose indices of virtue are not a measure of the capacity to out-earn the greedy supermanager² or the asset and property owning billionaires. Suffering in a

¹ Other routinely accepted standards, or orders, with which to gauge the merit and worth of one's on-going professional development, independent of profession, are enjoyment, happiness and non-monetary reward from one's work.

² In Thomas Piketty's surprise bestseller, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Piketty, 2014) the senior executive is equated with what Piketty calls the "supermanager," thus: "The final and perhaps most important point in need of clarification is that the increase in very high salaries primarily reflects the advent of 'supermanagers,' that is, top executives of large firms who have managed to obtain extremely high, historically unprecedented compensation packages for their labor" (Piketty, 2014: p.302). As Danny Dorling says of these super-rich, in his *Inequality and the 1%* (2014), "[i]t is up to the rest of us to control these people – for their own good as well as ours. We can document their

state of anxiety is therefore a common experience, if not the default, for the executive; for the rest of us it may well constitute a midpoint between the feelings of oppression and resignation in our consumerist existences.

But this does not mean anxiety is always a negative state, or that it is a *psychological state* at all. Instead, following on from Ian Thomson, who remarks about “Heidegger’s startling claim – that our fear of our eventual demise is really just a way of fleeing our anxiety about the core self laid bare by the global collapse of worldly projects in what he calls ‘death’” (Thomson, 2013: p.279) in the previous chapter, I will introduce here a Heideggerian variety of anxiety; an anxiety which reveals the horror of world-collapse, an anxiety that has a decidedly existential outlook, but one that opens onto a more promising landscape than it would be routinely credited as giving, and one which will help me reconceive how the executive and executive educator should view “time” with respect to the order-execution cognate.

The purpose of the present chapter is to use Heidegger’s negative-seeming melancholic spirit of anxiety to reveal potentially exhilarating prospects for fundamental change, for both the individual executive and the corporations he or she works in, and most certainly for executive educators. This about-face for such a dreary seeming mood rests on a distinction between two types of time, the chronic and the *Kairoitic*; or rather, the extent to which our way of “finding” a living that embodies an understanding of being (which is our working definition of *Dasein*) appreciates and lives out both of these types of time in the process of “finding”.

I intend to oversee this unexpected transformation in three stages: firstly with an introduction to Heidegger’s unusual conception of anxiety as a rare occurrence of what he calls a “ground mood,” a manifestation of anxiety in marked contrast to the symptoms of the more clinical varieties of anxiety that we are familiar with and which are treatable psychopharmacologically and therapeutically; secondly, by introducing his notion of “nothingness” as that which is revealed in such a ground mood; thirdly, to introduce to the thesis Heidegger’s concept of “care” (*Sorge*), and with it the all-important correlate to that of being, namely *time*. In this fashion, together, we will steadily work our way through Heidegger’s baroque-sounding opening epigram, his own definition of “anxiety” from *Being and Time*. Turning to that epigram, my first introductory section will map from the “being-in-the-world” and run up to the second semi-colon: the second section on “nothingness” expanding on what our “potentiality-for-being-in-the-world” means; and the third section expanding on the last two sentences of the definition, unpacking what “factically” means

greed, the size of their yachts, the frequency with which they fly...” (*ibid*: p.173). How will executive education itself accommodate this scrutiny?

and revealing that “existentiality,” “facticity,” and “being-fallen” are correlates of the tensed³ temporal modes of future, past and present respectively.

Positively stated, in the language of *Being and Time*, in “being-towards-death” (Heidegger, 1962: p.279), and in being “ready for anxiety” (*ibid*: p.343), one is correspondingly open to anticipating one’s rebirth in the founding of a new form of life. As Joseph Shear affirms, “[this] prospect, while no doubt terrifying, could also be felt as exhilarating – at least for a being bent on a sustainably intelligible form of life, and so uniquely capable of fundamental change” (Shear, 2013: p.377), and it is in this vein that I wish to persist in using the more existential terminology of *Being and Time*’s Division II to both inform the reader, via contrastive effects, of normative executive education, and to suggest a reformative agenda for the education of executives in the autumn of their careers, consequentially. Negatively stated, however, the sense of malaise from all this talk of death – the previous chapter’s plangent sounding “loss of meaning” and “world-collapse,” added to which is this chapter’s avowal of Heideggerian anxiety, not to mention the forthcoming chapter on boredom – has cast a chronically melancholic⁴ pall over the proceedings, sufficient to render any serious examination of the life-meaning of corporate executives wholly ancillary, at most, to resuscitating glad tidings more generally for most of us. This is telling. By way of a sense of the majority of scholarly commentaries on Heidegger’s death concept analysed for this thesis⁵, a lack of sympathy for existentially nervous non-philosophers (let’s call them executives) is a predominant theme, usually couched in the scholarly elitism of self-referential Heidegger-speak (for instance, seldom in these commentaries was the commentator’s discussion of Heidegger’s death concept played out in sufficient illustration or example, as I intend to do in this thesis, with my fictional executive, Sanjay). However, given an unease with the state of melancholy for most of us, I would like to suggest a recuperative and re-enchanting service to the

³ I will not have the opportunity in this thesis to pursue debates centred on “tensed time” initiated by J.M.E McTaggart in his influential “The Unreality of Time” (1908); one built on extensively by Flood and Lockwood (1986), Mellor (1998), Oaklander (2014), Poidevin (2007), Tooley (1997); nor, for that matter, will I engage with the work of Henri Bergson (1910, 1912).

⁴ My choice of the term “melancholy” here is intended to reflect a grave, though popular, topic for writers and philosophers through the ages, one which I am uncertain Heidegger appreciated. I’m thinking of Robert Burton’s best seller *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Burton, 1621). Melancholy must also be mentioned as the cause of Michel de Montaigne’s writing of his *Essays* (Montaigne, 1580): “It was a melancholy humour... brought on by the chagrin caused by the solitary retreat I plunged myself into a few years ago, which first put into my head this raving concern with writing” (Montaigne, 1580: *Collected Essays*, II.8). Consider also Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic essay “Mourning and Melancholia” (2005), where he associates melancholy with the sense of loss, as experienced in mourning; and especially where this conjunction chimes with my Conclusion’s mourning for a disregarded “excess”. The border between chagrin (depression) and Heideggerian anxiety will be one this chapter will need to patrol, if the arguments here are not to be treated as mere dandyism.

⁵ Scholarly commentaries on Heidegger’s death concept from de Beistegui (2003), Blattner (2006), Dahlstrom (2013), Davis (2010), Dreyfus (1991), Dreyfus & Hall (1992), Dreyfus & Wrathall (2005), Gelven (1989), Gorner (2007), Guignon (1983, 1993), Haugeland (2013), Inwood (1999), King (2001), Kisiel (1993), Large (2008), May (1996), McManus (2015), Mulhall (1996), Ó Murchadha (2013), Pattison (2000), Polt (2005, 1999), J.Richardson (2012), W.J. Richardson (1963), White (2005), Wood (2002), Wrathall (2000, 2011, 2013a, 2013b), and Young (1997).

disaffected consumer, be that fellow scholar or executive, one that will be hinted at throughout this chapter and one which will draw on the distinction between chronic and *Kairotic* time, to which I will return later.

What is the reader to make of this negative character of both death and anxiety drawn from Heidegger's writings, other than attempting to extract propositional content from this melancholic reverie in the form of blunt didacticism?, where by "propositional content" I mean an idea or set of ideas expressible in declarative sentences⁶. For instance, such propositional content, such didacticisms could have taken the form of useful facts about coping in the face of death, such as living a healthier and longer life, or dealing with the death of a loved one, or managing the fear of one's own death, or learning about how other cultures and epochs have regarded death: sure enough. But instead I am suggesting that an examination of Heidegger's concept of death, and especially what it means to be "ready for anxiety," helps to *form* one's attitude to death, rather than *inform* one of the processes of death (assuming that such knowledge would be useful); and that this formative process with respect to death is the purpose of sustaining my melancholic focus on *Dasein's* individual and our society's collective finitude, especially with respect to the singular and collective class of *Dasein* as the highly influential *sequencer-out* and subject of the order-execution cognate. In this chapter, and using Heidegger's concept of anxiety, I would like to draw a distinction between examining what Heidegger's text says about death and instead look to what it *does*; and this for two reasons. Firstly, to blunt the beak of the fiercely extractive disposition within normative executive education discourses that would asset-strip Heidegger's text (or this thesis) for usable material; a disposition whose predatory force I am keen at least to reveal as normative, if not attempt to arrest. And secondly, to show that the eminently ignorable philosophic processes on display for the "meaning mongering" (Landy, 2012: p.8) executive, or executive educator even, serve several purposes, only one of which is to act as a quarry for meaning. To illustrate the thrall by which we are compelled, in our disenchanting⁷ modern world – and in the light of Heidegger's melancholic and existential vein that I am concentrating on here – to seek endorsement from some source of authority for the manifold candidates to life's meaning, I would like to borrow from the discipline of literature studies the notion of "enchantment," especially,

⁶ I am indebted to Joshua Landy, and his book *How to do Things with Fictions* (Landy, 2012: p.3), for an introduction to the use of fiction as a formative aid in the process of training, distinct from its unquestioned use as a mere quarry for meaning.

⁷ As Max Weber wrote in 1917, "The fate of our times is characterised by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world'" (Weber, cited in Gerth and Wright Mills, 1946, my emphasis). As Joshua Landy and Michael Saler introduce their book *The Re-Enchantment of the World* (Landy & Saler, 2009), Weber was in good company with his pronouncement of disenchantment, preceded as he was by the German Romantics of Schiller and Goethe, as well as by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.

given my interest in motivations surrounding the order-execution cognate, where efforts at re-enchancing our world can bring purpose, meaning and *order* to our lives.

The comparative literature scholar Joshua Landy, in reference to his Austin-like attempt to show how to do things with fictions (in his book of that title; Landy, 2012), dismisses the three main branches of espoused theoretic purpose of fiction – purposes that are *exemplary*, *affective* and *cognitive* respectively – in preference for a fourth, *formative*, which serves for more than the unquestioning transmission of propositional content. Of fictions he says that:

Rather than providing knowledge per se – whether propositional knowledge, sensory knowledge, knowledge by acquaintance, or knowledge by revelation – what they give us is *know-how*; rather than transmitting beliefs, what they equip us with are *skills*; rather than teaching, what they do is *train*. They are not informative, that is, but formative. They present themselves as spiritual exercises (whether sacred or profane), spaces for prolonged and active encounters that serve, over time, to hone our abilities and thus, in the end, to help us become who we are (Landy, 2012: p.10, emphasis in original).

I would like to acknowledge and suggest that Heidegger's writing on death, and especially the demonstrative role he sees anxiety playing in *Dasein's* being-towards-death in his works such as *Being and Time* (Heidegger 1962) and in *What is Metaphysics* (Heidegger, 1978a), can and should be treated in Landy's formative sense if one is to *a)* confront the fiercely extractive attitude towards texts as sources of instrumental knowledge only, and *b)* divert attention towards acquiring new skills, some of which are applicable to superseding, as was introduced in the previous chapter, the order-execution cognate in the light of questioning our hyper-capitalist existence. As to why I am distracting you with theories from comparative literature at this stage of my argument; it is so that I can show how an engagement with the above texts can precipitate a *practical* execution of how Heideggerian anxiety can be beneficial for our executive, particularly with respect to assessing their own relationship to the order-execution cognate – that provisional candidate acting as the stated purpose of all executive education activity, the goal towards which executive education is oriented.

2.2 What is Heideggerian Anxiety?

We first come across the term *anxiety* in *Being and Time* in §39 (Heidegger, 1962: p.227), just as Heidegger introduces the need for *Dasein* to introduce itself to itself for the purposes of grasping what its being really is: although he has been experimenting with the concept of *Bekümmernung* (worry) since around 1920, where he says “worry is the care of existence” in his 1922 lecture course on Aristotle (Heidegger, 2001: p.112), which is why I am keen to link *anxiety* and *care* together later in this chapter. We most of us care about our existence, and face this care

especially in how fragile our existence really is. This acknowledgement of fragility in care arises, via Heidegger's early-career interest in the phenomenology of religion, in the form of the German term "angst" (anxiety or anxiousness), a term borrowed from Søren Kierkegaard's text *The Concept of Anxiety* (1844) on the use of repeated renewal and spiritual unrest, and a term in common use in English in post-Freudian psychological literature. The reason for his interest comes from the urgent, but often hidden, need he sees humans having in *finding ourselves in the world*. As we saw from the previous chapter, our acknowledging the state of *being-in-the-world* is fundamental to Heidegger's project, and anything that assists in this acknowledgment is given prominence in *Being and Time*. The mechanism by which Heidegger throws the focus, as it were, on our ability to confront our own being is via the unexpected identification of "moods" as the site of this confrontation; and not the superficial sorts of moods we would naturally consider when we first hear the term "mood". His interest instead is in the status of some moods as fundamental or "ground" moods (*Grundstimmung*): angst, or anxiety, is just such a ground mood, as is boredom, a concept concerning which he has much more to say in *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (Heidegger 1995) published two years after *Being and Time*, and with which I will engage in the next chapter.

The way in which "Dasein brings itself before itself" (Heidegger, 1962: p.226) in the ground mood of anxiety is the way in which anxiety allows all our practical involvements in the world to fall away. In the previous chapter I introduced his notion of "uncanniness" (*unheimlichkeit*) or not "being-at-home," and it is Heidegger's ground mood concept of anxiety that precisely interferes with our ability to lose ourselves in the activities of everyday life, and to mess with our feeling at home in the routines we normally and comfortably fall into: in fact, Heidegger calls this everyday comfortable mood one of "evasion" or "falling" (Heidegger, 1962: p.178). Thus, through the mechanism of the ground mood of anxiety, Heidegger has successfully revealed the presupposed⁸ structure of our being-in-the-world, which was his urgent purpose: "*that in the face of which one has anxiety... is Being-in-the-world as such*" (Heidegger, 1962: p.230, emphasis in original). In

⁸ If in fact it is presupposed. As a refutation of the "being-in-the-world" concept see the debate between John McDowell and Hubert Dreyfus (*Mind, Reason, and Being-in-the-World*, Joseph K Schear, 2013). McDowell opens his response to Dreyfus's Heidegger-inspired defence of 'absorbed coping' in being-in-the-world by saying that we, rather, stand in the "space of reasons". Of this space McDowell says "The epistemological significance of the experience of rational subjects is that when our experiencing is perceiving, as it can be, features of the environment are perceptually present to us in a way that provides us with opportunities for knowledge, of a kind that is special to rational knowers: knowledge that is, to echo Wilfred Sellars, a standing in the space of reasons" (Schear, 2013: p.42). McDowell refutes Dreyfus when the latter accuses him of perpetuating a "myth of the pervasiveness of the mental," as the debate has it, and of maintaining a distance to the world via a conception of disengaged mindedness. Says McDowell of this accusation that Dreyfus' insistence that being-in-the-world denotes the proper site of experience, "his interpretation of my picture of acting is shaped by his importing the assumption that mindedness necessarily brings detachment with it" (*ibid*: p.45), calling this the "myth of the mind as detached". If nothing else, this particular clash of respective myths brings one to ask what extra condition is being defended in one's insisting that "being-in-the-world," in its seeming proximity to the world of experience, is the more true condition of our existence.

bringing being-in-the-world into conspicuous view it is hoped the reader can now begin to make a connection between his concept of death – “*Death is, as Dasein’s end, in the Being of this entity towards its end*” (Heidegger 1962: p.303, emphasis in original) – together with his interpreters’ glossing of that concept as world-collapse, from Haugeland and White, via Dreyfus (Dreyfus 2005: p.xxxi), and the place anxiety has in revealing to us that which can collapse in that this particular ground mood⁹ is an embodiment of *Dasein’s* “being-towards-its-end”. Even if this is clear, how are these relations relevant to the senior corporate executive? Firstly, that death is openness to a vulnerability that leaves only one’s ability to execute when there is nothing meaningful remaining to execute, or *execution-less execution*; that Heideggerian death leaves one open to continue with one’s executive skills intact, even though the clearly identifiable ends towards which one exploits these skills no longer exist. Secondly, that world collapse is the conscious state where the “world” of one being-in-the-world can be exchanged for another “world” of being-in-the-world, but where the new world is not clearly perceived. Thirdly, that Heideggerian anxiety brings before the executive’s attention that which they are routinely and unreflexively engaged in; those engrossing activities which previously gave their executive lives meaning and reveal what it is one has anxiety about, namely “being-in-the-world” as such; and which could therefore serve some purpose in revealing a new “world” or new order. Along with Felix Ó Murchadha, I’m claiming that Heidegger’s concept of *Augenblick*, as the moment of vision, provides the *Kairotic* time sufficient to disclose being:

[i]ts being is, however, disclosed to Dasein only in moments of vision (*Augenblicke*), which occur for Dasein in its affective state (*Befindlichkeit*) [or ‘mood’]. The affective state of Dasein is manifest concretely in specific moods. Such moods for Heidegger are either affects of its engrossment with entities, as for example is the case with fear, or disclose for Dasein its ontological state, as in the case with Angst (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.62).

In terms of something approaching my overall argument thus far, it seems conceivable that an executive experiencing a form of Heideggerian anxiety could be the catalyst for opening the way for the collapsing (however this is conceived) of one “world” order in exchange for another, leaving intact the executive’s capacity to execute in this, as yet unconceived, alternative world. For instance, perhaps this world-collapse, this existential death, is a blow dealt to the current epoch’s monological, hegemonic and iniquitous order of western capitalism; maybe, via a reconceived education process for these executives, maybe not; but an alternative *ordering* principle nonetheless, one which can be disclosed by “anxiety-ready” senior executives, whose execution

⁹ In the next chapter I will reveal a subtle modal variation with which Heidegger’s other ground mood, boredom, reveals more of nothingness, itself the subject of the next section in this chapter.

within this new order is assured by these “anxiety-ready” executives’ abilities surviving existential death intact, as we saw in the previous chapter. Though this does all seem rather far-fetched and under-baked. All the same, my wish is to convince the reader that there is hope still to be had in the figure of the executive; that a timely change in appreciation of such an everyday mood as anxiety has the power to break the hold which the unreflectively conceived order-execution cognate has over the executive; and that executive educators face squarely their responsibilities of sanctioning the rise of Piketty’s “supermanagers” (Piketty, 2014: p.302).

The previously stated aim of this chapter is to use Heidegger’s anxiety concept to challenge the dominance of the order-execution cognate in the education of late-career executives. The dominance of this cognate rests on an assumption that the executive’s and their corporation’s betterment consists in one or several of the following conditions pertaining: either better orders being issued, or better execution of those orders being carried out, or a stronger assessment of the relevance of the orders issued relative to the corporation’s mission and circumstance, or stronger accountability for the means available with which those orders are executed – where “better” and “stronger” are used relative to any current state within the corporation, and where “order” refers to a command issued by the senior corporate executive on behalf of his or her corporation and/or shareholders. I am claiming that all education-oriented (or instruction, training, or development oriented) endeavours under the title of executive education are measurable against this cognate, against the fact of orders being issued and executed, in whatever fashion. The question is, *which* orders, and which orders based on what conditioning or *overarching* order? Assuming the reader subscribes to the view that the averagely conceived senior corporate executive is not only existing under the ubiquitous state of globalised capitalism, as we all are, but is in fact uniquely contributing to the successes and excesses of that capitalist state in the guise of their existing as an executor of orders inside their corporation, itself an active component of iniquitous capitalist wealth generation, then it is a contracted expectation¹⁰ that they issue orders and execute orders to the best of their ability, and to the financial betterment of their shareholders¹¹. It is against the overarching order of capitalism that the senior executive issues his or her orders, where here I am conflating the two (at least two) senses of order I referenced in the Introduction. This, in turn, reinforces the grounds for a relationship, albeit non-dependent, between the executive and a form of executive education based on the order-execution cognate, in the sense of the cognate acting as a proxy for the most primordial motivation for continuing to accumulate wealth in the fashion that Thomas Piketty identifies in his blockbuster book about the delinquencies of capitalism:

¹⁰ Albeit only a psychological contract, rather than a stipulated clause written into their formal employment contract.

¹¹ At least for publicly listed profit making enterprises; though the not-for-profit sector has also to successfully generate sufficient profit, from whichever sources, to cover their costs and invest back into the business.

though it is conceivable, if unlikely, that an executive may never have, nor ever will, engage in formal executive education of the type announced in the Introduction. What else can we say of the corporate attributes of this executive figure?

The late career executive has either passed or is situated at his or her mid-life point. Following Christopher Hamilton, in paraphrasing George Eliot in *Middlemarch*, perhaps “there is a kind of astonished recognition at this [mid] stage of life that we have been... ‘well-wadded in stupidity’ and could not see this” (Hamilton, 2009: p.29), not least bare the fact that there is no escape from this very condition, that it will persist, and that we only have ourselves to blame for not sloughing off this wadding of stupidity sooner. Whilst hardly the last word on the causes and symptoms of mid-life crisis, Hamilton’s observations at least situate our executive in a likely state as he or she takes part in an educative process for their espoused benefit¹² – an educative process espoused and offered by the relevant management (usually the department of “Human Resources”) inside their corporation. Maybe our executive is simply exhausted by their seemingly endless “falling” to work within the large corporation in which they’ve struggled these past years, and are dumbfounded as to why each upward rung of the career ladder brings them no nearer a sense of satisfaction with their wider lives, despite increases in remuneration. Maybe they’ve had cause to reflect on their mortality; maybe they can see no end to their struggle to find meaning to their (corporate) existence, as well see all too clearly their own end, their own (corporate, as in “bodily”) demise. Perhaps mention of ‘evasion’ has been a moment of vision when they’ve caught themselves giving the nod to that hidden, other, non-corporate figure¹³ of themselves. Perhaps the break offered by a short programme of executive development secures precious time to linger with such ruminations: perhaps it doesn’t; perhaps the prospect of such navel-gazing seems too outlandish for this executive’s august standing in their organisation. Even if all of these possibilities for our executive were to come to pass, would they likely occasion a concerted reflection of this *Dasein’s* being towards its end – an object of anxiety?

¹² Says Piketty about the statistical correlation between high levels of remuneration and productivity in the US, “[t]o my mind, the most convincing explanation for the explosion of the very top US incomes is the following. As noted, the vast majority of top earners are senior managers of large firms. It is rather naïve to seek an objective basis for their high salaries in individual ‘productivity’. When a job is replicable, as in the case of an assembly-line worker or fast-food server, we can give an approximate estimate of the ‘marginal product’ that would be realized by adding one additional worker or waiter... But when an individual’s job functions are unique, or nearly so, then the margin of error is much greater. Indeed, once we introduce the hypothesis of imperfect information into standard economic models..., the very notion of ‘individual marginal productivity’ becomes hard to define. In fact, it becomes something close to a pure ideological construct on the basis of which a justification for higher status can be elaborated” (Piketty, 2014: p.330-331). This, along with similar conclusions of Piketty’s, does not bode well for correlating the positive effects on productivity as a result of executive education.

¹³ As T.S. Eliot’s *Waste Land* has it, “who is the third who always walks besides you/...Gliding wrapt in a brown mantle, hooded” (Eliot, 1974: p.67), perfectly portrayed in Charlie Kaufman’s phantasmic movie *Synechdoche, New York* (2008).

My interest, in playing out as it were in an St Ignatius Loyola¹⁴ oriented exercise of the type Joshua Landy suggests above (Landy, 2012: p.10), what an active engagement in a *Dasein's* "wakefulness for itself" (Heidegger, 2001: p.113) might look like, stems from a combination of factors. Most notably from the congruence afforded to such an exercise by Heidegger's own two-week probation in the novitiate of a Jesuit monastery in Tisis in the province of Vorarlberg, Austria (Ott, 1993: p.56, and Safranski, 1998: p.14). Neither Hugo Ott nor Rudiger Safranski, as Heidegger biographers, provide evidence that Heidegger underwent the rigorous version of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises as part of his postulancy¹⁵; but he did continue on with his studies of Catholic theology, and it is implausible that Loyola's exercises were not known to him, nor that their spiritual, theological and existential effect remained unappreciated. My point about the genesis of Heidegger's specifically existential oriented thinking – his deep regard for an Augustinian self-certainty (*City of God*, 11.26) that, in his view, is more profound than that of Descartes (Kisiel, 1993: p.106), and his claim, in October 1920, that he was "still really a theologian" (letter to Löwith, quoted in Kisiel, 1993: p.150) – is that it has a religious substance. This fact alone is unremarkable, save for it vouchsafing my interest in the spiritual aspects of anxiety; an interest that will be met with much derision in the circles of executive education, and one that will be the subject of unqualified contempt from the ranks of business school academics charged with intellectually underwriting¹⁶ the contemporary capitalist and neoliberal¹⁷ order and blindly¹⁸ educating executives into that order. But that is not a reason not to proceed with my investigation, albeit cautiously, which is why I would like to return to the work of Charles Taylor and punctuate this investigation of Heideggerian anxiety with a look at how a possible equivalent to our "ground mood" might manifest in our secular age: fortunately, Taylor has hit upon a promising nexus of candidates in his work on melancholy and the opportunities for remedial re-enchantment therefrom in the face of the "malaises of modernity".

¹⁴ The (1491-1556) founder of The Society of Jesus, otherwise known as the *Jesuits*. Loyola is also famous for his Spiritual Exercises, a set of Christian meditations that are divided into themes and set to be carried out over 30-days. The Spiritual Exercises still remain an important part of the early spiritual development of novices in training in all Jesuit seminaries around the world.

¹⁵ I stray into this conjecture only because I too have been a postulant and a novice monk in a contemplative monastic order and know well the all-consuming religious *enthusiasms* experienced.

¹⁶ According to David Harvey, "the advocates of the neoliberal way now occupy positions of considerable influence in education (the universities and 'think tanks'), in the media, in corporate boardrooms and financial institutions..." (Harvey, 2005: p.3).

¹⁷ David Harvey introduces it thus: "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey, 2005: p.2).

¹⁸ Writing about the unfulfilled promise of management as a profession, Rakesh Khurana, himself in the profession of a business school academic, notes of this self-inflicted blindness of business schools that "[t]he market logic that has taken over business schools... has prevented us from even seeing that there might be an alternative to either markets or regulation as a way of preserving the integrity of our capitalist system...we have no meaningful language for civic discourse about the ultimate purpose of our secular institutions" (Khurana, 2007: p.379).

In the chapter of that title, in his work *The Secular Age* (Taylor, 2007: pp.299-321), and speaking of what he calls our “buffered identity” – the modern self that has closed the boundary between interior thought and exterior nature, and in a contrary manner to the pre-modern self for whom the boundary was wholly porous – he attributes to this lack of porosity a corresponding disenchantment and a causal factor of our modern malaise:

The buffered identity is deeply anchored in our social *order*, our embedding in *secular time*, the disengaged disciplines we have taken on. This anchoring ensures our *invulnerability*. But it can also be lived as a limit, even a prison, making us blind or insensitive to whatever lies beyond this *ordered* human world and its instrumental-rational project. The sense can easily arise that we are missing something, cut off from something, that we are living behind a screen (Taylor, 2007: p.301-2, my emphasis).

According to Taylor, we have made ourselves invulnerable to a cosmos of spirits and forces, to the “higher times” given by Augustine (*Confessions XI*) that were not an Aristotelian numerical succession of chronological instants of “now,” but rather the *Kairotic* gathering together of past into present to project a future¹⁹, and which found expression in the liturgical calendar as well as in *Carnival* (Taylor, 2007: p.56): this invulnerability is currently manifest in our mechanistic and staunchly chronological view of the time of the universe, and in our embrace of homogenous, empty and purely secular time (*ibid*: p.300) that is not especially the privy of business schools. The vision of a screen being withdrawn, to reveal who knows what, is at once compelling and absurd: formerly, via our compulsion and quest to fill gaps in our knowledge; latterly, via the mantle of our hubris in having ratiocinated all there is to know; both of which stances betray a suspicion of there being any need to acknowledge the metaphor of “porosity” at all. But I don’t believe this, and am comfortable, as Taylor is (as is John Haugeland, 2013: p.239), with assuming that our remaining in a state of vulnerability is a good thing. And as a test of this appetite for vulnerability, I would like to introduce a contender for that which can be revealed from behind the screen: “nothing,” or “nothingness,” a topic that Taylor does not directly address (in *The Secular Age*) but which Heidegger does.

2.3 Nothingness

Heidegger gives direct address to nothingness in the context of anxiety in his 1929 inaugural lecture to his fellow researchers, teachers and students at Freiburg University,

¹⁹ The allusion here, in Taylor’s work, to Heidegger’s project in *Being and Time* is no coincidence. Speaking of Augustine’s view of “lived time” Taylor says “The past, which ‘objectively’ exists no more, is here in my present; it shapes this moment in which I turn to a future, which ‘objectively’ is not yet, but which is here qua project. In a sense, Augustine may be thought to have foreshadowed the three ekstaseis of Heidegger” (Taylor, 2007: p.56).

subsequently translated and published under the title “What is Metaphysics?” (Krell, 1978: p.93-110). We can almost picture the scene: a new and famous faculty member joining the university community, with an expectant audience keen to hear, comprehend and assess what he has to say about his recently published *magnum opus*. How intrigued the audience must have been. Coming two years after the publication of *Being and Time*, we see in this lecture the inclusion of boredom as an accompanying and equivalent “ground mood” to anxiety mentioned in this text, translated as “the founding mode of attunement²⁰ [*Befindlichkeit der Stimmung*]” (*ibid*: p.100), which, as in my section above, refers to *Dasein* coming before itself. Only, in this lecture, Heidegger prefigures his introduction of the purpose of ground moods as *Dasein*’s self-revelation, as it were, with reference to that against which *Dasein* and all of humanity’s scientific endeavours are pitted, namely nothing: it is as if he is backing his intrigued audience into an epistemological corner, most of whom he recognises as having no appetite to consider “nothing” no matter how ontologically oriented it may be. His empathetic strains can be heard in the following:

The nothing – what else can it be for science but an outrage and phantasm? If science is right, then only one thing is sure: science wishes to know nothing of the nothing. Ultimately this is the scientifically rigorous conception of the nothing. We know it, the nothing, in that we wish to know nothing about it (Heidegger 1929, in Krell, 1978: p.98).

This is an empathy that serves my readers of this thesis too, and the associated executive education audiences sceptical of any supposedly business- or management-oriented discourse that is not directly oriented to profit maximisation. To bring to a point the enormity of the scepticism Heidegger faces from this particular address, in light of the wan counter of empathic reasoning in the above quote, I too should consider the enormity (the burden I referred to in the previous chapter) of outrage from my assembled audience.

On behalf of all business executives in the world, and echoing the longstanding academic split between *poiesis* and *praxis*, the question still stands: What possible relevance do reflections on anxiety and nothingness have for increasing shareholder value, say? Or, theoretically put: What conceivable purpose do questions of ontology have with a body (etymologically, a corpse, a corps, hence corporate) charged solely with an ontic commitment of profit maximisation? And where do those with apparently ancillary educational responsibilities stand with regard to this ontological/ontic stand-off, given the crisis of capitalism with which we are currently all gripped? Surely, the only anxieties we should be considering are the worries of making insufficient profit for

²⁰ Attunement first appears in *Being and Time* (p.172) when Heidegger introduces what Macquarrie & Robinson, the translators, misleadingly term “state-of-mind”. Heidegger equates our *Befindlichkeit* with every-day “mood” (*Gestimmtsein* or *Gestimmtheit*) or “attunement” (*Stimmung*). As we have seen earlier, Felix Ó Murchadha translates *Befindlichkeit* as “affective state” (see footnote 51, p.206 in Ó Murchadha, 2013).

our host organisation, of feeling anxious about our jobs; or feeling anxious about climate-change-induced global apocalypse, hijacked planes, chemical attacks, SARS, swine flu or Ebola, drug-resistant tuberculosis, and the abiding stresses of a worldwide economic slowdown and of a global economy undergoing seemingly constant upheaval²¹. The modern, in Taylor's parlance, are not short of anxieties. Melancholy was not the preserve of the pre-moderns. After the Freudian term *Angst* entered our vocabulary, we have become more loquacious with respect to describing anxiety. For instance, the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (currently in its fifth edition) lists and defines hundreds of anxiety disorders, a number significantly up from the first edition of that work in 1950. Not unlike Robert Burton's wonderful *The Anatomy of Melancholy* of 1621, we have graced our vocabulary with multiple terms for anxiety, gladly referring to *melaina chole* (Greek for "black bile"), as Scott Stossel tell us, "as 'melancholy,' 'angst,' 'hypochondria,' 'hysteria,' 'vapors,' 'spleen,' 'neurasthenia,' 'neurosis,' 'psychoneurosis,' 'depression,' 'phobia,' 'anxiety,' and 'anxiety disorder' – and that's leaving aside such colloquial terms as 'panic,' 'worry,' 'dread,' 'fright,' 'apprehension,' 'nerves,' 'nervousness,' 'edginess,' 'wariness,' 'trepidation,' 'jitters,' 'willies,' 'obsession,' 'stress,' and plain old fear" (Stossel, 2013: pp.34-35). I take Heidegger's attempt at empathy very seriously, in the face of a general bewilderment at the notion of nothingness, especially given our exhausted familiarity with all of the above forms of clinical anxiety, together with our private and ongoing sufferance and possible medication for such²².

However, Heidegger nevertheless does continue to back his audience off their comfortable chairs in "What is Metaphysics?" by continuing to claim that it is via our founding mode, or fundamental, attunements, our ground moods, that *nothing* is revealed to us:

Does such an attunement, in which man is brought before the nothing itself, occur in human existence? This can and does occur, although rarely enough and only for a moment, in the fundamental mood of anxiety (*ibid*: p.100).

Although he is at pains here, as he is in *Being and Time* in §39, to distance anxiety from fear (Heidegger, 1962: p.227), he is also sufficiently empathic to acknowledge that we generally do our utmost to avoid anxiety: not because of fear of encountering nothingness head on, but because we

²¹ This breathless list of anxieties, and the subsequent marathon of scare-quoted surrogates for the term anxiety, is taken from Scott Stossel's book *My Age of Anxiety: Fear, Hope, Dread and the Search for Peace of Mind* (Stossel, 2013: p.18), in my attempt to understand how Heideggerian anxiety differs from modern-day clinical anxiety. In the UK, from a report in 2009 by the "Mental Health Foundation," (quoted in Stossel, 2013: p.18) fifteen percent of the population stated that they are currently suffering from an anxiety disorder, a proportion whose rates are increasing. Aside from so-called "talking therapies" the principle treatments for anxiety disorders are pharmacological medication, using such brand name drugs as Thorazine. Imipramine. Desipramine. Chlorpheniramine. Nardil. BuSpar. Prozac. Zoloft. Paxil. Wellbutrin. Effexor. Celexa. Lexapro. Cymbalta. Luvox. Trazodone. Levoxyl. Propanadol. Tranxene. Serax. Centrax. St John's wort. Zolpidem. Valium. Librium. Ativan. Xanax. Klonopin (Stossel, 2013: p.7).

²² A helpful accompaniment to Stossel's book, and one that puts Heidegger's interest in the state of anxiety into perspective, is the historical study of anxiety by Allen Horwitz, *Anxiety: A Short History* (2013).

seldom realise anxiety properly conceived, which explains why he claims anxiety of this nature to be rare. Rather mystically put, he says of this oblivion from anxiety that “[b]eing held out into the nothing – as Dasein is – on the ground of concealed anxiety is its surpassing of beings as a whole. It is transcendence” (Heidegger, 1929, in Krell, 1978: p.106), which I take to mean the *Kairotic* moment of vision when we realise that our existence takes place in the context of no-thing, which can only focus attention back on our own being, suspended, as it were, in this field of nothingness. As elliptical as this quote sounds, its concision well matches its transcendent subject. That we are well wadded in our everyday “feeling at home” (*heimlich*), falling into our tranquilised occupations and oblivious to any transcendence, adds piquance, pathos and reverence²³ to any utterance denoting the possibility of living in a state to the contrary – in my view, anyway – in the way that artists, sculptors and architects through the ages have similarly worked to evince a sense of the transcendent in art to those who stumble in off the street and stand before their work in churches and galleries, gawping. Heady stuff for our executive too, though he or she is not especially under-privileged to gasp and grasp the opportunity for awe here. Our archetypal senior executive, in falling-to-work and feeling at home in “executing” and “projecting” for their multinational corporation, in the glass tower just across the street, as it were, is no more qualified for evasion from anxiety and nothingness, by dint of their executions, than the zero-hour-contract worker on a building site three doors down, by dint of theirs. Whilst I am keen to draw a distinction between the respective statuses of comparative wealth, benefits, security, healthcare, educational background and future education, training and development prospects between the senior corporate executive and the zero-hour-contract worker²⁴, I draw no distinction between their respective competencies to uncover opportunities to experience Heideggerian anxiety, regarding those as equal. This particular equality – that all human agents, normally considered, *ceteris paribus*, are capable of openness and vulnerability – is central to my argument²⁵ where, in this instance, that towards which we are all equal is this sense of nothingness. The next sections will

²³ If nothing else, the sentiments expressed here at least nudge the argument back in the direction of the sacred/secular distinction, even if it is to flatly denounce the existence of any transcendent whatsoever as Taylor’s modern “buffered identity” is more likely to do. At most, the sentiments provide impetus for us to conceive of Taylor’s metaphorical screen and then throw it back, in an attitude of resolved-ness and vulnerability.

²⁴ It was from reading Polly Toynbee’s book *Hard Work* (2003) and Toynbee and David Walker’s *Unjust Rewards* (2008) – as well as from an extended embrace with the writing of Noam Chomsky (1998, 2003a, 2003b), Ernesto Laclau (1985, 1996, 2004, 2005), Chantal Mouffe (1985, 1993, 2005) and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000, 2005) and recently, Thomas Piketty (2014) – that I became aware of the contrast between the respective orders, or ranks, of those managed and those who manage that was at the core of the executive educative provision I was involved in supporting. This sparked my interest in exploring whether the order/execution distinction need always be so partisan and unequal. Was I colluding in and perpetuating (e.g. executing) the particularly oppressive ordering of capitalism and neoliberalism, so anathema to the above authors, via the implicit ranking (ordering) of the enfranchised versus the disenfranchised, as part of my support of a process of undemocratic education? It seems as though I am: this thesis has been an opportunity to explore some alternatives.

²⁵ As it is to most religions espousing some form of salvation, redemption or enlightenment.

pursue these inequalities and equalities further, establishing a proxy with which to supersede the commanding motivation in the order-execution cognate.

Heidegger claims that from a position of *Dasein* encountering nothingness in its transcendence, and thereby looking back from that nothingness to our form of being (*Dasein* again, but this time in its being-in-the-world) in our everyday falling back to everyday activities, is to have identified the subject of metaphysics proper, and to have placed nothingness and being on an equal and dependent footing. According to Heidegger, “[o]nly in the nothing of *Dasein* do beings as a whole, in accord with their most proper possibility – that is, in a finite way – come to themselves” (*ibid*: p.108), going so far as to claim that our scientific endeavours are themselves dependent on a nothingness that gives being meaning (*ibid*: p.109). Space does not permit an extended engagement with philosophical criticisms of metaphysics *per se*, such as those of Ayer, Quine or Strawson, though Heidegger’s stance will be criticised in subsequent chapters of this thesis, since it would seem that Heidegger is establishing properties that nothingness exemplifies, e.g. “being,” at the same time as endorsing the scientific method which relies on observable properties. What is observable of nothingness? He would claim that it is only on the basis of nothingness that things mattering to us show up as mattering at all. What matters to us, what we care about, are the projects that we execute. This is a cue to introduce Heidegger’s notion of “care,” one that appears in and around his work *Being and Time*, but which appears less frequently in his later thinking, up until his engagement with the concept of “appropriating event,” which will have an important part to play in my argument and be the topic of my penultimate thesis chapter.

2.4 Care

Being matters to *Dasein*, especially with a *Dasein* wracked by anxiety. Absorbed in the world of its concerns, that things “are” and that *Dasein* itself “is”; these are the concerns of all of us. These concerns, broadly conceived, have what Mark Wrathall and Max Murphey have categorised as both “affective” and “projective” dimensions to them (Wrathall and Murphey, 2013: pp.18-19). Our *affective* concerns are indicated by the English expressions involving the locutions of “care about” or “couldn’t care less about”. What is cared about are generally those things that matter to me, that affect me, that touch me and for the sake of which I take an active interest; and obversely in instances where I do not care. Our *projective* concerns emerge from expressions involving the locution “taking care of,” where my taking care of something means I have made myself responsible to act with respect to that which I care about: I am projecting my concern towards something, committing myself towards some project about which I care. Already, in the

projective dimension, there is more than a hint of temporality: what I care about is something towards which I project my actions and concerns, as in the case of executing, as there is, though less obviously, in the backward looking affective dimension, in that I am touched by something that I care about because I always have been, that my being affected by something is condition of the state of who I have become. Likewise, my falling to current projects, my caring about what I am doing right now, concerns the immediate present: the “omnitemporal” – as Eric Auerbach, in his book *Mimesis* (2003: p.161), calls it – present concern that has come to me from a past, and which I direct at a future state. These temporal indicators are the crucial component of Heidegger’s overall argument in *Being and Time*, evidenced by the last link in a chain of reasoning that quickly summarises *Dasein*’s falling into the everydayness, and the potentiality *Dasein* has of viewing afresh that same everydayness via care, thus: *Dasein* is the meaning of our everyday existence; care is the meaning of *Dasein*; and time is the meaning of care (a chain of reasoning adapted from de Beistegui, 2005: pp.74-75).

Albeit a summary adapted from the secondary literature, the above concertinaing of these crucial concepts together is nonetheless a quick move; though one not unlike Heidegger’s own, in claiming time to be not only the basis of care but as serving a unifying structure to the care concept too. But as Stephen Kaufer acknowledges of Heidegger’s frisky move, “[t]he transcendental argument that temporality makes care possible is so quick that it is easy to miss altogether. Heidegger claims that temporality somehow *unifies* the various aspects of care, but is hard to see what justifies this claim” (Kaufer, 2013: p.338, emphasis in original), and so our confusion is somewhat justified. In one last exegetical reference, before attempting to map the above onto a practical example for our executive, coming from the hugely important §65 of *Being and Time*, we have Heidegger saying of the unifying properties of temporality for care that:

Temporality makes possible the unity of existence, facticity, and falling, and in this way constitutes primordially the totality of the structure of care. The items of care have not been pieced together cumulatively and more than temporality itself has been put together ‘in the course of time’... out of the future, the having been, and the Present. Temporality ‘is’ not an *entity* at all. It is not, but it *temporalizes* itself (Heidegger, 1962: p.376).

As a minimum piece of annotatory assistance for such a loaded passage, I should say that “existence,” “facticity,” and “falling” are Heidegger’s terms for the following: existence is that towards which *Dasein* comports itself, namely its being; facticity refers to our absorbed dealings in the world with those things nearest to us, distinct from (traditionally conceived) matter in the form of *factum brutum*; and falling, as we have already come across it, is *Dasein*’s plunge into its everyday involvement with the world. Such are these term’s respective meanings: however, these

three terms also correlate with the three tenses of time, which is indeed far from clear in *Being and Time*, the exposition of which would take a considerable amount of time to unpack. This was the quick move that Stephen Kaufer was referring to.

I owe my rescue from confusion in this regard to Hubert Dreyfus, especially his 2007 podcasted lecture series on *Being and Time* (and its associated printed material), where he helpfully collates all of Heidegger's instances of three-part structures – such as thrownness, falling and projecting, or disposedness, discourse and understanding, or, in the above case, facticity, being-fallen and existentiality – and places them under the three tenses of past, present and future, as well as indexing the heading of each threefold by purpose (Dreyfus, Nov 12 2007: “Philosophy 185” podcast “handout”). Perceptive and pro-*Being and Time* readers may have sensed the kernel of Heidegger's argument here, which is why §65 of *Being and Time* is so important to understanding the overall argument, and such an oft quoted section by commentators. Perceptive readers will also have noted a connection with this chapter's opening epigram, Heidegger's definition of anxiety. All of which allows me to parse the above quote in the following clunky fashion. The basis of *Dasein's future* facing executions, its always already having *been*, and its *present* involvement with the world is, basically, time; the nothingness revealed through anxiety shows *Dasein* that it has buried itself in its *present* everyday activities, its being-in-the-world; looking back at itself from nothingness *Dasein* is thereby shown that it has *future* potentiality beyond evasive falling; it is, therefore, time that we should look to to make sense of our being-in-the-world, and making the most of it. Hardly a Pulitzer prizewinning piece of prose, and just as ugly as the original, if a little more homey, my Heidegger-lite parsing does at least allude to the connection between being and time, which is helpful I'd say; but to what end? Why bother? And this has been my gripe with the work of the majority of *Being and Time* commentators²⁶ I have come across in this research. As well as unpick, elucidate and cross reference Heidegger's technical prose, as useful as such scholarly work is, surely we have been thrown an opportunity (a potentiality-for-being-in-the-world, properly speaking) to do something with this thinking? The majority of instances where the text has been, so to speak, cashed out by commentators in specifically practical examples involve, not unsurprisingly, examples of academics standing at blackboards making sense of their referential totalities: William Blattner's tale of *Smith & Jones* in his book *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* is perhaps the best and most engaging example of this (Blattner, 1999), up to a point of its limited applicability.

This is what I want to do in the next section; to build onto the above exegesis a practically oriented correlation, in my case concerning a revised potentiality-for-being-in-the-world for the

²⁶ See footnote 4 above.

late career corporate executive, one that affords a confrontation with the excesses of a monological, hegemonic and iniquitous system of contemporary western capitalism, on the coat tails of which hangs executive education. For this I will return to the ongoing story of Sanjay, who now faces the opportunity to act as patron to all the training, development and executive education activities of X-Corp. Sanjay is now at a crossroad in his position with X-Corp, having to reconcile a previous existence with a future potentiality. Falling short of complete illustration of world-collapse, this passage is intended instead to picture the commencement of a state of anxiety for Sanjay that will, later in the thesis, culminate in an example of total collapse of Sanjay's world.

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The CEO of X-Corp, on behalf of the board, has asked Sanjay to assume the role of Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). The CEO feels that Sanjay's call-centre management experience and personal values would make him the ideal CHRO candidate, to provide the much needed inspiration and vision that X-Corp needs if it is to continue to exploit its market dominance and attract and retain the industry's best talent. The CEO is aware of Sanjay's personal history, and has campaigned hard on Sanjay's behalf to convince the company board and shareholders that Sanjay is a "safe pair of hands" for the CHRO role: his reputation for waywardness ensured their initial hostility. Sanjay must make a decision quickly, as to whether to accept the board's significant offer and to uphold the trust the CEO is putting in him. Superficially, the offer constitutes not only a substantial promotion and an enormous boost to his already respected reputation, but an unparalleled opportunity for Sanjay to elevate his philosophical values to the level of corporate strategy, that may then go on to affect the entire current and future workforce of X-Corp (developing and caring for his staff, staff generally, was the most rewarding part of his job), not to mention X-Corp's competitors, and who knows, possibly even the entire offshoring sector – such is his excitement about what this opportunity confers. In pausing for thought, though, this decision reveals a less than certain future for Sanjay, if he were to be tempted by the pay and share options which were enormous, and with the ludicrously excessive benefits that went with the role. Sanjay knows he could handle the additional responsibilities and pressures that went with a C-level (e.g. CEO, COO, CFO) role, not least of which would involve uprooting his young family from Europe to North America, and being at opposite ends of the clock from his family in Gurgaon. Long ago he accepted his expatriate status. And ever since his time as a call centre supervisor, where he affectionately called himself a "cyber-coolie", managing time – and managing himself and his team around global time zones – has been second nature to him. Looking ahead down the track of his

current role, to where he'd seen himself, what matters to him about the CHRO post is the unsettling detour that the change in responsibilities would entail. There was a serene yet poetic justice in the path Sanjay had set himself on. Sanjay couldn't give this up. His past was both an attestation to and a cause of the struggle he was still fighting. The serenity he gained from his view of his past life came from the apparent inevitability and seemingly predetermined-ness of it all, and from "not being able to get behind it".

A week had passed: a strange week, almost dream-like, in the way that routine events, his whole engagement with work, somehow fell away. The gossip around the office was that Sanjay had suffered bereavement in the family, so distant did he seem. As he sat in his lushly appointed kitchen late on Saturday, on the point of phoning the CEO, Sanjay felt he was riding a wave of resolution. He had decided to take the job: his wife was ecstatic at the prospect of moving, though the kids didn't seem to react to the news. This was the right time, the opportune moment, to carry out what he believed in²⁷.

O-----O

The decision confronting Sanjay, in Heidegger-speak, represents a potentiality-for-being-in-the-world in marked distinction from his existing as falling into his everyday-ness, brought about, as the Heideggerian speak would have it, by an induced state of anxiety. Where most decisions involve the opening and then closing of potentialities, in the review of available options and the eventual closing of the majority of those options via the execution of the chosen option – and in the manner of Taylor Carman's definition of Heidegger's sense of death, which Dreyfus dismisses²⁸ – the decision facing Sanjay is better explained using exactly this Heideggerian manner of speech; as one where *that on the basis of which*²⁹ the decision is to be made has itself disintegrated. In

²⁷ This section of text is based on an amalgam of readings with a work orientation (Lars Svendsen, 2008: and Robert Hassan & Ronald Purser, 2007), with sociological orientation of accounts of workplace temporalities (Beth Rubin, 2007: and Carl Cederström & Peter Fleming, 2012), from more novelistic accounts (Siddhartha Deb, 2011: Mark Currie, 2010), from a career-long engagement with business-related journalism (*The Economist*, *The Financial Times* and other newspapers), as well as from conversations with executive education participants and clients in a professional capacity. It is therefore presented as a piece of fiction.

²⁸ See section 1.2 in the previous chapter.

²⁹ The translation of *Woraufhin* sparked a debate between Hubert Dreyfus and William Blattner on the pages of Blattner's *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism* (Blattner, 1999) and which spilled out into the airwaves of Dreyfus's podcasted lecture series (Dreyfus, Nov 12 2007: "Philosophy 185" and "Philosophy 187"), though I am unable to find the quotes. Dreyfus in his *Being in the World: Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time* Division I (Dreyfus, 1991), as well as in his lecturing on *Being and Time* (Dreyfus, Nov 12 2007: 'Philosophy 185'), repeatedly frames his understanding of the being of *Dasein* via Macquarrie and Robinson's translation of the German term *Woraufhin* as "that on the basis of which". Blattner prefers the translation "in terms of which", all of which hair splitting distinguishes Blattner's as the more idealistic term from Dreyfus's less idealistic translation preference. Dreyfus claims that Heidegger's inclusion of *Woraufhin* early on in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962: p.25-26) signals his meaning of being as "that against which" or "in comparison with" beings are already understood. See the concluding chapter for more on the idealism/realism debate in Heidegger.

other words, the familiarity and comfort with which Sanjay was in his world all of a sudden showed itself to him as contingent, as lacking in meaning: that he was no longer at-home, in the *unheimlichkeit* sense. I am identifying that the italicised phrase, *that on the basis of which*, in relation to the foregoing example of Sanjay's, constitutes a descriptor of Sanjay's *Dasein*, his being and that for which Sanjay exists. In a glimpse of nothingness, from a rare opportunity of a state of Heideggerian anxiety, and in his reflections on the new job offer, Sanjay has been jolted out of his comfortable present-ness and been presented with his own potentiality-for-being-in-the-world. This *Kairotic* moment, this extended moment of anxiety, in which the contingency of Sanjay's existence is brought before him, and where his ownership of his own future faces him, is not an intrinsically good thing. That the picture I paint of these moments could depict equally well the resolve of a suicide bomber, a desperate gambler, or a political revolutionary, I don't doubt. Though to think of these dangers from out of our everyday chronology, our quotidian sequences of nows, says Felix Ó Murchadha, "with an awareness that human action within a *Kairos* may lead to catastrophe, is to *carry out* the task and the responsibility of thinking" (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.198, my emphasis). Sanjay is doing just that, carrying out the dangerous task and responsibility of thinking for himself, on behalf of his family and for his company.

In terms of the previously outlined and temporally oriented "care" structure of this form of thinking, the three temporalities for Sanjay are also clearly apparent: the future is represented in the new job offer and what Sanjay can become; the present as a clearer realization of what it is Sanjay stands for; and the past as his emergence from and identification with a (possibly inconceivably) strongly held set of beliefs. Of the relative priority of these tenses, and in alignment with Heidegger's giving priority to the future³⁰, Sanjay's future potentiality allows him to make sense of his past and his present conditions. In Heideggerian terms, echoing the definition of care³¹ as well as jumping ahead to Heidegger's notion of "anticipatory resoluteness," Sanjay is able, via anxiety, to anticipate his own potential in respect to the job offer by coming back to where he has come from. In that sense, only with respect to Sanjay's future can he have lived authentically. For what it is worth, that tortuous phrasing of mine, recognised as another piece of clumsy parsing, is a mapping of Sanjay's story onto this portion of Heidegger's definition of anticipatory resoluteness:

Anticipation of one's uttermost and ownmost possibility is coming back understandingly to one's ownmost 'been'. Only so far as it is futural can *Dasein* *be* authentically as having been. The character of 'having been' arises, in a certain way, from the future (Heidegger, 1962: p.373, emphasis in original).

³⁰ As Heidegger states, "*the primary phenomenon of primordial and authentic temporality is the future*" (Heidegger, 1962: p.378, emphasis in original).

³¹ Care is defined by Heidegger as "the Being of *Dasein* means ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world)" (Heidegger, 1962: p.237).

2. Anxiety is Nothing

The fundamental mood of anxiety has precipitated, for Sanjay, an encounter with what he cares the most about; with a welcome anticipation of his own possibilities, given his strong connection to his past cares; with a dissolution of his life's meaning, comparable to his previous existential "deaths" during his slum years; and with a new appreciation of the connection between chronological and *Kairological* time. The task now is to consolidate these revelations, but this time using a different fundamental mood, that of boredom.

3

No Time for Boredom

Boredom is the entrancement of the temporal horizon, an entrancement which lets the moment of vision belonging to temporality vanish. In thus letting it vanish, boredom impels entranced Dasein into the moment of vision as the properly authentic possibility of its existence, and existence only possible in the midst of beings as a whole, and within the horizon of entrancement, their telling refusal of themselves as a whole.

(Martin Heidegger, 1995, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, p. 153, emphasis in original)

3.1 Introduction

What a boring epigram. I hit upon this particular boring quote from Heidegger's *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* to serve a couple of reflexive purposes: firstly, to furnish this last of three chronic and melancholic chapters in this thesis – after, that is, death and anxiety, with this chapter on the topic of boredom – with Heidegger's definition of his own peculiar concept of boredom; as we will see, boredom can bring us before time, like a plaintiff before a judge. Secondly, cheekily and simultaneously in this instance, to quickly provoke the reader into a reaction about boredom, thus: Why am I claiming the quote is boring; what grounds do I have; and do I find it boring or is *it* just boring, in the manner that my teenage daughter finds many things just boring¹? Does the reader, in fact, find it boring, and if so why: if not, why not, given its seeming obtuseness to our standard conception of boredom? Surely, what is boring is what I find boring, and not what someone tells me is, objectively speaking, boring? Not to mention; why are we even considering boredom here? What a boring set of questions².

¹ For the record I do not find the quote boring, or the topic, hence its inclusion: and in lieu of chastising Heidegger's return to a mystical and obfuscatory language to describe boredom as itself boring – in just such that manner of the heavy opening epigraph – instead I appreciate anew his turn to poetry as the means by which to articulate the oft-times inarticulable, in a non-boring way. The playfulness between treating the topic of boredom interestingly, and being true to its apparently (spiritually?) redemptive potential by treating it boringly, will be a feature of this chapter.

² Some of these boring questions emerge and subside from within Lars Svendsen's book *A Philosophy of Boredom* (2005).

My purpose in examining Heidegger's concept of boredom is to bring to fruition my preceding chapters' analyses of Heideggerian death and anxiety. The reader may have been wondering, or indeed reeling, at why this particular angle on Heidegger's work was chosen. It will fall to a revised understanding of boredom, in the context of executive education, to reveal the fruits of an extended engagement with these more embarrassing³, because existential⁴, aspects of (at least) the fundamental ontology project Heidegger brought to prominence in *Being and Time* and continued into the early 1930's: a project that the majority of commentators mine for the hard graft that its straightforwardly ontological language performs, bracketing the existential flim-flam as an embarrassing and unworthy excess. As John Haugeland attests of this peculiar aversion to existentialism, it is possible to "show quite directly how the existentialist themes are not only relevant but actually crucial to the ontology," and is astonished how "most readings of Heidegger manage to ignore this glaring interpretive issue" (Haugeland, 2013: p.44).

In the spirit of curiosity, and rising to John Haugeland's challenge, I feel well placed to recruit to the task of investigation what most constituents in my professional world would regard as embarrassing cogitations to the work I find myself in. With a personal history in religious contemplation, but now finding myself surrounded by a globally dispersed cadre of senior executives from what might as well be an homogenised, mythical, single profit-hungry corporation, all tasked with improving their corporations' profit-making statuses, I'm curious to investigate Heidegger's relatively modest claim that a healthy occurrence of the mood of boredom can open us out onto a profound sense of our own being. I'm intrigued to ask; What effect would such an exposure of this fundamental mood have on our capitalist world: what would be revealed? In the mood as we normally experience it, not much I suspect, so smothered are our inclinations to question a so dull and insignificant seeming mood. What would it even mean, in an educational context, to elevate the status of questioning our everyday notions of boredom, in whatever guise such questioning took, as the responsibility of educators to promote (a form of elevation I myself am doing here)? Delving deeper into this strange call on executive educators' time, what will the defence of the proposition that thinking more seriously about boredom is the responsibility of the educators of those executives tell us about mainstream executive education practices themselves? Presumably, that there exists a measure of value of an executive educator's effort, namely the practical applicability of craft-like knowledge – or to use its appropriate technical characterisation,

³ Hubert Dreyfus uses the term when he confesses to "ignoring Division II [of *Being and Time*] as something of an existentialist *embarrassment*" (Dreyfus, 2000: p.313, my emphasis).

⁴ I agree with all Heidegger commentators who make the point that Heidegger was not an existentialist. Says Heidegger himself in a lecture course delivered 1930-31 about his then recently published *Being and Time*, "[i]t was never my idea to preach an 'existentialist philosophy.' Rather, I have been concerned with renewing the question of ontology – the most central question of western philosophy – the question of being" (Heidegger, 1988: p.13).

techne – which in the case of corporate executives is the take-up and application of profit-maximising *techne*. The counter claim would go something like this: boredom is, *ipso facto*, the absence of any action, the epitome of a lack of practical knowledge, the antithesis of profit-maximising *techne*, and therefore the work of the executive educator to completely dispel or ignore. I disagree. I wish to apply some of the dangerous thinking that came at the end of the previous chapter, and claim that the “task of thinking” handed to us through boredom reveals the politically incendiary quandary of *non*-productivity: dwelling with boredom, in more ways than one, reveals the *un*-productive, the *un*-knowing and unashamedly *non-techne* aspects of all of our lives, to which ingenious use can be put by examining it in the context of education for the late career executive. Phrased in the already overdetermined language of “utility,” what utility could the commissioning patrons of such education – whose invitations to tender to education providers such as business schools betray their own corporation’s anxieties of productivity-failure in the neoliberal endgame – possibly gain through a task of thinking aimed at investigating degenerate *non*-productivity? It is likely that if you as reader are having trouble conceiving of what executive education actually is, this far in to a thesis on executive education, then it’s because you’re approaching the exercise in terms of *techne*, or more probably its lack, as in a lack of this particular “mode of knowledge” (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.55), a mode that stands in relation to capitalist production. Hence the degeneracy I speak of; not only the shocking relegation of relevant seeming *techne* out of the picture, as our examination of boredom foretells, but the unquestioned assumption you might have had of executive education being solely about the knowledge of production. Is the order of the order-execution cognate dealt a blow with the bracketing-off of production? What is left of execution once production-less ordering is bracketed-off from execution?

Before we begin to further address these questions, and before we embark further on this journey into boredom, I would like to bolster John Haugeland’s attestation and flag how my approach departs from a standard quarrying (Haugeland’s “most readings”) of Heidegger’s thinking. To build on the point not just of how load-bearing the death, anxiety and boredom content is to my project, but of how alternative and decidedly ‘political’ its use as a philosophical building material, so to speak, appears even to those rare Heidegger-friendly philosophers working within the field of management as an academic discipline – those adventurous enough to construct even a modestly Heideggerian ontological foundation for a discipline that is notoriously lacking in any philosophical footings at all – I would like to take a brief detour via the ethics oriented work of Dominik Heil. In his work *Ontological Fundamentals for Ethical Management* (2011), building on Heidegger’s concepts of *Bestand* (“standing reserve”) and *Gestell* (“enframing,” but cleverly

translated by Heil as “em-bankment”, as the “banking” of the standing reserve), as they are used in *The Question Concerning Technology* and related essays (Heidegger, 1977: p.19), Dominik Heil begins to lay the groundwork for a convincing and cathartic conception of the modern-day corporation as a fiercely extractive piece of technology in its own right, one which orders all assets at a corporation’s disposal (including quite a few that aren’t) as a standing reserve or resource to be exploited for profit-making purposes – presumably for the greater good of capitalism, though Heil doesn’t concentrate on this connection. Most certainly the corporation is the kind of place I’m interested in; the place in and for which executive education is carried out, even though foregrounding the predictably exploitative nature of corporations – Heil calls it “*corporate em-bankment*” (Heil, 2011: p.103, my emphasis) – does not advance the argument much beyond a crude name-calling of the banker-bashing variety. What is original and exciting in his work is how he allies Heidegger’s concept of the “work,” as in a “work of art,” taken from Heidegger’s lecture published as *The Origin of the Work of Art* (Heidegger, 1978), to explain the way in which the world of a corporation can be understood (Heil, 2011: p.84) as a “world,” distinct from the tradition of viewing corporations as entities, or as a collection of entities, e.g. people, offices, ledgers, photocopiers. By saying that “corporations are works that create a world” (*ibid*: p.87) Heil is establishing a fundamental ontology that allows those that follow his Heidegger-inspired thinking to make claims that executives in those corporations, in those corporate worlds or “works,” can reveal those worlds in original and compelling ways; ways similar to how a skilled carpenter reveals the wood in a beautiful piece of furniture, or Michelangelo revealed figures from shapeless blocks of marble. The (non-Heideggerian) philosophic tradition – especially one based on the pre-eminence that Plato attached to the idea of things, that one understands how things (really) *are* only when those things have been abstracted away from all particular details and instances – would have us become clear about the corporation by correctly thinking about the corporation rationally and atomistically. Then, following Descartes, the tradition would have us sit back and think about the purpose of the object that the corporation is, thinking about the role of the subject of the executive; as subjects standing over against objects, in a completely disengaged manner. The novelty of applying Heidegger’s thinking to studies of the corporation, of Dominik Heil bringing Heidegger to the attention of the field of management and corporation studies, comes when the traditional approach to understanding the corporation as a Platonic form, or the executive as a detached subject, or our correct rationality as the ultimate philosophical goal, is swapped out for considering how our ability to become involved in the work of the corporation is what matters most, *as mattering* most: that our doing is more important than our thinking: that how the

executive acts and engages with their world is the proper *desiderata* of a philosophy of executive education – that *this* techne is paramount. But that is not the whole picture.

The purpose of my detour to the work of Dominik Heil is to show how his study, likewise, has next to no engagement with the melancholic and “existential agony” aspects of Heidegger’s thinking, despite the proximity of Heil’s general area of interest to mine; demonstrating, as I think this does, John Haugeland’s earlier point about how easy it is to overlook⁵ the existentialist aspects of what must be considered to be a body of work, not just that of the existentially tinged second division of Heidegger’s unfinished, three divisioned *Being and Time*. While we don’t get to hear about it, Dominik Heil is perhaps justified in his selective application of Heidegger’s thinking to understand the nature of corporations and management simply because those existential aspects do not seem relevant to the domain of business, in his view. But then his claim to have brought those involved with corporations, i.e. executive educators in my case, into a “co-respondence with the very nature of entities and Being itself” (Heil, 2011: p.179) is fatally flawed when missing from this analysis is one of the prime, and I would argue, abundant and most accessible means of obtaining such a “co-respondence,” namely our ontological *moods*⁶: an example of this is an executive’s melancholy at his failure to escape the meaningless and crushingly boring duties inside the corporation he finds himself in, one of many negatively phrased moods depicting subsistence employment inside the workplace captured in Carl Cederström and Peter Fleming’s provocatively titled book *Dead Man Working* (2012). As that book acknowledges, though without mentioning Heidegger once, we care deeply about our moods, the effect they have on us and how they colour our worlds, the worlds that Heil and I operate in. Such moods have such an enormous disclosive capability, of disclosing that to which we are disposed, that it would be un-Heideggerian to ignore them.

⁵ Hubert Dreyfus, in the acknowledgements section of his *Being in the World: Commentary on Heidegger’s Being and Time*, Division I (Dreyfus, 1991: p.xiii) comes clean that he and John Haugeland have totally different views on the existentialist themes of Division II of *Being and Time*. As he says ten years later “Haugeland is no Heideggerian. He has gotten Heidegger’s priorities reversed. *Dasein* does not disclose itself in order to disclose the being of entities; *Dasein* discloses the being of entities in order to disclose itself. This disagreement determines our divergent take on everything else” (Dreyfus, 2000: p.314, emphasis in original). In his *Commentary* (1991) Dreyfus situates his reason for relegating his analysis of the whole of Division II to an appendix around how that portion of *Being and Time* was itself only an addendum, one that Heidegger hastily added for the sole purpose to secure tenure. Subsequent to that publication however, as Mark Wrathall and Jeff Malpas remind us, Dreyfus has since acknowledged that “by treating Division I independently of Division II he has failed to comprehend the importance to the Heideggerian project of a higher form of intelligibility than everyday intelligibility” (Wrathall & Malpas, 2000, vol.1: p.6). In a note to to me as writer as much as to the reader, I need to attend to whether my addressing boredom is geared towards properly disclosing entities (and the world) via executive education, or whether it is geared towards the disclosing of *Dasein* in its executiveness.

⁶ The reader should not consider moods as the preserve of the domain of psychology. Having a mood (*Gestimmtsein*) does not happen without our heads, but that doesn’t mean they happen in our heads. The analogy Mark Wrathall likes to use (Wrathall, 2010) is that of a radio. A radio gets tuned in to different radio stations: that doesn’t mean the different stations are all inside the radio. It just means that without the radio getting tuned to them we’re not in a position to pick them up.

Moving on then, it is important that I show my own Heideggerian colours in my adoption of, in this instance, the mood of boredom as showing how we are disposed in the “affective state” (*Befindlichkeit*) as Felix Ó Murchadha calls it. I stop at this generic term since it is here at which my principle commentators – John Haugeland and Hubert Dreyfus – have a fundamental disagreement about what moods actually reveal. It is worth spending time on this now, so as to make clear where I stand on my support for engaging with existentialist themes in the context of executive education. In response to John Haugeland, his one time student, colleague, close friend⁷, and intellectual adversary in this case, Dreyfus says about moods:

Surely ontological moods, which Haugeland acknowledges are Heidegger’s paradigm cases of disposedness, do not reveal what is and is not possible for *entities*; ontological moods like joy, boredom, despair, or anxiety reveal the global attunement of colouring of our whole world and so reveal ‘how things are going with us’. By making us sensitive to what matters; they make us sensitive to our way of being (Dreyfus, 2000: p.314, emphasis in original).

As much as this is an ideological choice here – between deciding whether that for the sake of which ontological moods should be considered is their power to reveal *Dasein* first and foremost, or whether they should be considered for their foremost means of revealing *Dasein*’s power to disclose the being of *entities* – what is at stake is whether the reader is willing to remain with the conclusion, one that Dreyfus asserts, that the ultimate aim of any study of our *disposedness* is to show *Dasein* as a discloser, plain and simple. For this thesis I will choose not to rest at that point of Dreyfus’, since I had already reached that conclusion prior to my discovering him or Heidegger. The option of twisting this around, at the expense of being un-Heideggerian according to Dreyfus, and of moving beyond a merely *Dasein*-oriented focus that Dreyfus seems to be stuck with, is the direction I will take – something I will explore later in this chapter.

This chapter is where I come clean on why I find the more existential aspects of his thinking particularly instructive for the area of work I now find myself in (executive education) in the sense of helping me to find the grounds from which to supersede the hegemony of the order-execution cognate – that stated purpose of all executive education activity which states that the goal towards which all executive education is oriented is to address the manifold aspects of *execution*, in whichever manner and circumstance the sequencing-out takes place, over against a prevailing *order*, of whatever magnitude or level of governing dynamic that order stands. The cognate is certainly a handy descriptive device. It is not often one has the chance of conceiving and working with such a conveniently singular purpose when it comes to defining that for the sake of which the

⁷ They both appeared in Tao Ruspoli’s 2010 cinematic *Festschrift* to Hubert Dreyfus (as well as Wrathall and Malpas’s two volume written *Festschrift* to Dreyfus), *Being in the World*, along with the usual US-based (only) suspects of Heideggerian scholarship.

educative act, in this instance executive education, is conducted: the thrill of whose uniqueness alone, however, should be enough to signal the flaws in such reductive and essentialist thinking. Can I really make ship-shape the whole of executive education and align it to a single purpose, namely the order-execution cognate? A spontaneous answer, given my professional experiences, is “no”; though the slightly more considered answer of “I’m not sure” is reason enough to defer an outright rejection of this handy device until the overall argument of this thesis has emerged from its construction, after it has slid down the slipway, as it were, but before it is fitted out to convey passengers, if in fact (to labour the metaphor even further) the vessel is seaworthy at all.

It will be remembered that anxiety, in the Heideggerian sense, was revealed as a “ground mood” (*Grundstimmung*) or a “fundamental attunement”. It turns out – although you wouldn’t guess it from the opening epigram – that the mood of boredom has a special claim in “attuning” us to the *time* in our lives, hence its relevance in a thesis that is time-oriented with regard to the temporal aspects of, respectively, execution, education and their compound, executive education. Boredom tunes us into what, for Heidegger, deserves our closest attention, which in the case of boredom is our encounter with time. This process of tuning, not unlike that of bringing a piano back into tune, or a wayward plane back onto its homing beacon⁸, or a symphony back to its home key, is Heidegger’s way of claiming there to be a proper focus for our philosophical attention. Various, throughout Heidegger’s philosophical career, these “proper focuses” have been, roughly speaking, the distinctly related themes of the onto-theological conception of *Dasein*; *Dasein*’s being; the historically distinct epochs of being; the role of language in revealing being; and time. It is the latter and, I would argue, this overarching focus that is under explicit examination here, not least because this persistent focus was still uppermost in Heidegger’s post-*Being and Time* lecture course given at the University of Freiburg in the academic year 1929/30, subsequently published in book form in English translation as *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (Heidegger, 1995): this focus on time continued across the whole of his published works, culminating in the 1972 publication in English of his lecture *Time and Being*. With respect to time, the reason why Heidegger singles out anxiety and boredom as fundamental, distinct from other moods, is because they serve to tune us into becoming awake to the temporal ground of *Dasein*’s being, namely the threefold horizon of time’s present, past and future, or “care” as we saw it nominalised in the previous chapter. Only in being ‘gripped’ by philosophical questioning (Heidegger, 1995: p.57) can we hope, according to Heidegger, to gain insight into what our fundamental attunements give us to know,

⁸ This is the comparator reference of Hubert Dreyfus, one he uses in his podcasted lecture series of Division II of *Being and Time* (Dreyfus, 2007).

or reveal, or give us over to knowing. This chapter will explore this claim further. Says Heidegger regarding the connection between the preceding points:

We determined philosophizing as comprehensive questioning arising out of Dasein's being gripped in its essence. Such being gripped however is possible only from out of and within a fundamental attunement of Dasein. This fundamental attunement itself cannot be some arbitrary one, but must permeate our Dasein in the ground of its essence. Such a fundamental attunement cannot be ascertained as something present at hand that we can appeal to, or as something firm upon which we might stand, but must be awakened – awakened in the sense that we must let it become awake. This fundamental attunement properly attunes us only if we do not oppose it, but rather give it space and freedom (Heidegger, 1995: p. 132).

That which we are giving space and freedom to is boredom (and anxiety; though Heidegger does not foreground this particular mood in this text); and the reason for doing this – for providing space for boredom, however that could possibly be foregrounded – is so that we can become gripped by a comprehensive questioning. It's as if Heidegger is saying here that we cannot be trusted to philosophize ordinarily unless we are *gripped* in this fashion – in the fashion of fundamental attunements: that we have to not only confront anxiety and boredom, which shouldn't be difficult given their quotidian occurrence, but to be somehow awakened to that towards which we must become attuned, via anxiety and boredom. At the head of a long list of (equally) critical philosophical questions regarding this shaky claim is one that concerns Heidegger's partiality for apparently *psychological* states mediating the process of philosophical questioning. I will come back to this objection later. However, parking for a moment the obvious shortcomings of this claim's exclusivity, not to mention its strangeness, and for the sake of positioning some more introductory comments before our engagement with Heidegger's argument about boredom proper, it is worth me recapping my argument in this thesis thus far, so as to remind ourselves how all this ties in with executive education and the delinquency of iniquitous capitalism.

By way of summary, based on the provisional apparatus of my order-execution cognate, I am putting forward a Heideggerian justification for *not* considering time merely in terms of chronologically conceived temporal sequences, "homogenous" and "empty"⁹ as our common

⁹ Walter Benjamin, in his book *Illuminations* (Benjamin, 1999: p.263), talking of our modern and profane sense of time, calls it "Homogenous, empty time". With respect to the emergence of the secular age, says Charles Taylor of Benjamin's phrase, "[h]omogeneity' captures the aspect I am describing here, that all events now fall into the same kind of time; but the 'emptiness' of time takes us into another issue: the way in which both space and time come to be seen as 'containers' which things and events contingently fill, rather than as constituted by what fills them. This latter step is part of the metaphysical imagination of modern physics, as we can see with Newton. But it is the step to homogeneity which is crucial for secularization, as I am conceiving it. The step to emptiness is part of the objectification of time which has been so important a part of the outlook of the modern subject of instrumental reason. Time has been in a sense 'spatialized'. Heidegger has mounted a strong attack on this whole conception in his understanding of temporality; see especially *Sein und Zeit*...Division II. But distinguishing secularity from the objectification of time allows us to situate Heidegger on the modern side of the divide. Heideggerian temporality is also a mode of secular time" (Taylor, 2007: p.798).

understanding of time has it; but as also taking the form of *Kairotic* moments, or “knots” to use Charles Taylor’s language (Taylor, 2007: p.54), moments whose nature calls for temporary temporal suspension and even reversal of the standard temporal succession. Whilst our chronological conception of time predominates our reckoning with time generally, with time’s *Kairotic* aspects either relegated to the status of anomalous and therefore discountable psychological states, or to primitive or pre-modern accounts of the time of the sacred as Charles Taylor avers, both chronic and *Kairotic* types of time are worthy of consideration, if we are to find a way of living that embodies an understanding of being (to keep reminding ourselves what *Dasein* is). Where, as Heidegger states on the opening page of *Being and Time*, “[o]ur provisional aim is the Interpretation of time as the possible horizon for any understanding whatsoever of being” (Heidegger, 1962: p.1), it makes sense, in the light of a desire to understand being *qua* Heidegger, to be similarly interested in getting to grips with time in all its varieties. My purpose in this thesis is to account for alternative conceptions of time in Heideggerian terms, in the context of executive education. As a consequence I will be able to use “time” to act, so to speak, as a burglar’s jemmy to prise apart the *relata* of the order-execution cognate, thereby nullifying the purported essence of executive education through a dissolution of the sequence, or *ex-sequi*, of executiveness. Heidegger’s concept of boredom, and fundamental attunements generally, can enact the violence of the jemmied splintering, as it were, on our executive’s stolid acceptance of, and collusion in, the seemingly unassailable forces of contemporary capitalism (this is an effort in stark contrast to the palliate to capitalism offered by “business ethics,” the current incumbent in executive education tasked with questioning/sanctioning capitalistic motivations). Only then, once the *Dasein* of our senior executive has been gripped by its own essence, can we (philosophers of education) consider effecting a reappraisal of this familiar and iniquitous world of capitalistic excesses in the form of an educative experience for the late career executive that mocks death, politicises non-production, and frees the executive to reconsider their incorporated time and finitude, effecting who knows what as a result: dangerous indeed.

Almost Wagnerian in its ambition, though based on such insignificant beginnings in the guise of plain old boredom, I will attempt this process of disassemblage in the following manner. Firstly, using the text *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, I will outline what Heidegger means by establishing, as he does, three levels of boredom, and quite why he accords boredom the status of a fundamental or ground mood. Secondly, using these three levels and this fundament, I will make a connection between boredom and the modern melancholy¹⁰ suffered by

¹⁰ Heidegger actually uses the German term *Schwermut*, translated as “melancholy,” in connection with boredom when he describes boredom as “slowly propelling us to the threshold of melancholy”, and where an apparently melancholy seeming landscape “is not itself melancholy, but merely attunes us in such a way” (Heidegger, 1995: p.79, 85).

our senior corporate executive and position this melancholy as the workbench for tinkering with what our fundamental attunements give us to know. Lastly, I will explore how this theory works in practice.

3.2 Three Levels of Boredom

As we saw in the previous chapter, we first came across “attunement” in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962: p.172) in relationship with our everyday moods, “how one is, and how one is faring” (Heidegger, 1962: p.173), in which *Dasein* is brought before its being as “there” in the “Da” of *Dasein* – in a fashion of *Dasein* being “delivered over” to its being¹¹; in a way in a form of active portering. We then came across attunement again in *What is Metaphysics?* (Heidegger, 1943), in relationship with man this time being brought before nothingness through anxiety. Ultimately, Heidegger’s interest in attunement is allied to his wish to see the work of metaphysics address the sense of Being, and not only beings as present-at-hand entities. As Daniel Dahlstrom notes, “In asking its leading question ‘what are beings?’ metaphysics recognizes only beings, not the sense of being, not historical being (the presence as such of beings to *Dasein*), which is at odds with what Heidegger considers the proper task of metaphysics, since it should be asking the basic question: ‘what is being?’” (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.129). This was the muster call I wanted to rally to when I first engaged with Heidegger’s work. When I first set out on the task of this study, I was keen, like any newbie, to assimilate exciting new concepts (such as Heidegger’s reawakening of our sense of being) into my everyday practices: this straightforward seeming act of portering for me, as I initially saw it, involved breaking with a thousand year history of pragmatic and *techne* oriented merchant education¹² and swapping that out with classes on metaphysics for merchants. How foolish I was: until, that is, I realised that a subtle but persistent alignment of opportunities lay before me, under the auspices of which I could conduct my portering duties after all. These opportunities manifest themselves in the figure of the older but well-connected and influential merchant, in executive guise these days, suffering with what I’m calling, for euphony’s sake, the mood of modern

¹¹ Just to pick up on the anti-psychology point made earlier, *Dasein* brought before *Dasein* is not evidence of a psychological basis of his analysis. Says Heidegger of this, “The statement: *Dasein exists for the sake of itself*, does not contain the positing of an egoistic or ontic end for some blind narcissism on the part of the factual human being in each case” (Heidegger, 1998: p.122, emphasis in original). Instead, “[w]e must therefore take careful note that the conception of man as consciousness, as subject, as person, as a rational being, and our *concept* of each of these: of consciousness, subject, I, and person, must be put in question” (Heidegger, 1995: p.133, emphasis in original).

¹² Where education for the orders of merchant workers (L: *laboratores*) – as with the orders of clergy (*oratores*) and warriors (*bellatores*) – has a long history: see David Priestland’s *Merchant, Soldier, Sage: A New History of Power* (2012), and Jacques Le Goff’s *Time, Work, & Culture in the Middle Ages* (1980: p.53).

melancholy, accompanied by that in the face of which the malaise is positioned¹³, the current capitalist order: hence my melancholic and capitalist-facing executive.

The act of bringing this instance of *Dasein* before its own being, in order to ask Heidegger's cardinal question "what is being?," can now, after a little more introducing, be delegated to our humble servant "boredom" (not forgetting its twin "anxiety"), notwithstanding the fancy tag of "fundamental attunement" that acts simply, as it were, as an arrow on the hotel ceiling pointing to Mecca, to that which we need to attend in this analysis, to *Dasein* as an active discloser disclosing the world. And while it is too early in the argument to attribute the object in the face of which *Dasein*, in this instance, is bored or bored by, we have the beginnings of a motley though philosophically productive alignment.

A casualty of the translation into English of the German word for boredom, *Langeweile*, is the English term's having a direct sense of time, which is present in the German "long-while," in which time is not only explicitly addressed but suffered by it being "drawn out" in boredom: and so usefully "[b]oredom and the question of boredom thus lead us to the problem of time" (Heidegger, 1995: p.80) directly, and thereby an engagement with boredom "ultimately grasps at the roots of *Dasein*, i.e. prevails in the ownmost ground of *Dasein*" (*ibid*: p.96)¹⁴. That time is "drawn out" in boredom is Heidegger's observation of the first of three forms, or levels, of boredom he identifies, where we do our best to "pass the time" or to "kill time". Illustrating this first and most familiar form of boredom, Heidegger uses the example of waiting at a station for a train (Heidegger, 1995: p.93). In this example the train won't be arriving for four hours, and so he has us (figuratively) rummaging through our rucksack looking for something to read, spending some time studying the timetables, as well as walking out of the station surveying the locale, counting the trees along the road. Though, in our concerted effort to pass the time, after glancing at the clock again, we've only managed to draw out a mere five minutes. This oppressive dragging of time as a sequence is what we're trying to divert ourselves from: we are being held in "limbo," as Heidegger calls it (*ibid*: p.99), in our frantic efforts to keep ourselves occupied and to fight off boredom. The oppression we feel, he sees as our fear of being "left empty" (*ibid*: p.101), which means that the situation we find ourselves in at the instance of our boredom offers us nothing: that in being left empty we are abandoned to ourselves. Says Heidegger of this relationship between being held in the transition state of limbo, and our fear of facing ourselves, "[h]ow much time is capable of here! It has power

¹³ I'm holding back from making a causal connection between melancholy and the capitalist order: I'm merely facing them off against each other at this stage.

¹⁴ I have assumed that the reader is familiar enough with Heidegger's works to make the connection between boredom's grasp at the roots of *Dasein* and unity of the past, present and future time as the basis for *Dasein*'s being. For what it's worth, this far in to the thesis, Heidegger establishes this connection in §65 of *Being and Time* by saying that "Temporality makes possible the unity of existence, facticity, and falling, and in this way constitutes primordially the totality of the structure of care" (Heidegger, 1962: p.376).

over railway stations and can bring it about that stations bore us. On the other hand it becomes apparent that time of itself, the mere course of time, does not bore us. Rather becoming bored is this *essential being held in limbo in coming to be left empty* (*ibid*: p.105, emphasis in original). What we're left facing is time itself, in all its drawn out chronological and successive order.

Given our apparent familiarity with boredom, the description of this first form seems acceptable enough. What Heidegger is acknowledging here is that we can become bored "by" something: by having to wait for a train, in this instance, where the "by" in Heidegger's language involves a form of being that is present-at-hand. The "leaving empty" of the first form of boredom is not an absence or lack of something, "but is a particular kind of being present at hand in accordance with which things refuse us something – not in general or universally or indeterminately, but refuse something that we spontaneously *expect* within this particular situation under these specific circumstances" (*ibid*: p.106, emphasis in original). The salient point introduced here is the refusal, whose role in the opening epigram serves as the link to that which fundamental attunements give us over to attend. We shouldn't forget that it is because of fundamental attunements that we're talking about boredom at all. As we will see, since boredom gives us an opportunity to come face-to-face with nothingness, the same nothingness that was introduced in the previous chapter, it is not surprising that we *refuse* this opportunity. "Boredom in the ordinary sense is disturbing, unpleasant, and unbearable" (*ibid*: p.158), and so an element of refusal is not unsurprising when confronted by the abyss of nothing that we do our utmost to block out from our lives. The prospect of confronting the contingency and meaninglessness of our lives in the face of nothingness is the motivating force of our fleeing and refusing to face that which boredom shows us: and yet it is this very refusal that Heidegger wants us to focus on, which is why he introduces a second and more profound form of boredom that "grasps more at the roots of our Dasein" (*ibid*: p.107).

Putting up for a moment with a whiff of high-mindedness that comes from having someone tell us what is good for us, though being sufficiently intrigued to see just what sort of palliate is offered to mitigate the effects of what must surely be a straightforward mood, we find Heidegger busily preparing for us a descriptive framework for a deeper form of boredom that is not dependent on the specifics of a particular situation that bores us. The example he uses to illustrate this second form of boredom is a dinner party, the delightful circumstances of which we find quite to our liking: the company is pleasant, the food is nice, the music and conversation are to our taste, where overall we find the event perfectly "witty and charming" (*ibid*: p.109). And yet, as he continues with the illustration, when we get home after the party, "[w]e cast a quick glance at the work we interrupted that evening, make a rough assessment of things and look ahead to the next

day – and then it comes: I was bored after all this evening, on the occasion of this invitation” (*ibid*: p.109). Heidegger takes the fact of our pleasure at how agreeable we found the dinner party as evidence of a situation-independent basis for this second form of boredom, one quite at odds with the former type which was situation-dependent, i.e. the situation of the station. There was nothing about the dinner party that we found boring, and yet, he claims, there is still a basis for what he’s calling a more profound form of boredom to emerge from this example. How so? Because we have left ourselves time (in this case, for the party): we see that we have sufficient time, and so do not feel oppressed by the dragging of time as in first instance of boredom. In this second case, our relationship to time is different, in that we are less concerned to lose time; we have carefully apportioned the time of the party as ours to take, and yet once taken we realise that it was wasted. This situation of wasted-ness is what Heidegger accords as boring, with *time* itself as that which both triggers and is that over against which boredom occurs.

With respect to the first form the question is surely: Why do we have no time? To what extent do we not wish to lose any time? Because we need it and wish to use it. For what? For our everyday occupations, to which we have long since become enslaved. We have no time because we ourselves cannot keep from joining in everything that is going on. This *not having any time* is ultimately a *greater being lost of the self* than that wasting time which leaves itself time (Heidegger, 1995: p.129, emphasis in original).

Realising the absurdity of wanting oppressive time to pass in the first instance of boredom, especially in the face of having so little of it, brings one to one’s senses about spending the precious time that one has. So no wonder that the ultimate baddie is revealed to be *time*: that in boredom one is brought before that which grants the very possibility of Dasein’s “doing and acting” (Heidegger, 1995: p.140). Dasein is brought before Dasein: as if Dasein is tuning into *Dasein FM*, we have attuned to our home station, though this is not some interior process. It is a way of getting in tune with the world that allows us to reveal how we, as Dasein, interact with our worlds in unique and authentic ways. But who does the tuning? Boredom?

Is this, what he calls a more profound form of boredom, in fact *boredom* at all, instead of simply an inconvenience, or a chore we felt we ought to endure, or an overdue favour that we owed the host: or was our attendance at the party itself one giant ploy to assuage a mood of boredom we were overcome by *before* going out to the party, only after which, in reconnecting to what the party interrupted, we were landed back into, but which now arose with an even greater force by dint of the contrast to the earlier evenings’ activities? In what way is this second form of boredom more profound and against what is this profundity gauged?

The temptation at this stage is to concentrate one’s critical efforts to unpick these two examples Heidegger uses (the station and the dinner party) to illustrate the first two forms of

boredom¹⁵, and thereby to miss the ultimate claim he makes, that boredom presents an opportunity to attune *Dasein* to resolute self-disclosure, of bringing *Dasein* before itself, as he goes on to explain in the last of the three forms of boredom. If the first form arises, as it were, from outside, in being bored “by” a particular *situation*; and if the second form arises not from the outside but from *Dasein* itself, in the sense of being bored “with” *ourselves*; then the third form of boredom, correspondingly more profound, surprisingly does not actually *arise* at all. Without a singularity to its cause, this form of boredom “can occur out of the blue, and precisely whenever we do not expect it at all” (Heidegger, 1995: p.135). In a characteristic and by now familiar tendency to clothe his culminating arguments in increasingly Byzantine prose, we find Heidegger, in the last level of this three-level structure, stacking all his favourite concepts on top of one another, ending in the giddy lather of the opening epigram, whose principle concept, by the way, is the *Augenblick* or the *Kairotic* moment of vision, and whose corresponding arch nemesis is “entrancement”. The profundity of the third form of boredom comes from it revealing to us the burdensomeness of our existence: that we have to *be*. This is not a simple “arising” but has to be worked at, given space and freedom as was mentioned earlier, since we find it a heavy burden. This heft is acknowledged in how the situation in the first form of boredom refuses to give us what we expect (escape from oppressive time), and in the second how a “return” on our time invested (at the party) is likewise refused. In the third form of boredom, confronted by the sheer “timeishness”¹⁶ of our existence, we become dazzled, or “entranced” (Heidegger, 1995: p.147) by time, affording a sight of the *Kairotic* moment at which we can become open to see not only our own being, but the world and our relationship to it. It becomes, in the third level of boredom, “boring for one” (Heidegger, 1995: p.134), not boring for me, not for you, but *for one*. Says Heidegger, in summary of all three cases of boredom

Whereas in the first case of boredom we are concerned to shout down the boredom by passing the time so that we *do not need to listen to it*; and whereas in the second case what is distinctive is a *not wanting to listen*, we now have a *being compelled to listen*, being compelled in the sense of that kind of compelling force which everything *properly authentic* about *Dasein* possesses, and which accordingly is related to *Dasein's innermost freedom*. The ‘it is boring for one’ has already transposed us into a realm of power over which the individual

¹⁵ For instance, just such a diversionary body of critique, though one I have not come across, would be to have wished Heidegger had read Marcel Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* before embarking on his 1929/30 lecture course (*Recherche* was published in France between 1913-1927), if only to metal his example of how time *can* pass at dinner parties especially, and be passed and lost generally. I am indebted to Joshua Landy (2004, 2009, 2012) for pointing out how to do things with (Proustian) fictions.

¹⁶ As comic as this locution sounds, it conveys “that which has to do with time-ness” in a way more straightforward than the formal term “temporality”; it is also John Haugeland's preferred translation (Haugeland, 2013: p.154) for Macquarrie and Robinson's lowercase “t” temporality. As a fan of Haugeland's writing on Heidegger, this is reason enough to use it here.

person, the public individual subject, no longer has any power (Heidegger, 1995: p.136, emphasis in original).

As Heidegger's writing moves away from the *Dasein*-oriented and transcendental themes of *Being and Time* and the other texts of the 1920's and 30's that I've have been drawing on in this thesis thus far, he will continue to use the device of *Grundstimmung*, or ground moods¹⁷, to tune us into experiencing how Being is revealed in all its manifest indeterminateness, as his thinking moves into a decidedly historical register. Subsequent ground moods will include an analysis of Hölderlin's holy mourning, Greek wonder, and the "reserve, shock, and awe" that is concomitant at the beginning of a new way of thinking – a "beginning" that, by the end of this thesis, will have brought us back to what can emerge after our world has collapsed in my interpretation of Heideggerian death, a new beginning, a beginning again from the excesses of a delinquent capitalism. We will encounter some of these ground moods in other¹⁸ source texts in the remaining chapters of this thesis. I would like to assess whether what I call the "mood of modern melancholy" can count as just such a ground mood. This change of register will be helpful to temper this discussion's hitherto narrowly individual- (and *Dasein*-) focused slant that has had me bring Heidegger's thinking to bear on the individual executive as the figure under scrutiny, in contradistinction to the broader structures, the grand dynamics that drive capital accumulation and its dangerously extreme inequalities. This register-change will also help to reconceive what we can and should expect from an executive education that is alive to the potential for a political response, for instance, to the discontent generated from these inequalities, clearing space to allow executive education to consider what kind of relation it has to this delinquent child it appears to foster. But who is fostering who?

In what follows I would like to attempt this change of register, at the same time as making the connection between Heidegger's levels of boredom and the mood of modern melancholy, specifically as this mood relates to the excesses of capitalism, as outlined by Piketty (2014) and David Marquand, in the latter's book *Mammon's Kingdom* (2014). That I believe the contemporary hyper-capitalist corporate workspace (at least a decent proportion of the executives I come into contact with) is afflicted by a form of modern melancholy will go some way to backing up Heidegger's claim that moods don't just take place inside your head, but instead happen out in the world. As we saw with Dominik Heil's work, a change from Platonic and Cartesian philosophical traditions, and the undercutting of these traditions with the phenomenological discourse of Heidegger, sees a suspension of the subject/object dichotomy with its over-reliance on psychology,

¹⁷ *Grundstimmung* only appears once in *Being and Time*, according to Daniel Dahlstrom (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.134), although I can't find it.

¹⁸ According to Daniel Dahlstrom these include, from Heidegger collected works (*Gesamtausgabe* - GA), volume 39, Hölderlin's Hymn 'Germania' and 'The Rhine'; GA45, *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected 'Problems' of 'Logic'*; GA65, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*.

and along with it an opportunity to say that moods can be outside of our heads and in the world. As Charles Taylor says, *on camera* this time (as part of Tao Ruspoli's 2010 cinematic *Festschrift* to Hubert Dreyfus), we commonsensically say that there is a "joyful mood in the room; it's plainly not a creation of my mind of your mind – what it is...is a creation of our interaction" (Taylor, 2010) in the room, outside of our heads: we similarly say "that the mood of the nation is downcast right now", as Mark Wrathall says in the same film (Wrathall, 2010). These statements have captured something that is real in the world, and not just some private and *psychological* state, from which I project outwards onto the world. This accounts for the frustration and disappointment I initially felt when I came across Heidegger's discourse on moods in *Being and Time*, believing this to be an unwelcome renege on his anti-Cartesian and non-psychologistic stance that attracted me to him in the first place, not understanding that he was using mood as a means by which to have *Dasein* confront itself. Reconceiving the fundamental mood of boredom (and anxiety) now as a means by which *Dasein* confronts its own temporality, seeing in mood that time is both a power *over Dasein*, yet always coming *from Dasein* (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.81), allows me to explore how we simultaneously *suffer* time, and suffer time as that on which we *depend*. Chronologically speaking, we depend on the timely meeting of our ontic commitments using standardly sequential measures of clock time: no one doubts the value of standardised clock time in regulating our worldly concerns, least of all Heidegger. But our chronological conception of time, a conception that is purely quantitative in its tendency to reduce time's passing as a calculation of the sum of instances of now, and even accounts for the future with the same calculative intent such that the future is relegated to the possibilities not yet calculated as nows, fails us in the task of transcending our everyday, which is the wish of every figure of revolution, be that in politics, art, science, or religion. We can only fulfil a new beginning, the next revolution, by conceiving the revolutionary act not outside of time – that would be a fantastic impossibility – but outside of time chronologically understood, hence my pejorative use of the term "chronic" to describe a hopelessly overdetermined definition of time. Such revolutions require a break with the past and the future, whose time is better understood as *Kairotic*, the opportune time of action, the right moment to do something. In the world of the corporate executive, there is even a phrase for this sort of time: quality time.

Concerning the "outside-of-our-heads-and-in-the-world" mood of boredom – substitutable for any of terms from the long list of synonyms for "anxiety" in the previous chapter, including the archaic, though sensible term "melancholy"¹⁹ – I would like to illustrate what the

¹⁹ In my attempt to establish a connection between the archaism of the term "melancholy" and its contemporary stand-in "boredom," thereby drawing attention to that fundamental disposition with which the term has long been associated, I'm drawn to Peter Toohey's book *Boredom: A Lively History* (2011). The author, true to his sub-title, peppers his account

lethargy of boredom (and manifestation of ground moods generally) can attune us in to in assessing the dumbfounded-ness of our capitalistic existence, and the not-at-home-ness of our anxiety in the face of it. Consider Sanjay, three years on from commencing his role of CHRO for X-Corp, now also promoted to a member of X-Corp's Board, having comfortably settled in to his luxurious business district apartment, five-minute's drive from the company's high rise headquarters in an Eastern Texas city in the US. We join Sanjay on the opening day of a newly launched X-Corp executive education programme, taking place in a plush suite of rooms in a golf resort on the outskirts of the city. As CHRO, and thereby responsible for all aspects of the management of human resources in X-Corp, he is acting as chief sponsor of the programme, keen to give the programme and its intent his "blessing".

O-----O

Sanjay was distracted, swivelling to and fro in his comfy chair at the back of the training room at the venue. This 3-day development event was coming too close to Quarter End for his liking. It was only half-way through a long phone conversation during the drive to the venue that he'd felt his sixteenth-floor team had understood the finance update he'd wanted. Now he just needed a quick follow-up with some of his direct reports he knew would be there, the ones he'd nominated to join this programme, about some of those figures – it shouldn't cause much of an interruption; he needed this at the earliest opportunity, which looked to be during the mid-afternoon coffee break, judging by the schedule he'd been handed by the lead trainer from the business school as he entered the training room, who he'd met several times since he'd selected this high ranked school to design and run the programme. He was sat low in his swivel chair at the back of the room, behind a large "U" shaped table, around which sat twenty of X-Corp's brightest and most talented senior managers. Sanjay was willing himself to relax, though he was up next in a few minutes, *to set the context of the programme, and say a little about your own leadership journey to the top*, as the woman's consultant colleague had put it to him as he was being whisked from reception to the room. He couldn't see the managers' faces, which were turned towards the business school woman at the front, busy introducing the programme, but he knew most of them, and certainly their potential, on paper at least.

He'd fought hard for this programme: it had been part of his pitch for the CHRO job: there hadn't been one like it in X-Corp for many years. Whilst he'd capped the seat and \$4m budget

of boredom with reproductions of famous paintings, most notable of which are Albrecht Dürer's copperplate engraving *Melancholia I*, 1514, (*ibid*: p.118); and that of Durer's contemporary, Lucas Cranach the Elder, and his *Melancholia*, 1532, (*ibid*: p.123). Both depict, not surprisingly, bored-looking figures, surrounded by timely symbols of their disposition.

allocation for this programme, he had, with the assistance of his Talent Review Boards in each global region, personally earmarked the outstanding balance of one hundred and seventy potential attendees within the senior manager population across X-Corp to join this nine-month long programme within eighteen-months of its launch, provided everything went well. The Board needed to show the stock market that it was serious about the strength and long-term viability of the company's management structure, as the market for outsourcing services was changing faster than the company had foreseen. Academics in Business Strategy were on tomorrow, to map these market changes against the company's strategy, so as to inform this group, and ultimately the entire management community, of their responsibilities to effect the necessary changes: after, that is, the participants had received feedback on their psychometric profiles from coaches they'd each been appointed to later that afternoon, as background to their personal development plans taking place during and after the programme – they were expected to fit the programme's activities in around their day-jobs. There hadn't been this sort of mass profiling in the company for a long time, and it had caused quite a stir amongst the group and their "directs". Consequently the programme was a big deal for participants, for Sanjay, and for X-Corp as a whole.

As the PowerPoint™ slides began to fly, and as the sixty-forty split male/female group began to sit back in their chairs – this being the first time most of them had been together – during one of his swivels, Sanjay caught the view out beyond the shaded veranda over onto an adjacent lake this side of the golf course, down which the training room looked, the green visible in the far distance. The view was sublime, though the mood he realised he was in terrifying. He kept staring. He couldn't very well share with the group how profoundly bored he realised he'd become in the job: the endless round of team lunches, budget meetings, talent forecasts, remuneration committees, disciplinary hearings, appointment boards, union gatherings, most of which required lengthy trips overseas. He was fine with each of these, understanding their respective importance. In fact, his diligence was acknowledged by the self-appointed reward – along with his own pay, beyond his capacity to spend – of giving himself leave, when time permitted, to lead some HR-related seminar sessions on the local university's MBA course. His style was popular, though it was in the fresh faces at these seminars, where he confronted his ideological young self many times over, that he realised he'd become a stranger to his own past. His was a seven-figure liveable-with sense of profound boredom, but profound all the same: did it show?

It was time to be introduced to the group, by the woman from the business school, whom he now knew to be a "Human Resources" academic with many years of experience in leadership development. A flash of panic shot through his body as she gave a light-hearted précis of his much publicised past, as he made his smartly besuited walk to the front of the room, to face the talent.

At dinner later that evening, in the same dark suit, after drinks in the bar with the business school team, a number of people from the group had spoke to him about how inspiring they'd found his story, which he'd told without slides. All Sanjay could think of, looking out at a hastening dusk over the mist-hung fairways, after he'd made his apologies to the group, having drifted out to the carpark, and having climbed into his classy car, was his son back in Gurgaon.

O-----O

As a pacing out of the contours of Heidegger's notion of "profound boredom," this description is a tad excessive. Though what the excess portrays, I would say, is the extent to which we have to have become wholly entranced by time, knowingly captivated by the lavish timeishness of our quotidian existence, before we can even begin to catch a glimpse of how our lives do or do not (for the sake of the revelation, it doesn't matter which) embody an understanding of our *existing* at all. Sanjay has done that. Glancing back at the chapter's opening epigram – just one of many of Heidegger's explanations as to what the fundamental mood of boredom gives us over to realise – we can catch in it a picture of Sanjay, slumped over his steering wheel in the car, given over to an experience of the "properly authentic possibility" (Heidegger, 1995: p.153) of his sheer existence, a sense of existence for him "only possible in the midst" (*ibid*) of his everyday engagement with his CHRO job. That in terms (of the opening epigram) of which has "vanished" and has "refused" is more accurately referred to, I'd say, as a coming together, a "unity," of Sanjay's chronological existence – his necessary accounting for his existence using standardly conceived sequential time – with the less standard, but no less necessary, *Kairotic* temporal existence that brings him in front of his own existence, evidenced by his son acting as a token for Sanjay's existence. This unity of the chronic with the *Kairotic* is, rather theatrically put, nothing less, in temporal terms, than the meeting of the finite with the infinite – something I'll pick up on in the next chapter.

Let's try and map Heidegger's three levels of boredom onto this scenario. At no point was Sanjay bored by the naked passing of time, chronologically speaking, of the event, or its preparation, since too much was riding on its success for that case of boredom to arise. Likewise, at no point was Sanjay bored with himself – distinct from the situation he found himself in – and needed to make no effort to avert his senses to the time of the event, since he was perfectly familiar with the various temporal structures of the event – its duration and span beyond its publically understood duration. No: it was a boredom he had no option but to face, coming as it did, "out of the blue" (Heidegger, 1995: p.135), and revealing to Sanjay, via this fundamental mood,

his own burden of pure existence, a revelation over which he had no power, despite his well wadded and privileged status. Although it doesn't seem like it, Sanjay, or Sanjay's *Dasein*, has done itself a favour, in this vignette, and now faces a choice. Whether to be bowed by the limits, the chronological limits, set by a calculative view of time that will bring a familiar, and conveniently apportioned, future sequentially into view, now-point by now-point: or whether to face the infinite squarely. In Part Two of this thesis, I will explore how the infinite, the eternal, is an excess closer than we're minded to think.

Part Two

Sublimely Kairotic

The Gods of Technology

The men [sic] of this earth are provoked by the absolute domination of the essence of modern technology, together with technology itself, into developing a final world-formula which would once and for all secure the totality of the world as a uniform sameness, and thus make it available to us as a calculable resource. The provocation to such making-available orders everything into a single design, the making of which levels the harmony of the infinite relation. The togetherness of the four "voices of destiny" no longer rings out.

(Martin Heidegger, *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, p.202)

4.1 Introduction

Remaining with the theme of what counts as excess, I would like to approach my examination of the relationship between time, technology and executive education from outside, or in excess, of an approach we might expect to take. An expected approach might take an historical line, in showing how, over the ages, the "perceptual moment" (Canales, 2009: p.3) has shrunk in measurable duration from seasons, days, minutes, to tenths of a second, and now to the attosecond, one billionth of billionth of a second, and to Plank time – about 10^{-43} second – all of which is in keeping with our preference for materialistic and scientific explanations (*Scientific American*, 21 (1), 2012): the expected line might be to subject to scrutiny how, so-called, consumer oriented information communication technologies (ICT), given these shrinking perceptual moments, speed up our lives, revealing our "always on," or 24/7, existence; then, possibly, how this abiding and temporally oriented episteme, or *techne*, either is or is not manifested or countered in educative practices, in perhaps the more political dimensions of education. Such approaches to an examination of the relationship between time, technology and executive education have a compelling, sometimes beguiling, explanatory force. Even Heidegger's own writing on technology, especially his translated essays *The Question Concerning Technology* and *Discourse on Thinking*, can themselves be readily interpreted as quaintly anti-technological and anti-acceleratory in this runaway manner, when he points out that "[n]ature becomes a gigantic

gasoline station, an energy source for modern technology and industry” (Heidegger, 1966: p.50); or when his apparent fears that “technology threatens to slip from human control” (Heidegger, 1977: p.5) seem to reveal our powerlessness in the face of modern technology. In my view, however, as such, they have a tendency to distract attention away from a simpler means of encountering time, namely through those fundamental moods associated with the traditionally Romantic complaint of melancholy – constituted, in this study, by reflections on death, anxiety, and boredom – that emerges from the contrast between a chronological and a *Kairological* conception of time. What was revealed in our examination of Heidegger’s concepts of death, anxiety, and boredom, was the “between-space” (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.63), the excess, between *chronos* and *Kairos*, where *Dasein* found itself in its temporality. In this second part of the thesis I’d like to examine the basis of a different set of fundamental moods, ones that open *Dasein* onto the *Kairological* moment of vision, via an examination of the Heideggerian concepts of technology, history and the event of appropriation, or *Ereignis*.

In the previous chapter, it was only Sanjay’s dealing in and with the world that revealed to him his raw existence. He didn’t gain that revelation by effort of will; it was given amidst his cares for his world. The issue I have with the standard descriptors¹ that emphasise, critically or positively, the *grip* that technology has on the time of our lives is that the site of this enslavement or redemption – depending on which stance is taken – is an actual piece of technology, the gift of its use and the *telos* of that particular gifted use. What is actually gifted, I would say, are not the affordances of the specific piece of technology, however compelling it seems, and however swept up we are by it; rather, the *Kairotic* aspect of the time its use reveals, beyond *techne*, and irrespective of any specific knowledge (of profit maximisation, say), which is dangerously *unproductive*. Our being swept up by technology, constitutes a missing of the true gift technology brings, a revolutionary gift of having us realise, through technology, our own revolutionary possibilities. As the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* entry for “*Kairos*” has it, *Kairos* is “personified opportunity” (OCD, third edition, 1996: p.806); consequently, our being swept up by technology, our treating it as the ultimate distraction, constitutes the negation of *Kairos* and the *Kairotic* moment of opportunity. As Felix Ó Murchadha says of *Kairotic* time, “[t]he *kairos* is characteristic of a time and a certain history; it is occasioned by that history and refigures that history. The time of revolution is one in which the past and the future is transformed and a new chronology becomes possible, such that the past can no longer be thought except in relation to that revolution, to that *Kairos*” (Ó Murchadha, 2013: p.197). This is the new beginning, the *Kairotic* revelation I’m here

¹ A standard not uniquely, though iconically, represented by Neil MacGregor’s 100th object in his *History of the World in 100 Objects* (2012), the solar-powered charger, a technology that has the power to “change almost every aspect of [our] domestic existence” (*ibid*: p.555).

attempting to theorize, for the jemmied apart of the relata of the order-execution cognate, such that the past of executive education can no longer be thought except in relation to the revolution that can be enacted only once *Kairotic* time is revealed: I'm saying that education is the mode of experience in which *Kairotic* time comes to appearance. If the chronic time of death, anxiety and boredom slip away as a train into the night, then a different kind of time stands the chance of emerging through the *Kairological* understanding of – as this chapter deals with – technology.

Based on one of Heidegger's neologisms, *das Geviert*, from his 1951 essay *Building Dwelling Thinking*, and translated into English as the "fourfold" (Heidegger, 1971: p.150), I would like to approach Heidegger's critique of the dangerous place we allow technology to assume in modern society – where, as we will see, "the danger stands that man is completely delivered over to technology and one day will be made into a controlled machine" (Heidegger, 1966: p.590) – via an analysis of this fourfold of earth, sky, divinities (or small "g" gods) and mortals. By basing my analysis of Heidegger's critique of technology on the 'fourfold' in *Building Dwelling Thinking* (Heidegger, 1971), as well as from *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry* (Heidegger, 2000) – distinct, say, from the standard analyses of his arch-essay on the topic, *The Question Concerning Technology* (Heidegger, 1977) – it allows me to begin to talk about the (scare quoted) "sacred," distinct from the current secular orthodoxy that is suspicious of a "sacred". This in turn, facilitated by an interpretation of Heidegger's notion of the "fourfold," allows me to rehabilitate the dangerous (as in the human as a "controlled machine") technology under a range of new orders: new orders of non-sequential or *Kairotic* time, higher orders of transcendence, ranking orders of intelligibility as these relate to the order-execution cognate, and, thereby, new orders of meaning in the sense of re-establishing a different order, or as Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Spinoza have it, of "bringing technological ordering out in its ownmost" (Dreyfus and Spinoza, 2006: p.277). I will delight in upholding the perversity of Heidegger's anachronistic seeming notion of the "fourfold" being applied, as I'm doing, to a business world completely purged of all talk of "gods," evacuated of all consideration of "earth" and "sky," emptied and cleansed of any "mystery" and "enchantment" of whatever sort.

The world of the business executive, the world of technology, is a disenchanted world with its own correspondingly disenchanted and malevolently absolutist ontology, one that restricts what can be experienced and, crucially from Heidegger's point of view, what can be thought. I would like to explore what a consideration of the enchanting and Romantic *poetic fable*, as I view it, of Heidegger's "fourfold" can teach – dare I say it – the late-career executive and those in an educative position to influence their (temporal) assumptions about the order-execution cognate.

I will structure this seditious-seeming re-ordering into the following sections. Firstly, and briefly, by reminding the reader of Heidegger's standardly conceived concerns about technology and its correlate "machination". Secondly, by establishing a connection between Heidegger's notion of technology and its desiderata of ordering, or summoning; which in turn points to the index of freedom, or slavery, by which to evaluate the extent of the law-like grip in which technology holds us. Thirdly, by examining each of the constituents of the "fourfold" of earth, sky, divinities and mortals, and suggesting how the form of dwelling within the fourfold "compass" relates to the distinction between chronic and *Kairotic* time. Fourthly, in an attempt to establish a boundary between credulity and scepticism regarding Heidegger's thinking, a boundary between dream and reality in the case of the world of philosophy versus the world of business, and in order to test out some of these boundary-crossing workings, I will "use" my own tame executive, Sanjay, to explore this.

4.2 The Question Concerning Machination

Heidegger had begun his considerations of the effects of a technological approach to the world in his 1938 manuscript *Beiträge Zur Philosophie*, long before the commonly referenced thirty-two page 1953 essay became popular, whose title I have parodied to include "machination" rather than "technology". Translated into English as *Contributions to Philosophy* (Heidegger, 1999), his "technological approach to the world" in that book went by the name of *Machenschaft* – a term which, as Daniel Dahlstrom notes, like the term for power, *Macht*, is related to the word for "making" or "doing," *machen* (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.125) – or "machination" where, unsurprisingly given Heidegger's principle concern about the forgottenness of being, this approach is a way of understanding beings as a whole, and markedly distinct from the design, the build and use of machines per se. With "machination" all *beings*, every instance of occurrence, is construed as some-*thing* that humans can manipulate, calculate and produce. In his 1938-39 manuscript titled *Besinnung* written shortly after *Contributions*, and translated as *Mindfulness* (2006), Heidegger reiterates that "*Machination* means the accordance of everything with producability, indeed in such a way that the unceasing, unconditioned reckoning of everything is pre-directed" (Heidegger, 2006: p.12, emphasis in original) and that as such machination is a "coercive force" (*ibid*). In *Contributions* Heidegger conditions this coercive force of machination through our "lived-experience," a concurrence that banalizes machination's negative effect of obscuring the proper "beingness" of being, thus:

If machination and lived-experience are named together, then this points to an essential belongingness of both to each other – a belongingness that is concealed but is also essentially *non-simultaneous* within the ‘time’ of the history of be-ing. Machination is the early and still long hidden showing of what is precisely *not* ownmost to the beingness of beings. But even when in certain shapings it emerges into the openness of interpretation of beings – as in modernity – it is not recognised as such nor grasped at all. On the contrary, the spreading and rigidifying of what is not its ownmost is accomplished by actually retreating behind that which seems to be its utmost opposite, even as it remains totally and solely its own making. And this is lived experience (Heidegger, 1999: p.89, emphasis in original).

The foundation for most of the (more presentable) technical jargon from the 1953 *The Question Concerning Technology* is buried here in this passage, and neighbouring passages from *Contributions*, along with a hint that Heidegger sees machination reflecting not only the interpretive limitations of being within our modern age but that the same limitations stretch forward from the very beginnings of Western thought – this is his not untroublesome notion that he can diagnose Western humankind’s understanding of being as a symptom of “modern,” i.e. Aristotelian, metaphysics. Something to bear in mind as we come to grips with Heidegger’s critique of technology, as Richard Polt points out, is that Heidegger’s analyses of technology are themselves “technological” in the critical sense he employs, in as much as “he writes as if he has a *technique* for unlocking the mechanisms of history” (Polt, 1999: p.174, my emphasis). Contrary to Polt, I could imagine Heidegger defending his point by affirming the “coercive force” of machination through his own lived experience, as evidenced by him falling back into the locutions of modern metaphysics. So let’s grant him that privilege for a moment, until we’ve grasped his tools of critique.

Heidegger’s principle claim is that the essence of technology is not the manifestation of technological equipment; not simply a means, an instrument or human activity, not even of a particular *techne*, as in knowledge of how to run a profitable business. Rather, it belongs more to the realm of knowing, in that “technology is a mode of revealing” (Heidegger, 1977: p.13): that is, technology reveals beings – being as things and thingness, not the being of *Dasein* – as available for our exploitation. For the lived-experience of a technological *Dasein*, to *be* means only two things: to be an occurrent object ready to be exploited, or to be the exploiter of that occurrent object. Hence a technological approach to the world only reveals beings as resources ready for exploitation, in the manner of which objects present themselves to us as “standing-reserve” (Heidegger, 1977: p.17), and hence the being of *Dasein* “is not recognised as such nor grasped at all” (Heidegger, 1999: p.89), which is a problem for Heidegger. Interestingly for my argument, that

beings are standing-by ready for exploitation means for Heidegger that beings can be ordered², thereby adding to my list of senses of order the notion of “summoning”.

This summoning sense of order will be examined in relation to establishing an exploitative (technological) basis for execution – in the standing-reserve sense of “human resources” (that department within an organisation tasked with determining policies for ordering of the organisation’s human resource) and as an orderable activity, as in the order-execution cognate – in the next section on the “fourfold,” from which this technological basis, as well as the commensurate forgottenness of being, can be seen more clearly. When technology has to do with “revealing,” and when the “fourfold” (as we shall see) concerns a form of corrective balancing that assists in un-hiding the being of *Dasein*, it is not surprising that Heidegger invokes the original sense of the Greek term *aletheia*³, meaning un-hiding or revealing, in marked contradistinction to how *aletheia* is commonly understood as “truth” in modern metaphysics. This distinction, he claims, established in Plato’s Cave Allegory (Plato: *The Republic*, 514a–520a, in Cooper, 1997), represents the root of modern metaphysics, and the root of the problem of the essence of technology, in that confusing *aletheia* with truth of beings, and not the un-hiding of being leads us to assume that the opposite of *aletheia* is not the multiple forms of hiddenness but simply falsehood: that beings only have the attribute of truth (*aletheia*) as being available to be accounted for and used, and hence to be merely present as standing-reserve. Towards the end of the essay, in this regard, and in mordant phrasing, Heidegger proclaims that “[t]he coming to presence of technology threatens revealing, threatens it with the possibility that all revealing will be consumed in ordering and that everything will present itself only in the unconcealedness of standing-reserve” (Heidegger, 1977: p.33).

The “revealing” that rules this particularly pervasive form of knowing, translated as “challenging” (*Herausfordern*), as a form of “provoking” or “setting upon,” conveys both the unreasonableness of the demand we continually put on our natural resources – for energy, say, in Heidegger’s “gasoline station” quote at the start – as well as conveying something of the taken-for-granted-ness with which we routinely “execute our commands” or exercise *dominion* over

² I am using two translations of the Heidegger’s *The Question Concerning Technology*; David Farrell Krell’s *Basic Writings*, (1978) who has “altered the translations slightly” (p.311) from William Lovitt’s collection, on which Krell’s is based, namely *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (1977). Both translations use the term “ordered” (*Bestellung*, and *bestellen* and all the senses of *stellen*, as in *Gestell* or “enframing”) to denote “summon” and “send for”.

³ *Aletheia*, Heidegger acknowledges in *Parmenides* (Heidegger, 1992), his lecture course of 1942-43, is a Greek goddess: not a representative of “truth” but truth itself. “The goddess is the goddess ‘truth’. ‘The truth’ – itself – is the goddess. Hence we shall avoid the locution that would speak of a goddess ‘of’ the truth. For the expression ‘goddess of truth’ evokes the idea of a goddess to whose patronage and blessing ‘the truth’ is only entrusted. In that case, we would have two items: on the one hand ‘a goddess’ and on the other ‘the truth,’ standing under divine protection” (Heidegger, 1992: p.5, emphasis in original). Straight away we see that Heidegger is not playing with a “mere” myth or symbol, given that later in *Parmenides* he mourns the transformation of *a-letheia* into its counter essence *veritas* – truth, correctness and certitude (Heidegger, 1992: p.17).

resources, be they animal, mineral or vegetable. Says Heidegger about this form of challenging, “[t]he revealing that rules in modern technology is a challenging..., which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such” (Heidegger, 1977: p.14). This provocation Heidegger terms *Gestell* or the act of framing, or “enframing”. “Enframing means the gathering together of that setting-upon which, in turn, sets upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve. Enframing means that way of revealing which holds sway in the essence of modern technology and which is itself nothing technological” (Heidegger, 1977: p.20). In characteristic fashion, and using his ironic method of “formal indication”⁴, whereby a philosophical concept should only ever be indicated provisionally, for want of misinterpretation, Heidegger is in this quote reiterating the earlier point that we should not misinterpret technology via instrumental means, as what we use technology to achieve, for instance; neither should we employ anthropological definitions (*ibid*), as these misinterpretations occlude the essential point – that the essence of technology concerns the wrong sort of “revealing”. Somewhat theatrically, and with a touch of megalomania, he claims his thinking reveals the “essence of all history” (Heidegger, 1977: p.24), and that Western humankind’s starting out on the path from Plato’s Cave to revealing (only) the coming to presence of being as standing-reserve is, what he calls, *destining* (*Geschick*). It seems to be our destiny to misconstrue *aletheia* as *veritas* (truth).

A relatively common⁵ criticism of Heidegger’s position, a position quickly sketched in the foregoing summary of *The Question Concerning Technology*, and a criticism that Richard Polt rehearses in response to that essay alone, is that Heidegger is “too passive, too quietist and even fatalistic” in presenting his essence of technology. “Is there really nothing we can do”, Polt asks, “other than to let Being play with us?” (Polt, 1999: p.174). In a similar fashion to the embarrassment that John Haugeland (2013: p.44) attributes to the way in which Division II of *Being and Time* is often met, how are we meant to take the closing lines of *The Question Concerning Technology* that seem to trail off into mystical and unaccountable reverie? Consider the following: “[t]he closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become. For questioning is the piety of thought” (Heidegger,

⁴ Says Daniel Dahlstrom of Heidegger’s concept of formal indication, “A formal indication is a way of pointing to existential phenomena, roughly fixing their preliminary senses and the corresponding manner of retrieving those sense, while at the same time deflecting any ‘uncritical lapse’ into a conception that would foreclose pursuit of their genuine sense. Formal indications accordingly have a ‘referring-prohibitive’ function. Their ‘fundamental sense’ is based upon insight that, while any interpretation must emerge from our original access to phenomena, existential phenomena are not given to us directly. Hence, they need to be indicated but in a purely formal, revisable fashion. The sense of a concept as a formal indication is less a matter of content than a matter of enactment or performance” (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.74). See *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle* (Heidegger, 2001: p.16, 25, 40, 45) for Heidegger’s own definition of formal indication.

⁵ We see Lee Braver mimicking Richard Polt’s “quietistic” point in Braver’s *Heidegger’s Later Writings* (2009: p.97).

1977: p.35). Or consider any of the otherworldly and allusive, symbolic-seeming – frankly, baffling, as Lovitt himself admits (*ibid*: p.xiii) – passages in the closing pages of his essay. What can be made of these? To persist with my earlier defence of Heidegger regarding the coercive force of machination, against Polt’s accusation that Heidegger’s own thoughts on technology are themselves technological, I’m keen to draw similarities between the coercive force of machination and the *regulative* aspects of the order-execution cognate.

To regulate means to put in good order: as such, the order-execution cognate is the embodiment of good order, in that it is the governing token, as it were, of the putting into effect, via execution, of an order. The law-like, or regulative, normalcy of the order-execution cognate has a coercive force, in the manner of the coercive force of an overarching sense of *aletheia* that is machination, ending in the current historical epoch that requires, says Heidegger, the clarity of an ontological difference between beings and being to save us from complete enslavement by technological thinking. As such, given the cognate’s regulative lawfulness, and in the context of its motivational status within capitalist corporations, it seems unassailable and beyond decoupling. Fortunately, I don’t think it is.

It is under suffrage of the Heideggerian-induced melancholy in the preceding chapters that I turn to an analysis of his fourfold, so that I can properly question machination, to have a go myself at experiencing such questioning as “the piety of thought,” and in so doing, heave this thesis around into the homeward bound tailwinds of “the ways into the saving power” that I’m claiming is the saving grace of *Kairotic* time. The easy work is done now: in true *Odyssey* form, the hard work of returning home to defeat the “suitsors” (of technology in this chapter, but of the hiddenness of *Kairotic* time generally) is just about to begin.

4.3 Ordering, Enframing, and Enslaving

With the order-execution cognate always in mind, I would like to examine the role that order has in a machination that, in Heidegger’s opinion, effectively underwrites the entirety of modern metaphysics, and impinges on our own freedom. As Daniel Dahlstrom notes, “[a]s far as machination is concerned, there are only beings, and they are exclusively what human beings can manipulate, calculate, and produce. Any resistance to it is mere material for its expansion. There may be problems and difficulties, but nothing is fundamentally questionable (herein lies the seeds of its nihilism) since what things fundamentally are has been decided” (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.125). Given machination’s seeming inevitability, I’m keen to chaperone “order” in seemly congress with its cousins “manipulate,” “calculate” and “produce” for the purpose of three particular outcomes:

firstly, to see how they relate to each other and to ascertain whether they're all as rum a bunch as sponsors of Heidegger's concerns would have us believe; secondly, to isolate some positive influence that order may have on these relations; and thirdly, to present the basis of some of these new and positive orderings, via Heidegger's "fourfold," and claiming a Romantically oriented provenance to this concept.

If, for Heidegger, technology orders, via enframing, our complete world into a standing reserve (*Bestand*) of resources for us to calculate and manipulate, what would the opposite of this exploitative enframing be? What would be counter to this ordering compulsion? If it were possible, how could we suspend our impulse to order the world in a manner that has become the fundamental way in which the world of human beings is revealed? Assuming for a moment that this is even a legitimate opening question, and not barefaced sophistry acting as guilty accomplice to Heidegger's argument, we would be better off adjusting the direction of our enquiries slightly towards the motivations to order, in this case, the enframing impulse itself: who or what orders the ordering, and why? Consider the place of ordering in Heidegger's argument: "[e]verywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. Whatever is ordered about in this way has its own standing. We call it the standing-reserve [*Bestand*]" (Heidegger, 1977: p.17). Or, later on the same page, speaking of an empty airliner at an aerodrome, and in a parenthetical disagreement with Hegel who would characterise such a machine as entirely autonomous, says Heidegger in contradistinction, "[s]een in terms of the standing-reserve, the machine is completely unautonomous, for it has its standing *only from the ordering of the orderable*" (*ibid*: my emphasis). For standing-reserve to even be a reserve, it needs to be ordered as such, which is where the "ontological difference" between being and beings comes into play in this instance – according to Hubert Dreyfus, "his single great contribution to Western thought" (Dreyfus, 2006: p.265). This represents a maturing and enlarging of his earlier concern regarding tools and machines, namely his interest in the being of equipment as "readiness-to-hand" (Macquarrie and Robinson's translation of *Zuhandenheit*: Heidegger, 1962: p.98) or "available" (Hubert Dreyfus's translation: Dreyfus, 1991: p.61), distinct from the modern metaphysical sense of being *in toto* as merely truth and falsity (the supposed epoch-setting misinterpretation that is distinct from *aletheia*, which I will expand on in the next chapter as it relates to his understanding of history) that Heidegger treats as "presence-at-hand" (*Vorhanden*; Heidegger, 1962: p.7) or "occurrent" (Dreyfus, 1991: p.60). Heidegger's dig at Hegel echoes his *Being and Time* emphasis on tools only making sense within their context, where "there 'is' no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment

is essentially “something in-order-to...” (Heidegger, 1962: p.97). His point is that Hegel cannot have an autonomous machine, a “self-reliant tool” (Hegel, 1910: p.117) because the tool only makes sense, only *is*, in the context of its use, which in the case of Heidegger’s concern about technology is extended to include its *potential* for use – that it is “orderable” (Heidegger, 1977: p.17).

What conclusions can I make about “ordering” from this? I would like to say that ordering is not just akin to the terms Heidegger uses that position the occurrent as a resource for us to exploit, such as manipulate, calculate and produce, but that these terms and “order” are interchangeable. By setting up this congruence I can usefully equate the manipulative, predatory, and acquisitive aspects of the average business corporation of contemporary capitalism with Heidegger’s notion of *machination*. News that the activities of the average corporation, its executives, and the wider context of its markets and consumers – be those relationships of the business-to-business (“b-2-b” as business schools term them) variety as the majority are, or of the business-to-consumer (“b-2-c,” which is you and me as “mall rats”) kind, such as the retail industry – are subsumable under Heidegger’s concept of *machination* can hardly come as a surprise at this stage of my argument. Under his terms, naming the department that broadly deals with the staff of a corporation under the title “human resources” is an inevitable, though telling, consequence of the not especially extraordinary fact that corporations operate under the same modern metaphysics – as revealed by our approach to technologizing of everyday life – that so concerned Heidegger in the last decades of his life. His own term for how we ourselves have fallen fowl of the enframing logic, in the fashion of the Ouroboros eating its own tail, is to see humans as mere “functionaries of enframing” (Heidegger, 2012: p.30).

Not only is this a relatively trivial observation. That a corporation’s operational – including its financial, marketing, logistical – strategy routinely orders its world, and ours vicariously, via our direct or indirect consumption of its products and services, is surely the main benefit of, so called, “in-corporating” the manipulation and production of “resources” into a legally constituted body called a “corporation” in the first place – so that we don’t have to do the manipulation of resources ourselves. So that we don’t have to smelt our own ore, build our own car, drill for and refine our own oil to fuel it, and trade our own stocks and government bonds to fund the insurance of it, to use a rather gross example. We tolerate corporations’ ordering of the world on our behalf because, as Heidegger has it, we expect as much: we’re all collusive in that same technological approach to the world. It’s not as if the convenience of our delegating to corporates, in the previous example, demarks a boundary of metaphysics, only the corporate side of which is properly (improperly, for Heidegger) “modern”. Not only that. Technology (*die Technik*) *reveals* our world in a very particular way (enframing), if you concur with Heidegger’s grandiose historical schema, which at the moment

I do; which is one of the possible explanations I put forward to account for the obscene disparities of wealth that Thomas Piketty evidences (Piketty, 2014) in his influential book about capitalism in the twenty-first century. Since our lostness in enframing and technologizing reveals the world as just so much stuff that shows up for us to use, the world as an orderable set of resources has, as a consequence, lost any inherent significance it may have once had – in the religious sense in particular, before, that is, Nietzsche pronounced the death of God. The ultimate index of purpose has since become, in the face of this devaluation of the *aletheia* sense of being, the accumulation of wealth: or as David Marquand terms it, we live in “mammon’s kingdom” now (Marquand, 2014). Aiming to become wealthy, getting wealthy, maintaining and growing that wealth, these are our newly ordained daily offices in the holy order of enframing.

Conscious of mirroring Heidegger’s grandiose pronouncements myself, my reference to Piketty’s work throughout this thesis stems from the *relation* aspect of my argument – which, along with a *concern* about the delinquencies of capitalism, and an *expectation* that education can mitigate these delinquencies somehow, are significant motivators in this study. But here’s the crunch, based on the foregoing logic. Executives working for the corporation of mammon, as the political philosopher David Marquand would have it, or working at the accumulation of capital for the purposes of increasing shareholder return, as the Chicago School economist Milton Friedman would have it, or the executive as a functionary of enframing, as the philosopher Heidegger would have it, far from being the ruling apparatus of the capitalist society, are instead its *slaves*⁶.

Think about it. Executing against orders, in the business context at least, is the paradigm case of technology revealing our world, a malevolent corporative body that is only vaguely hinted at in Heidegger’s non-commercially focused philosophising. Executives, then, are not only intimate in this extractive process, bearing the responsibilities, as they do, of sequencing-out the fine-grained orders of the abiding arch-order that conforms all things into mere “resources”; they are owned by the enframing process itself, with their freedom wholly impinged. Not only are they beholden to the capitalist owners, shareholders and rentiers of the corporations they execute on behalf of, executives have nowhere to turn to evade a modern metaphysics that has predefined, without question, the being of all entities. And whilst it is laying it on a bit thick to affirm that enslavement by the melancholy of an executive’s anxieties – and by their boredom, foreshadowed

⁶ I summon my courage to make this bold claim from Cornelius Castoriadis, and his book *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy: Essays in Political Philosophy* (Castoriadis, 1991). Against the potential to disenfranchise business schools, and all involved in training, developing and educating both proto-executives and those in mid-service, Castoriadis reminds us that in ancient Athens “the task of *execution* in the strictest sense, is left to the slaves” (*ibid*: p.110, my emphasis), and that “[r]igorously speaking, there is no such thing as ‘executive power.’ (Its functions, which were in the hands of slaves in ancient Athens, are performed today by people acting more or less as ‘vocal animals,’ and they may one day be performed by machines)” (*ibid*: p.169). His robust argument continues, claiming that the Athenian state’s “ruling apparatus stands opposed to a mass of executants who, theoretically, form its ‘base’ but who in reality remain outside it” (*ibid*: p.208).

as it is for us all by the prospect of death – it is nonetheless within the precincts of Heidegger’s argument to claim that we can be saved, released from slavery, from our Ouroboros-like capture by technology, by “divinities” (see the “fourfold” in the next section), just to add some more piquancy to the *slave* metaphor. As Mark Wrathall describes life under servitude to technology, “[i]n such a world, nothing is encountered as really mattering, that is, as having a worth that exceeds its purely instrumental value for satisfying transitory urges” (Wrathall, 2011: p.198). Now, this smacks of enslavement to me, at least a subjugation to a form of temporality that restricts one to merely satisfying one’s “transitory urges”. Though isn’t this a little strong? Have I let my ordering get the better of me?

I’ve been careful to restrict my interchangeability of “machination” and “order” to the rationale of average corporations. Mine is not a thesis of business administration, and space does not permit analysis of the wider spectrum of corporate operations that put “machination” to the test in non-capitalist and non- (overtly) exploitative contexts. Arriving at my point, my claim is that even such incorporated paragons as these alluded to, along with their executive flesh and blood, still operate under the sway, under the mastery, of the enframing essence of the technological approach to the world, which is the root of Heidegger’s concern, which can also be described as “ordering the world”. As a restatement of my abiding concern over the seeming ineluctability of the order-execution cognate, the question that now emerges is, how can a corporate executive freely order at the same time refusing the enslavement of enframing? How should they execute on that which should never be seen as wholly a resource?

Let me give an instance of the enframing sense of ordering first. James Edwards, in illustrating the implications of our engaging with enframing, with our technological approach to the world, uses the business-to-consumer examples of his use of an Oral-B toothbrush and Grape-Nuts each morning, to show how the ordered outcomes of the production process in turn order our lives. “Today’s breakfast Grape-Nuts taste exactly like yesterday’s, and mine taste just like those sold in Seattle or in São Paulo – and (this is the crucial point) *that is what makes them what they are*. That anonymous interchangeability is what gives them their being as *Bestand* [enframing]” (Edwards, 2005: p.459, emphasis in original). Their anonymity and interchangeability are not accidents: “they are essential to our need for these entities readily to disappear into our use of them. In practices given over – as Heidegger thinks almost our whole life is – to *ordering for the sake of ordering*, the more easily and quickly an entity can be thoughtlessly taken up into its *particular task of ordering*, the better” (Edwards, 2005: p.459, my emphasis). Taking an admittedly large leap, but being true to the seditious intent of my thesis – where I am expecting education to mitigate the delinquencies of capitalism – my interest is in how this particular task of ordering

manifests in the process of educating corporate executives to better order their company's own resource-ordering processes. In light of my labelling executives as *slaves*, how can we re-order the standard educative process such that it sees its own ordering, its own orders within the order-execution cognate, and offer its hapless charges, as a consequence, no legitimate distraction or deviation from what Heidegger identifies as the destination of all our not-at-home, our *unheimlich*, wanderings, namely "dwelling in the fourfold"?

Obviously, the hiddenness of these multiple orders translated over into contemporary executive education processes is guaranteed, once one acknowledges that this educative process, any educative process, is predicated on a modern metaphysics that has already decided what things fundamentally are (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.125). So is that it? Is this the end-stop of our concern about the essence of technology, a concern about its revealing of a hopelessly impoverished understanding of what it means to *be*? Does Richard Polt's (1999: p.174) criticism of Heidegger's view on technology as "fatalistic" stand? Does our epoch's approach to technology simply confirm Heidegger's worst fear, stated at the very beginning of *Being and Time*, that "the question of the meaning of being" (Heidegger, 1962: p.1) has been answered, but answered prematurely and incorrectly? Consequently, is there no hope in expecting education to assist in bringing Heidegger's project of reawakening an understanding of being coming to fruition? Fortunately not.

4.4 The Fourfold

Heidegger's introducing of the "fourfold," in his essay *Building Dwelling Thinking* (Heidegger, 1971: p.143-161), and later in *The Thing* (the very next essay in Hofstadter's 1971 translation *Poetry, Language, Thought*: p.163-186), is his attempt, as Mark Wrathall explains, "to uncover the way that real *things*, as opposed to mere resources and technological devices, show up" (Wrathall, 2011: p. 204). This is good for us, as it points the way out of slavery to enframing. However, I need to caveat my treatment of the "fourfold" at this early stage as being open to the same type of criticism that Richard Polt surfaced above, namely that I am using it as a resource to solve a problem – the problem of executive education under the sway of a wrongly ordered order-execution cognate. As I mentioned earlier, Heidegger nullified this objection by pointing to the coercive force of the lived experience of technology. He uses the term *Gelassenheit* (translated as "releasement") to acknowledge our living within technology knowingly, as it were, a knowing of both its positive and negative aspects: says Heidegger of this handy get-out clause, "I would call this comportment towards technology which expresses 'yes' and at the same time 'no,' by an old word, *releasement towards things*" (Heidegger, 1966: p.54, emphasis in original). In which case, in

the manner that Hubert Dreyfus terms “releasement” as “a kind of holding pattern we can enter into while we are awaiting a new understanding of being”⁷ (Dreyfus, 1993: p.309), I will venture my treatment of the “fourfold” as constituting releasement, a knowing suspension, of an enslaving sense of enframement.

The enormity of the *Odyssean* task left to me is not only to acknowledge as a cul-de-sac that which appears in the guise of the “fourfold” – at least to those seemingly immune to the oppression wrought by the coercive forces of machination – but to transform this seeming dead-end into a departure point for new orders for executive education, as the thesis title has it. The first means of lessening the burden of the task is to situate the task in our “everyday,” and by this I mean the (largely chronologically conceived) time of the everyday. Throughout *Being and Time* it has been Heidegger’s abiding concern to show *Dasein* as a discloser of worlds, in the equipmental sense mentioned earlier with reference to the airliner at the aerodrome. In the essays *The Thing*, *Discourse on Thinking*, and *Building Dwelling Thinking*, he begins to talk about local gatherings that set up local worlds, and, I would say, the time of local worlds – though he is less overt about the temporal aspects of these local worlds. Hubert Dreyfus (Dreyfus, 2006: p.274) champions Albert Borgmann’s designation of these local worlds as “focal practices” (Borgmann, 1984: p.196-210), which is handy for me as I prefer to interpret talk of the fourfold in these three essays of Heidegger’s as *temporal focal practices* which the fourfold uncovers. Hidden amongst the seeming nostalgia and faux Romanticism of Heidegger’s resistance to consumerism, his disaffection with our exploitation of the earth and of the ills of mass media, in preference for the world of simple peasants, peasant cottages, rustic hearths and jugs, lies in the essay “What are Poets For?” the following warning;

What threatens man in his very nature is the view that technological production puts the world in order, while in fact this ordering is precisely what levels every *ordo*, every rank, down to the uniformity of production, and thus from the outset destroys the realm from which any rank and recognition could possibly arise (Heidegger 1971: p.117, emphasis in original).

In response to this warning I interpret Heidegger’s introduction of *das Geviert*, the fourfold, from his 1951 essay *Building Dwelling Thinking*, as a non-technicised (non-) solution as is possible to give, under the circumstances of an exploration of a solution oriented technology as he sees it.

⁷ Interestingly, though relegated to a footnote nonetheless for fear of distraction, *Gelassenheit* is sometimes attributed as a meditative state, one that is adduced by enthusiasts of Heidegger’s so called “mystical” element in his thought as evidence of a connection to both Occidental and Oriental mystical religious traditions. For instance, John Caputo, in his book *The Mystical Element in Heidegger’s Thought* (1978: p.213), equates *Gelassenheit* with a Zen-like “letting be”. Despite being a meditative adept and a formal enthusiast (in the true sense of the term *enthusiast*) of the mystical, I discount Heidegger’s claim to any meditative ability in light of his appalling political decision-making ability. For me, the lines of prejudice and critical orthodoxy are too firmly drawn to cause a shift in the way Heidegger is perceived, notwithstanding any whiff of piety caught downwind.

Bringing together earth and sky, divinities and mortals, I take to be a commitment to suspend our enslaving sense of enframement not only with regards to releasing ourselves towards what a positive disclosing of the world as a resource can mean; but, in parallel, as releasing us towards a more positive sense of time than the merely chronological sense that accompanies our enslavement in a resource based view of the world⁸: as if strict adherence to chronological time equated to treating time merely as a resource, like any other act of enframing, distinct from an alternate evaluation of time in terms of the *Kairotic*, or *Augenblick*.

For instance, circumventing for the time being an explicit set of environmental concerns with respect to earth, we can ground our temporal focal practices, *pace* Borgmann, in our local worlds. There is a tempo and a pace to habitual everyday practices, which serve to ground our ontic cares and make them matter to us. This is no less the case with our resource-framed corporate executive, with his or her rounds of daily deadlines, weekly and monthly targets, and quarterly returns. But temporal focal practices, in the fashion that I've introduced the term above, imply a more localised context, which is at odds with the hegemonised tempo by which the average (neoliberal) corporation habitually operates, itself the homogenised temporal essence, the beat, of globalised capitalism. In contradistinction to the "homogenous, empty time," as Walter Benjamin terms what I'm calling chronic time (Benjamin, 1999: p.263), such localised tempos can be seen as the basis for grounding the operations of a particular team, department or division within a company, in distinction to the beat of the stock markets that sets the overarching tempo of the corporate. Mine is not a Romantically nostalgic yearning for older or slower times; rather, a revealing of a different "ground" to the beat, which more often than not remains withdrawn and only barely perceptible, as all good rhythms are. My example of Sanjay later in this chapter will reveal more of this.

With respect to the sky, I take Heidegger to mean the enduring and stable possibilities for action that arise via localised temporal focal practices, such that certain actions become naturally appropriate given that local "beat," and others naturally prohibited. For instance, where the localised corporate tempo values a particular celebration of remembrance of a founding father, say, or the anniversary of a figure or event of special significance to the corporate, or to its influential clients or suppliers, those adopted and temporally stable possibilities discourage actions based on a conflicting set of temporal values, such that are disrespectful in moods of such acts of remembrance. In establishing and valuing corporate cultural paradigms – be they at the level of a

⁸ It should come as no surprise that such a resourced-based view of the world is one ascribed by the majority of business school academics to the bundle of tangible and intangible assets a company can muster when considering its competitive strategy in the marketplace. As an early (1959) statement of this view, see Penrose's *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm* (2009).

team, or across an entire division – that distinguish distinct temporalities, the brave guardians of that paradigm have taken on a responsibility that enshrines a particular view of the wheeling of the heavens, the turning of the sky.

By divinities, with respect to temporal focal practices, I take Heidegger at face value and interpret this as an ushering back in of the (small “g”) gods so alien to a monotheistic culture, and yet so germane to the numerous *Kairotic* moments in our days. I can give a personal instance of this, concerning my reverence – part lexical, part practical – with the printing gods at my work; be that reciting the anxiety-inducing mantra “think before you print” before I decide whether I actually need the current document in my hands, rather than just on the screen of my computer; or second guessing the mood of the alive-seeming giant photocopier, via its blinking red eye and complicated litany of “clear paper jam” instructions, one floor above my desk; or taking (or gifting, out of my schedule) the time to talk to those gathered around the photocopier god, either concerning who is next in the printing queue, or about nothing work-related in particular. Whilst I hardly say grace to the divine processes and the gods involved in the elaborate printing ceremony, the whole devotion to this particular temporal focal practice does lend a graceful ease to my time in the office, lending its own momentum, whether I couch all this, in jest or otherwise, or in the language of “gods” or not.

Lastly, with respect to mortals as it touches upon our temporal focal practices, this refers to our finitude, our short lives in contrast to the vast durations of time before our birth and the eternity after our death, in distinction to the immortal forces that seem conjureable via our imaginations. As we saw in the chapter on death, Heidegger means by death our willingness to curtail our current identity in order to assume the next identity, in light of which our next set of attunements opens up a new world, and a new response to boot. This transformation, I’d say, comes not only in our capacity as disclosers of worlds, but in our ability to disclose new worlds through new, *Kairotic*, appreciations of time. The *Kairotic* opportunity open to us, via this conception of death, and via this subtly different conception of our own mortality, allows a new world to show up for us, as well as for those for whom we are guardians of this new temporal paradigm. This *Kairotic* opportunity is in stark contrast to a form of self-enslavement, a Rousseau-esque “born free, and he is everywhere in chains” (Rousseau, 1762) sense that comes with the commanding and regulative-seeming order-execution cognate.

Thus, having now staked a claim at a temporally-oriented fourfold, and standing on the very borders of credulity, possibly summoning bafflement from both sober minded academicians and equally sober minded executives, I would like, all the same, to confront what being guided

forward by the compass of the fourfold might look like in the context of an educative, or at least developmental or formative scenario, inside a Piketty-esque corporation.

o-----o

Activity in and around Sanjay's corner office on the sixteenth floor at X-Corp's headquarters, the home of its Human Resources department, was reaching a crescendo, as it had done towards the end of this particular week – week 14, the week of Quarter One's sales return – ever since Sanjay became CHRO, seven years ago. Not that the department's preparations this year were directly associated with the frenzied Quarter End: that version of frenzy was taking place two floors up, on the sales floor, generating its own form of madness and sour mood, made worse by changes in top management as a result of the recent twenty percent buy-out of the firm by activist investors. Sanjay's was a more joyous busy-ness, and centred on preparations for *Fool's Week*, something he'd introduced to his department of 50 headquartered staff five years ago, which he'd rolled out to the remaining globally dispersed 50 staff only last year. The view from the windows, for those that looked up from their work, was of the sun setting behind the cluster of high-rises around the park on the other side of the river, across from the 30 storey glass tower that housed X-Corp and a handful of law firms. It was going to be a working evening for Sanjay and his expensively flown-in immediate team, but the mood was buoyant. Hanne, Sanjay's personal assistant, was especially pleased this evening, as she followed him back from the conference room, where the 12-strong corporate HR leadership team had just broken up from a status briefing he'd given, to his magnificent and dimly lit corner office. She'd taken up his offer to move with him from his previous post in Brussels, and in the interim had seen his status and the respect the company paid him rise incredibly, hers along with it, even with the buy-out. Like everyone else in the early years, she'd been sceptical of the idea of *Fool's Week*, but this year, for the first time, its approach was being heralded by other departments, even Sales. In the past month she'd seen his mood lift, out of the gloom that last year's spin off of a non-core subsidiary had plunged him, into a joyous lucidity that all his little 'festival days' somehow seemed to bestow; she'd sensed an equal lift in the whole department's mood as it too turned the corner and rallied behind him with the preparations. She was a convert now to the madness that was about to be unleashed, and was proud to be working with Sanjay to bring it about. This year, for the first time, there were to be press interviews, which she'd help to arrange with the company's Public Relations team.

Sanjay was back at his broad wooden desk, cluttered with two laptops, several expensive fountain pens, two smart phones, papers, and bordered with a selection of dusty executive bric-à-brac from his travels – mostly statuettes and a collection of photos of him with his teams, taken in front of far-flung monuments and temples. In the middle of the desk, beneath the light from an old

style lamp, Hanne had placed a familiar and battered old clipboard, complete with string-tied pencil. His tanned sixty-year old face creased into a broad smile at Hanne, who beamed back as she closed the door.

Sanjay's briefing for *Fool's Week* had sent his leadership team scurrying to their allotted tasks: mostly checking the role descriptions for each member of their respective teams, and making sure amendments from last year's festivities were incorporated: conducting final checks with the HR Legal team, union representatives and the Senior Vice Presidents of the company; and going over the contingencies in case things went wrong. The letters had already been sent to all 100 HR staff, laying down the rules for the week, along with their non-negotiable temporary roles assigned to them during the forthcoming week: it took a lot of planning. This was the one time, in all of the observances that had begun to crop up in the department's calendar year, where chaos was actively embraced, distinct from just celebration; it was amazing that the Board let it happen. But Sanjay had shown a canny foresight, and had convinced them and the investors of the benefits...for now. Known by its other name as the "carnival of misrule," and by his one detractor on the Board as "FU week," *Fool's Week* saw the HR department turned upside down. On plan at least, this year would see all the department's senior managers don headsets and take to the switchboards to answer HR related calls from the company's 20,000 employees; team supervisors would become senior executives in charge of arbitrating the call centre's escalated issues; the junior members of staff, and probationers, become the leadership team, executing a prescribed set of orders that became more daring and the outcomes more sacrosanct each year; and the department's three interns take over Sanjay's role, along with his office and meeting schedule, in a predictable ecstasy of terror (he'd remembered to leave the salted peanuts in the top drawer, in compliance with item three on last year's strategy addendum). Sanjay himself was demoted to the mail, copier and store rooms, with his clipboard schedule of drop-offs and pick-ups, which he'd only half-heartedly attempted to memorise; there was no point. For this one week they were all (April) fools at their jobs, enjoying the part protest, part safety-valve let-off to an otherwise smooth running and boring corporation.

Sanjay swivelled excitedly to and fro in his comfy reclining chair, which he scuttled out to the side of his desk, positioned to enjoy the exhilarating view from his office, clipboard in hand, watching the lights of traffic on the downtown beltway through his own reflection in the dark glass. He rehearsed the suggested responses the Public Relations team had given him in preparation for the press interview on Monday, secretly cherishing the surprise he had in store. Who'd have thought?

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Yes: who would have thought that such a temporary truancy⁹ from the orders of neoliberalism was defensible? Talk of gods is apt to repel the modern reader, and yet here I am talking about a form of god-given foolery inspired by Martin Heidegger, a throwback to the times of medieval mayhem we thought we'd finished with. That I present Sanjay as fooling to the top of his bent as a valuable contribution to this discussion of Heideggerian temporality reveals, I'd say, the extent and timely import of his thinking on time, as well as its lethality. And with contemporary economic and class-tensions rising, as a result of increases in obscene wealth inequalities, it's not as if my attempt at describing a release (at least temporary) from these tensions is unprecedented¹⁰. Charles Taylor, writing in *Secular Age* (Taylor, 2007: p.45-54), champions the medieval Christian Church's attempt at releasing the tensions in that society via carnivals of misrule, Feasts of Fools, festivals, and the spectacle of boy bishops:

These were periods in which the ordinary order of things was inverted, or 'the world was turned upside down'. For a while, there was a ludic interval, in which people played out a condition of reversal of the usual order. Boys wore the mitre, or fools were made kings for a day; what was ordinarily revered was mocked, people permitted themselves various forms of license, not just sexually but also in close-to-violent acts, and the like (*ibid*: p.46).

Taylor's is an ordered and academic engagement with this mockery of order. A more accessible example of this Roman *Saturnalia*, complete with pictures, is provided by Alain de Botton in his bestseller *Religion for Atheists* (de Botton, 2012: p.63-67), which challenges our assumptions about religion halting freedom. What is called on in my playful Sanjay example above is a *Dionysian* form of freedom. Throughout the research for this thesis, I've observed a keen correlation between those edifying aspects of the mythic character of the Greek god *Dionysus*, and the strictly *Kairotic* constituents of Heidegger's notion of time. Three of the four¹¹ salient provinces that the Oxford Classical Dictionary (OCD, third edition, Hornblower, 1996: p.479-482) identify of Dionysus map

⁹ I came across this *Kairotic* phrase in my investigation into the debt Heidegger pays to Romanticism. It is from C.S. Lewis, in his book *The Allegory of Love* (Lewis, 1936: p.52), where he is explaining the Romance of European medieval literature.

¹⁰ Especially given Mikhail Bakhtin's work on carnival and the carnivalesque in his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984).

¹¹ The fourth and principle *Bacchic* domain of influence, as the god of wine and intoxication, is nonetheless salutary for revealing the inhibitions that prevent ritual madness, and which curtail certain forms of freedom. As a parenthetical aside, Nietzsche's famous dalliance with the Apollo-Dionysus distinction, in §20 of *The Birth of Tragedy* (in *Basic Writings*, Kaufmann, 2000: p.121-124), will help me to make the connection between Heidegger and the thought of early German Romantic philosophy, though Nietzsche's is a "dubious contribution" (Kerényi, 1976: p.138) to Dionysian scholarship when it comes to fully appreciating ritual madness, of the type I've attempted to illustrate for Sanjay. Whilst, as the Dionysian scholar Carl Kerényi says, "[i]t is quite erroneous to assert that the [Dionysian] cult originated in 'spontaneous attacks of mass hysteria'" (*ibid.*), it is conceivable there is something of use in a connection between Heidegger and Dionysus. The principle connection I've found comes, appropriately, in §13 of *Hölderlin's Hymns 'Germania' and 'The Rhine'* (Heidegger, 2014: p.169-177) where he says of Dionysus that he is "not just one demigod among others, but the distinctive one. He is the Yes that belongs to life at its wildest, inexhaustible in its creative urge, and his is the No that belongs to the most terrifying death and annihilation. He is the bliss of magical enchantment and the horror of a crazed terror. He is the one in being the other; that is, in being, he at the same time is not and in not being, he is" (*ibid.*).

nicely over aspects of my study. Says the *OCD*, throughout antiquity the myths and cults of the often violent and bizarre Dionysian rituals were “a challenge to the established social order” (*ibid*). His rites were associated with ritual madness or ecstasy, in the fashion of Heidegger’s ecstasies of time, and the ideal form of originary and ecstatic/Kairotic time; with masks and the impersonations of the fictional world, as in my use of fiction in this thesis; and with “the mysterious realm of the dead and the expectation of an after-life blessed with the joys of Dionysus” (*ibid*), which chimes with Heidegger’s claiming that when mortals die their death in life they usher in new opportunities for revealing being. We should mourn the death of foolery and consider rebirthing our inner maenad, if we are serious in “bringing technological ordering out in its ownmost” (Dreyfus, 2006: p.277).

To do this we can start by dwelling in the fourfold, where one is truly free. This is what Heidegger seems to be saying in his introducing the fourfold as a palliate to the chronic grip in which we are held by technology. If the fourfold is the site of a form of dwelling that discloses being, then Heidegger’s interest in freedom and what he sees as freedom’s five distinct types¹² become the conditions by which *Dasein* is able to reveal its own being. As he says in his gloss on *aletheia*, the goddess in Parmenides poem, in Heidegger’s lecture of that same name, “[t]hereby we might grasp the freedom man must first attain, in accord with this essence, if he is to be able to let beings be in the open what they are as beings” (Heidegger, 1992a: p.143). So, in my example of *Fool’s Week*, what I’m having Sanjay reveal is his being, Sanjay’s *Dasein* – along with the *Dasein* of his entire department – via a decidedly temporal, and temporary, suspension of the chronic time of the corporation, in favour of an embrace of *Kairotic* time, the time of opportunity, the time of the opportune moment, the non-sequential time of medieval carnival from the orders and misrule customs of the medieval Christian church¹³. *Kairotic* time is, in this sense, a temporary truaney.

The freedom of *Fool’s Week* has created a temporal clearing for this embodied understanding of being, at the same time as representing a highly politicised act of championing freedom from enslavement by technology, in the purely Heideggerian sense; a releasement from humans as resources, as the unfolding drama of the sixteenth floor Human Resources department illustrates. What I hope the above example begins to show is how it is possible to remain open to mystery while in the temporal now of a seemingly entirely non-mystical – resource-centred, hence technological, and hence chronic – setting. Namely, to be free to follow a way of being that embodies an understanding of being, but still via explicitly technological ordering: or as Heidegger says in his *Discourse on Thinking*, “I call the comportment which enables us to keep open to the

¹² See footnote 12 of chapter 7. See also Heidegger’s *Schelling’s Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom* (Heidegger, 1985b: p.83-84, 88).

¹³ Of the sort detailed in Chris Humphrey, *The Politics of Carnival: Festive Misrule in Medieval England* (Humphrey, 2001).

meaning hidden in technology, openness to the mystery” (Heidegger, 1966: p.55). Only, in my iteration of this, the mystery which concerns us is the emerging mystery of *Kairotic* time, part of which remains inviolate from chronic sequencing-out.

Given that I’ve just re-appropriated a medieval instance of Kairotic time from the ancient Christian church to the modern capitalist corporation, it only seems proper to examine, in the next chapter, how Heidegger conceives time with respect to history.

Being Mindful of History

The happening and the happenings of history [Geschichte] are primordially and always the future, that which in a concealed way comes toward us, a revelatory process that puts us at risk, and thus is compelling in advance. The future is the beginning of all happening. Everything is enclosed within the beginning. Even if what has already begun and what has already become seem forthwith to have gone beyond their beginning, yet the latter – apparently having become the past – remains in power and abides, and everything futural encounters it.

(Martin Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy*, p. 35)

5.1 Introduction

The idiom *historia magistra vitae* was coined by Marcus Tullius Cicero in his *De Oratore*, written in 55 BCE, and seems germane to our discussions of time and education. It appears in the following passage by Cicero: “By what other voice, too, than that of the orator, is history, the evidence of time, the light of truth, the life of memory, the directness of life, the herald of antiquity, committed to immortality?” (translation by Watson, 1860: p.92). Usually truncated to “history is life’s teacher,” the idiom epitomises our ambiguous relation to history’s literal pedagogic precedent, as Reinhart Koselleck observes in his Heidegger inspired book *Futures Past* (Koselleck, 2004): the ambiguity, in our era at least, he attributes to our dissatisfaction, since the Enlightenment, with history determining our future, congruent with our ability to learn about the future via historical exempla. Paraphrasing Diderot, Koselleck’s mock Enlightenment-style rallying call is that we should “work through the past as quickly as possible so that a new future could be set free” (*ibid*: p.39). For my present purpose the ambiguity transforms, via executive education of the present day, into a desire to learn from best (historical) practice, at the same time as attempting to envisage improved (future) productivity and profits. Considering the last chapter’s culminating throwback to the epoch of medieval mayhem – times we thought we’d finished with – and to what my neoliberally incorporated contemporaries probably see as the principle degeneracy of my argument, its historical determinacy, it seems sensible to ask how, in a given

present, the temporal dimensions of past and future are related. Unsurprisingly, given his interest in time, Heidegger has a lot to say about history. Though his is not a search in vain for the periodization of phantom epochs – the Greece of Dionysus, the Rome of Cicero, medieval Catholic England, or the Romantic period of Hölderlin – that our archetypal historian is steeped in.

Before we engage with Heidegger's unusual treatment of history, I would like to call to attention the parallel track of observation that has been bubbling up throughout this thesis thus far: namely, German Romanticism¹. That Heidegger has claims on our attention far beyond the restricted purpose for which I cite him – famously, his being a Nazi – must be admitted. One of the less well explored claims is his channelling of certain traits in early German Romantic thinking, most evident in his embrace of the poetry of Hölderlin, and manifest in his deliberately strained use of words and phrasing, or catachresis, that is a hallmark of his writing. Having wandered among these Romantic headwaters and precursors of Heidegger's thought myself, and detected in his own thinking an employment of elusive and Romanticised modes of representation, I feel as though it is possible to aid the future reception of Heidegger's thinking, and my modest contribution to its scholarship, by recourse to his own historical precedent, in the manner that *historia magistra vitae* suggests.

Take the above epigraph, or any of the preceding chapters' epigraphs for that matter, as a typical example of catachresis that is a standard trait of German Romantic philosophy²: the deliberately paradoxical and strained use of words (beyond that is the obvious stresses and strains involved in its translation from the German original). For instance: "history is dependent on the future"; "the future is the beginning of everything"; "the past remains in power": these are surely examples of the use of words to convey meanings that are opposite of history's literal meaning. What does Heidegger mean by this paradoxical usage? It wouldn't take much to have a spluttering interlocutor exclaim, "this is not the meaning I was expecting!", from talk about history, from talk about events in the past tense, from such oxymoronic talk, of times and happenings that have already slipped by.

Yet Heidegger is comfortable with irony – which is what this is – especially when it comes to history, as we will see. His notion of formal indication alone, as we discovered in the previous chapter, is akin to what most of us would term irony, and what I wish to classify, technically, in Heidegger's case, as *Romantic irony*. As I will defend later in this chapter, and as part of re-establishing the connection previously stated of Heidegger's own writing style as congruent with

¹ In order to acknowledge the holism of the movement, what Stephen Prickett calls the "family resemblance" of Romanticism (Prickett, 2014: p.15), where Romanticism can be conceived of as a common language, despite its vast diversity across Europe in the period between 1780 and 1850, I will refer to Romanticism using an uppercase "R".

² See John McCarthy's 'Forms and Objective of Romantic Criticism' in Nicholas Saul's (Ed) *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism* (McCarthy, 2009: p.106 and footnote 16, p.116). See also footnote 11 in the next chapter.

his philosophical intentions, Romantic irony represents a “creative liberation from the prison of the merely phenomenal world and the representational limitations of philosophical language” (Seyhan, 2009: p.17), that, as Azade Seyhan asserts on behalf of most literary theorists, is completely in keeping with the thinking of the German Romantic movement. In our case, actively sought for, such liberation succinctly accounts for Heidegger’s choice of the rhetorical conventions he uses to explain his sense of history (*Geschichte*) – not to mention the host of allusive tropes and mystical-seeming pronouncements right across his work – that mainstream Western metaphysics is incapable of acknowledging, least of all understanding, by dint of not appreciating the importance of what is meant by *being* (or, to be precise, *be-ing*). By his frequent employment of the ironic-seeming formal indication – along with my exemplar correlates of catachresis, allegory, metalepsis and ellipsis – Heidegger is at once pointing to the limitations of our mis-inherited metaphysical point of view, as well as pointing beyond that limitation, to a view that could be ours were we sufficiently resolute/authentic/mindful/enowning³ enough to pick up the task of examining being (*Sein*), or properly, be-ing (*Seyn*), as he begins to call this less individualistic sense of *Dasein*, after *Being and Time*. He begins to despair that we will ever return to our rightful home in be-ing; that our philosophizing will become aimless. In *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* we even have Heidegger quoting the arch German Romanticist, Hardenberg (Novalis, 1772-1801), complaining of the same. Says Heidegger, “Novalis on one occasion says in a fragment: ‘Philosophy is really homesickness, an urge to be at home everywhere’. A strange definition, *romantic of course*” (Heidegger, 1995: p.5, my emphasis). After this telling and almost involuntary piece of reverie, he goes on, in apologetic tones, reminding his readers, after Aristotle, that poets cannot be trusted: “Novalis – merely a poet, after all, and hardly a scientific philosopher” (*ibid*). This, as we will see, is one of many (somewhat hesitant) nods in the direction of Romantic sensibility, towards his intellectual neighbours, which, in a stroke, situates science, poetry and philosophy in the same line-up to be compared. This intermingling of genres is a common occurrence in the Romantic aesthetic. As the contemporary Romanticist philosopher Ernst Behler avows of such a coming together, it promotes a transcendence of “the dominance of one single principle (reason or imagination, theory or creation, classicism or Romanticism) in favour of a pluralistic movement of counteractive and interactive principles that seem to oppose, but in their interaction actually generate and maintain each other” (Behler, 1993: p.5). This is certainly the case with Heidegger.

Hitherto in this thesis I have simply paired-up relevant examples of Heidegger’s written thinking with one or other critical tools from a suite of such, specifically those emerging from

³ This concatenation of Heideggerian concepts, whilst not strictly speaking synonymous, nevertheless represents the respective departure points for appreciations, or states of, *Dasein*’s being that occur across his oeuvre. The last of these, enowning, will feature in the next chapter.

German Romanticism (catachresis, etc); and this, for the purpose of effecting a slightly distanced, parallel and thereby productive, if artful and compassionate, sense-making of certain of Heidegger's Romantically oriented claims, chief of which is *Kairotic* time. With this chapter on history, though, I would like to crash together these two lines of thought; to effect a reappraisal of Heidegger's relevance to educational practice, specifically Romantically progressive educational practice as it could manifest in executive education.

With Heidegger's turn to history in his "middle period" (Guignon, 2005: p.392), in the lectures and writings subsequently translated as *Basic Questions, Contributions, Mindfulness, and Country Path Conversations*, his (mostly unacknowledged) embrace of overtly Romanticisable topoi, tropes and other elusive modes of representation becomes more evident. Any act of crashing, surely, is implicit in any consideration of his style of written philosophising, no matter how conventionally intolerant and damning it is of his often infuriating language. But beyond simply bemoaning his sibylline prose, as most introductory texts have it, I have found an explanatory companion in German Romanticism; one that serves not only to vindicate his tortuous style, but gives a singular voice to the manifest objections I have towards the delinquencies of capitalism as embodied in mainstream executive education, and as such, a voice that offers service to my unusual task. As David Halpin claims of this sensibility, "Like the process of education, Romanticism is the mood in which we feel we are or could become greater than we know" (Halpin, 2007: p.1). Whereas Halpin limits his focus on what he calls "the chief features of [English] Romantic sensibility" (*ibid*) of childhood, love, heroism, criticism and imagination, my interest is in marking off Heidegger's dalliance with some equally persistent, though less glamorous, themes of the German Romantic provenance. Though, along the lines of David Halpin's argument, I will be exploring Heidegger's Romanticist oriented thinking in the fashion of a specific fundamental attunement (*Grundstimmung*) that, with the exception of anxiety and boredom in the earlier chapters, Heidegger fails to provide, namely *hope*. I will be borrowing from Romanticism's sense of hope as this applies to executive education.

5.2 *Geschichte, Historie, and Mindfulness*

Engaging with Heidegger's sense of history is something of a test; a test to see if one is willing, and able, finally, to relinquish assumptions about sequential time, especially clock and calendrical (chronic) time, for this is what is being asked for by Heidegger, even if he doesn't say as much. The bulk of this thesis has credited the reader with this ability, however reluctantly deployed: with that, and a growing realisation for the reader that being and time of *Being and Time* are, in some way,

synonymous – which will be similarly tested in the next section. For Heidegger’s sense of history is not about the past or past events, as we generally understand it: it is about “happenings,” which take place now and in the future, just as much as they did in the past. The essential differentiation emerging from this is between history as *historie*, and history as *Geschichte*, a distinction Heidegger uses in his *Contributions to Philosophy* (Heidegger, 1999). In introducing this work, Daniela Vallega-Neu says of this distinction, “[w]here ‘*Historie*’ refers to past events from an objective, i.e., representational, point of view, ‘*Geschichte*’ bears the sense of both ‘history’ and ‘occurrence [happening],’ thus marking the temporality as well as the epochality of being as it is disclosed in *Dasein*, in being-t/here” (Vallega-Neu, 2003: p.8, emphasis in original). For the sake of grasping *Geschichte*, we need to understand that by studying happenings in the traditional way, via historical science or historiography (or, *historie*), we are not studying what Heidegger means by history: “history [*Historie*] means the exploration of the past from the perspective of the present” (Heidegger, 1994: p.33), which is not the proper focus, he claims, of history. As Heidegger has it:

The word ‘historical’ [*geschichtlich*] means ‘happening’ [*das Geschehen*], history itself as a being. ‘Historiographical’ refers to a kind of cognition. We will not speak of historical ‘consideration’ but ‘reflection’. For reflection [*Be-sinnung*] is looking for the meaning [*Sinn*] of a happening, the meaning of history. ‘Meaning’ refers here to the open region of goals, standards, impulses, decisive possibilities, and powers – all these belong *essentially* to happening (Heidegger, 1994: p.34).

After quickly dismissing historiographical history as mere cognition, as simply a consideration of occurrences, Heidegger introduces another concept, reflection [*Be-sinnung*], by means of which the historical “happening” is made sense of. It is this process of meaning-making that encompasses the future and the present, as well as the past. This is (among others) the catachrestic move that Heidegger makes; the one that jolts our standard conception of history; the Romantic move that beckons a break with rationalistic reduction, and hints at a profound critique of homogenizing technological enframing.

To establish this point, it is worth us spending a while reflecting on this meaning-making process itself, sometimes translated as “reflection” and sometimes as “mindfulness”. Under the latter title, Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary have translated Heidegger’s 1938/39 text *Besinnung* (where, for the sake of expressing certain hermeneutic-phenomenological insights, Heidegger often hyphenates the “be-“ of that term, thus *Be-sinnung* in the above extract): a text that, along with his *Contributions*, represents the peak of his discourse on history, and one where history as *Geschichte* is accounted for as allowing for those happenings of *Geschichte* to continue to hold sway in our present, as well as in what will be our future. After all, what is the “open region of goals, standards, impulses, decisive possibilities, and powers” (*ibid*) to which he refers, other than

those of the future? It is no surprise that he claims of an event that it is partly determined by that “towards which” it is directed, especially when one considers the case of the hammer in *Being and Time*; in this instance, the towards which of the hammer, or its *for-the-sake-of-which*, points to the being of *Dasein* (Heidegger, 1962: p.116-7), as in being a house dweller, under a roof that needed hammering. To establish the meaning of a happening, one needs to look at that towards which the happening beckons, in the fashion of the hammering. But not only that: a reflection of, or a state of mindfulness for-the-sake-of, that same happening reveals that it somehow still holds sway over us, in some way – in our hammering example, that the roof is standing, and that we’re still dwelling under it. As Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary have it, “*Historie* has no inkling of a past that still is in sway and is ‘on-coming’. *Geschichte*, on the other hand, is nothing but the gatheredness of that still swaying ‘on-coming’ past” (Emad and Kalary, 2006: p.xxix, in foreword to Heidegger, 2006). There is an aliveness to this on-coming past, a sense that it has not passed away, that it is still coming towards us. And it is keeping this reflection in mind that constitutes mindfulness.

With *Historie* now revealed as a rather limited common sense of history, and with this forward looking sense of *Geschichte* installed as the proper (*Eigen*) sense of history, we can concentrate more on how swaying manifests itself: what is meant by swaying? In what thrall are we held by history, and how are we en-thrallled, and what is doing the thralling? Heidegger is claiming, in *Contributions* and *Mindfulness*, that being mindful enables one to appreciate how an historical event can bring to presence a pastness; how it can, in a way, “send” the past to not only us (properly speaking, to *Dasein*) now in the present, but to us in the future; and, importantly, how the reception of that which is sent acts as an indicator of the readiness of the collective *Dasein*, or representatives of that particular epoch, to embrace a new beginning.

Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary, in their Foreword to their work of Heidegger translation titled *Mindfulness* (2006), provide an illuminating example from Heidegger’s own past as to how he saw this process of “sending” working out. In 1962 and 1967 Heidegger made two trips to Greece⁴. In providing an account of his trip, not surprisingly, his approach was *geschichtlich*, in that he spoke of the “suddenness and the coming to presence of a pastness of which the erudite historical archaeology has no inkling; that is, of the pastness that *is* the temple of Athena wherein the goddess is gathered and comes to presence in the midst of the technological hubbub and technologically organised and maintained tourism of the twentieth century” (Emad and Kalary, 2006: p.xxx, in foreword to Heidegger, 2006). The somewhat awkward language in this passage from these proficient translators, themselves more than capable of crafting a decent Heideggerian

⁴ For a detailed description of these trips, and the effect they had on Heidegger and his wife Elfride, see Rüdiger Safranski’s biographical portrayal (Safranski, 1998: p. 401f).

sentence or two, gives some indication of the effort required to render this novel sense of history into something like acceptable prose. With my hope that the reader now appreciates that this awkwardness is in excess of the vagaries of translation, one has to question in what way the object of Heidegger's point of using a *geschichtlich* account cannot be conveyed via the standard sense of history. What extra is added to the account of the trip, by dint of an affected italicised *is* and the use of (non)hyphenated abstract nouns that attempt to highlight a particular state – as in past-ness – that would not already be there in a more standard rendition? Why not aver; “I went to Greece: I roamed around the ruins of the Acropolis of Athens for a bit: I felt a sense of history: I took a home movie of me doing this as piece of history.”⁵ Even assuming there existed a Nobel Literature Prize-winning account of the trip, in what way would such an eloquent account address a sense of the goddess Athene's presence during my touristic stumblings, or thereafter, as I watched the home movie, say, in the comfort of my home? Or conversely, other than as a form of conspicuous Heideggerian branding, or tagging, or as a mark of scholarly partisanship, what limits is the language being put under that sanctions such awful prose – in this case mirrored by Heidegger scholars Emad and Kalary? We have encountered similar objections to Heidegger's prose before in the preceding chapters. This stylistically oriented objection, for the seasoned Heidegger reader, becomes a common refrain, as one engages with the next (and the next) piece of lumpy, obscure, arcane and disjointed piece of prose from this thesis's sponsoring philosopher. And so, with this recurring objection, I would like, in the manner of Judo, to use the opponent's force to defeat the opponent: my hope is that the objection is not only nullified, but that the bluntness of the objection itself becomes a subject of mindful reflection (I don't regard my accommodation of these concerns at this point as a detour into superficiality, along the lines of “stop worrying about *how* he says it; just concentrate on *what* he says,” especially not when the “how” and “what” in this instance can be shown, I believe, as related and co-created).

Thus, two rejoinders to these stylistic objections come to mind at this stage, ones that have been slowly emerging across these pages; rejoinders that are intended to serve a parallel purpose to the remaining narrative. The first is oriented to Heidegger's stylistic method, to which I offer a solution that sees us return to a Romanticised appreciation of his work, of how Heidegger *does* bring historical be-ing (*Seyn*) to words. The second rejoinder concerns a revealing of historical being itself, that almost indescribable and impermanent concept that suffers stuttering descriptions as a consequence. My (ambitious) intention is to neutralize, once and for all, the persistent stylistic objection via a parsing of Heidegger's words about historical being against certain associated (and

⁵ Just such a home movie was made, of Heidegger and Elfride, stumbling among the rocks and ruins on the Parthenon, which can be seen on *Youtube*. See Jeff Morgan, *Human all too Human* BBC documentary, www.youtube.com, last accessed 16 September 2014.

calming) Romanticised sentiments; at the same time as coming to an understanding of allusive *Seyn* (be-ing) – not least how it differs from *Sein* (being), how it forms the object of Heidegger's thought regarding history, and how it too is best encountered under the overtly Romantic disguise of *Sublime Kairos*, as the second part of this thesis has it.

5.3 A Romantic Interlude

Regarding the affinity of Heidegger's thought and writing to aspects of thinking within the German Romanticist movement, these associative sentiments have seen Heidegger's philosophical preoccupations linked to the movement's predominant reaction to the excesses of Enlightenment reason, most notably as a reaction to the French Revolution and to the subsequent fifty-year period, up to c.1850, of intense political, social and intellectual revolution(s). Chief among these reactions, as David Halpin describes,

Romanticism represents a profound critique of some of modernity's most problematic and dehumanizing features, in particular its rationalistic reductionism and homogenizing technism, which it wishes to see replaced by certain foundational human values that have been marginalized in modern society – values to do with the importance of individuality, spirituality, spontaneity, feeling and emotion and community. Indeed, Romanticism's rebellion against the hegemony of technology in particular challenges us to create a utopia in which present reality is radically transformed, enabling us to live in ways that fuse together the material and spiritual, and the mechanical and the organic, while at the same time speaking out against narrow conventionality and traditionalism (Halpin, 2007: p.15).

From the perspective of the excesses of capitalism; of executive education's traditional relationship to this particular order; to executive education's endorsement of the capitalistic hegemony and its excesses; to the concomitant targets of Heideggerian concern with the technicist discourse of enframing, brought about as a result of the unquestioned predominance of Western metaphysics; given this list, David Halpin's articulation has hit upon a broad but productive rendition of Romanticism. Notwithstanding its sense of cliché and excess of ingratiating, it would be difficult not to imagine a bare bones agreement in the respective camps on these reductive points. Though there is something adrift in Halpin's articulation, as it relates to the associative desiderata of my list; or is it the other way around? Perhaps it's because my list seems so out of joint with so-called Romantic sentiment, a sentiment which, in some form or other across our lives, most of us subscribe to. And that, really, is the point I want to make here: to highlight this incongruity. There exists a blazing incongruity between execution and Romance: between capitalistic conformity and revolutionary zeal; between profit and spirit... The list of opposites could continue here; it wouldn't

be difficult for the reader to compile further, once you got into the swing of contrasting a business related term with its Romanticised opposite. Which is an extension of my point. Even though this thesis is not an extended exposition of literary Romanticism, and even if you're not fully acquainted with the works of Schiller, Novalis and Schlegel, or Wordsworth and Blake for that matter, there exists a natural antipode for corporate execution in Romanticism. In which case, to what philosophic work on the order-execution cognate can we employ this antipodean status?

Before I bring the focus of the discussion back around to history and sequentiality, I want to lay bare the Scylla and Charybdis nature of the foregoing, so as to temper my optimism in line with the sentiment of mindfulness introduced earlier – a particular sentiment whose complete thrall is in no way exhausted by Heidegger's treatment of the term.

In what could be called a (small "r") romantic tiff, soon after the war, Heidegger's former paramour Hannah Arendt delivered a series of stinging criticisms of her mentor, some implicit, others less so, in some of her writing. In publications of hers that built on his thinking (see Wolin, 2001: p.31ff.), she nonetheless saw, and saw through, the pedigree from which his thinking emerged. Specifically, writing in the *Partisan Review* in 1946 (Arendt, *Partisan Review*, 13 (1), 1946: p.46), as Richard Wolin quotes, "she tellingly observed that Heidegger's 'whole mode of behavior has exact parallels in German Romanticism'". Wolin goes on to quote Arendt, "he was 'the last (we hope) romantic – as it were, a tremendously gifted Friedrich Schlegel or Adam Mueller'" (Wolin, 2001: p.48). Richard Wolin summarises Arendt's point by saying that "Heidegger's case epitomized the risks of romantic 'worldlessness,' along with the concomitant megalomania and delusions of grandeur" (*ibid*).⁶ Arendt's fear is presumably based on her associating Heidegger's whiff of Romanticism – along with classing early German Romanticism's (Beiser, 2003: p.37) embrace of the communitarian ethic as insipient totalitarianism – with the catastrophe that was National Socialism. As Frederick Beiser notes, "[s]ince World War II, romanticism has been discredited by both liberals and Marxists alike as the ideology of fascism, and not least because many Nazis embraced it as party ideology" (Beiser, 2003: p.1). I leave it to the reader to rehearse the standard arguments that see his overall thought neutralised (or not) on the basis of his disastrous alliances. But neutralised or not, this is not sufficient reason to equally discredit Romanticism *per se*, whose reception has warmed considerably since the time of Hannah Arendt's suspicions (Beiser, 2003).

Nonetheless, in the eyes of the reader, can Heidegger's thinking, can Romanticism as fragmentarily presented here, and my overall endorsement of a Heidegger-inspired argument,

⁶ Interestingly, later in the same book (Wolin, 2001), Richard Wolin backs up his connecting Heidegger to German Romanticism when he attributes a similar connection to Heidegger's former student, Herbert Marcuse. Speaking of Marcuse, Wolin affirms that "[h]is argument bears distinct affinities with the later Heidegger's preference for 'poesis' or 'poetic revealing' as opposed to the 'enframing' characteristic of modern 'technics' (*das Gestell*). The discourse of German Romanticism profoundly imprints the work of both thinkers" (*ibid*: p.171).

survive after Hannah Arendt's critique? Obviously, I would say it can, though not via "historicising" Heidegger's thinking in the sense of *historie*, which is always a temptation for scholars. Returning to this distinction, as he himself says, "[w]hoever *without hesitation* reads and hears the lecture-courses only as a 'historical' presentation of some work and whoever then compares and reckons up the interpretation [*Auffassung*] with the already existing views or exploits the interpretation in order to 'correct' the existing views, *he has not grasped anything at all*" (Heidegger, 2006: p.372, emphasis in original). What *is* at stake in not having grasped "anything at all" of his argument is nothing less than humanity's total abandonment to the devastating power of machination, the root of enframing that we encountered in the Technology chapter previously. The perils of machination represent the wake-up call, and the benefits that "temporal truancy" effect in having us acknowledge the thrall in which we are held by technological thinking. This retracing is a coming back to "be here"; as Daniel Dahlstrom says, "to carry out and belong to the hidden truth of historical being" (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.96).

In preparation for the next section on "historical-being," and by way of acclimatising the reader to the next chapter on historical-being's metonym, the "event of appropriation" as a means to combat machination, and also as a chance to mindfully partake in some of Heidegger's Romanticised bringing of *be-ing* to words, I offer the following example of the task that Heidegger thinks philosophers should be engaged in, in light of the looming monster that is machination. To pick up the Judo metaphor from earlier, rather than spinning the quote on its heels and flooring it on the mat of reasonable decorum, here's a chance for the reader to attempt an attitude of mindfulness in its reception. Says Heidegger about the task of philosophy,

...there is the dominant claim on philosophy (as 'worldly wisdom', as a 'morality' that sets values, and as a 'science' that solves the 'mystery of the world') to account for beings and for the security of the extant man. At the end, this twisted and presumptuous claim plays itself out as the court of arbitration that decides the failure and usefulness of philosophy. One could view these sort of things with indifference, if therein an unrecognizable and stubborn representation of philosophy would not always consolidate itself, and degenerate into a hardly noticeable but unassailable repelling of any inquiry into what is ownmost to philosophy. The consequence of this misinterpretation of philosophy expresses itself in the state of an epoch that allows this epoch to know everything 'historical' about philosophy and its history but to have no knowing-awareness of the one thing that is entrusted to philosophy's ownmost, namely to ask the question of the truth of be-ing and in the midst of the disarray of beings to set up this question in its inevitability (Heidegger, 2006: p.44-45).

At the moment (of writing this thesis) I subscribe to this task for philosophy – despite the balance of explanation owed "historical-being" – as an exclusive pursuit because my proximity to the site of mindful reflection for machinating executives allows me to encourage and experiment with it. For instance, the site referred to is executive education: the machinating executives are those,

including the body of educators themselves, in the sway of the order-execution cognate: and the experimentation is contained, along with this thesis, in the foil of my hopelessly Romantically-headed worldlessness in the face of said cognate (not forgetting my kinship to that particular body of executants of education). Of course, I would claim that I fall shy of any megalomania and delusions of grandeur that Arendt considers a concomitant of this dangerous state. After all, arguing for or against *Dasein's* worldly or worldless condition is, I suggest, a properly Romantic gesture anyway, which deserves consideration on its own terms. What if the same could be said of Heidegger's ownmost task for philosophy: that it too is a Romantic gesture? Would that negate his project, or simply force our hand into treating *it* concomitantly and proportionately, whatever that would entail? I'm keen to explore how what would be entailed could form the basis of progressive executive education.

5.4 Historical-Being (*Seyn*)

Boundless (un-boundable) obstacles lie in the way of this double experimentation – those concerning philosophy, and those to do with executive education. Barring the former's passage is that doughty court of arbitration, in front of whom my replaying of Heidegger's arguments stand, as in the following.

Firstly, a decision about *being* faces us: a decision to see, as Heidegger has it, “whether beings take being as what is ‘most general’ to them and thus hand being over to ‘ontology’ and bury it, *or* whether be-ing [*Seyn*] in its uniqueness comes to word and thoroughly attunes beings as happening but once –” (Heidegger, 1989: p.63, emphasis in original). *Seyn* is different from the being that Heidegger had used in *Being and Time (Sein)* in that its use is intended to represent a break in the traditional meanings of being, with the hyphen serving to indicate that break (though some translations represent it with *beyng*). After writing *Being and Time* Heidegger realised, partly via the way that reviewers spoke of the book and how they described his project, that he had still been using the language of metaphysics, when all the while claiming to question being in a more original way than metaphysics allowed. Reflecting on this error he said that “[t]his publication would not have let the misinterpretation of *Sein und Zeit* as a mere ‘ontology’ of man and the misconstrual of ‘fundamental ontology’ go as far as these misinterpretations have gone and are going” (Heidegger, 2006: p.367). In as much as his work *Contributions to Philosophy* can be called a book in the normal sense (Scott, 2001: p.1), he set out to account for and correct his earlier mistake with this revised engagement with language. In a sense, then, with be-ing, *we* are at fault; *we*, the upholders and traders (in an executive sense) in traditional Western metaphysics, are not

only unable to grasp being in any other sense than as objects that *are*, via our singular blindness in ontology; we failed as a consequence to understand Heidegger's own failure to adequately convey his sense of being as be-ing. But all is not lost. I think I'm on to something with this, using the rejoinders I introduced earlier: rejoinders that will, in the course of this chapter, return us to the theme of temporality. Firstly, though, there is bad news, and there is good news.

Sadly, to compound this failure, Heidegger gives us precious little clarity in *Contributions* by way of an out-and-out definition of "be-ing" – or, for that matter, clear definitions of "enowning," "fore-grasping," "ab-ground," "essential swaying," "projecting-open," "charming-moving-onto," "enseeing," "enthinking," "enopening," "enquivering," or "encleaving" – to help us Western metaphysicians who seem to require a definitive definition when grappling to understand a concept. Wonderfully, though, to account for this failure – as a failure on our part, let's accede – Heidegger's writing of his middle period is offered as, what in my world at least is called, a "developmental opportunity". Consider it from the German Romantic movement's tendency to help us re-remember those things that have been torn asunder by (modern) abstract analysis, as a "homecoming," as Heidegger reminded us earlier of that arch-Romantic Novalis' preference for understanding philosophy's purpose (Heidegger, 1995: p.5). One such form of homecoming, pertinent in our case, is that of encouraging incomprehensibility – as incomprehensible as that seems to us. Referring to the objectives of Romantic criticism, John McCarthy claims incomprehensibility as the last of eight traits of Romanticism⁷: "Lack of understanding is not seen as something to be resolved, but as a state to be affirmed as inherent in an existence that is on the one hand concretely fixed and iterative and on the other elusively imprecise in its unexpected twists and turns" (McCarthy, 2009: p.107). As educators, being left to work it out, or employing the Socratic method, is an approach we're all familiar with the usefulness of. So consider the corollary with regards to being thrown the challenge of understanding be-ing, via *Contributions*; how does one go about this? Susan Schoenbohm, in her helpful introduction to *Contributions*, the opening chapter of a *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy* (Scott, et al, 2001), cautions us early on about ready intelligibility;

The commonly held belief that the success of a piece of writing can be measured by the degree to which an author makes something readily intelligible to already familiar ways of understanding is inappropriate here [in *Contributions*]. We need to be venturesome, to allow our familiar ways of understanding, which are at best limited, to be challenged, perhaps then

⁷ The other seven of which are worthy of note, due to their spectacular proximity to Heidegger's thought. These are: elusive modes of representation; a subjectivist embrace of fantasy; perspectivism, to historicise narrated reality; nature as animate; the value of Greek antiquity as an invitation to experiment with the received canon; infinite perfectibility, which is why Romanticism embraces all forms of revolution; and a mingling of genres, combining poetry, philosophy and spirituality. Further work, across the expanse of Heidegger's oeuvre that is still being published, is required to establish his provenance in the German Romantic tradition.

to become opened to interestingly different ways of thinking (Schoenbohm, 2001: in Scott *et al*, 2001: p.15).

I can personally vouch for this method, encountered involuntarily in the process of compiling this research; an experience which was more sink than swim. Leaving behind the somewhat dizzy spin of relativism, though, we are presented with another call to arbitration. This time, the choice of either respecting Heidegger's own – what can only be described as – pedagogic intentions⁸ of redressing his failure to purge his *Being and Time* language of metaphysics by re-engaging with the same task, but using (an even more) completely original language, and leaving us to get on with it after his death; or deriding Heidegger still further, for over-privileging a subjective, closed and essentially private-language so-called explanation of a concept that is beyond words anyway. I opt for the former, of course: and value how Heidegger has brought be-ing to words, the method of which I promised earlier to disclose. Which accounts for my attempt to stir a debate about how his bringing of historical be-ing to words can be amplified, can be better understood, by situating his efforts adjacent to German Romanticism's earlier efforts at the same. For instance, what accounts for the endurance of Romantic efforts in the visionary work of William Blake, say, or Caspar David Friedrich, that is not also attributable to Heidegger, but which is likely not to be given the same airing in the less than public domains of "the court of arbitration that decides the failure and usefulness of philosophy" (Heidegger, 2006: p.44-45), namely academic philosophy? If, as Charles Scott says, Heidegger "sought a way of thought that would call people out of their unalert and insensitive lives with beings and would recover alertness to the *temporal* eventuation, not the spiritualisation, of living things in their coming to pass" (Scott, 2001: p.5, my emphasis), can we not suggest that the methods of how we go about this ourselves may rightly lie in the domain of the Romantics, and that it is to them that we, as educators, look for our means, if not our rationale, in wrestling out of our well-wadded state.

Though I must say, the prospect of releasing this language of be-ing into the site of my accepting of the "developmental opportunity," is daunting; the site where I intend to work it out, on my own, to dutifully accept, from my management, this "development opportunity" and blithely meander down the pathways of be-ing. Namely, and secondly, on the subject of unboundable obstacles that this section opened with, barring the forward passage of my experiment in executive education is a welter of worldly, most general, objections, not least of which are the perfect antipodes of the staunchly Romantic arguments against rationality, progress, technology, utility,

⁸ For a more 'praxis' oriented account of Heidegger's pedagogic intentions, see Michael Ehrmantrat's book *Heidegger's Philosophic Pedagogy* (2010).

comprehensibility, practicality, certainty, permanence, productivity, modernity, conservatism, and the bounded systematise-ability of all of these that are the themes of European Romanticism⁹.

By way of suggesting workarounds to these obstacles, now is the time to ask where history is in all of this? Why is it *historical*-being? In answer to what historical be-ing *is*, it is the thrall, the sway, the shadow of what be-ing holds us in, since its inception at the very beginning: that which captures us still, enthrals us, en-sways us, in the sense that we can be held in the “sway” of a masterful piece of music. Mourning his failure at conveying this sense of be-ing, and his maddening frustration at the persistence of purely metaphysical understanding of being, Heidegger attempts to portray a replacement for being as *happening* first, before metaphysics, at the (indeterminately chronological) beginning, thereby acting as the ground – albeit hidden – of our impoverished sense of metaphysical being. *This* is historical be-ing, this happening¹⁰. In asking what be-ing is, one can only describe its “swaying,” the influence this happening continues to have over us. “In contrast to this”, says Heidegger of metaphysical being of machination, “be-ing *is* unique, and therefore it ‘is’ never a being and least of all the most-being. But a being *is not*, and for that very reason thinking of beingness – forgetful of be-ing – attributes to a being the beingness as the most general property. This attribution has its legitimacy in the ordinary representation; and therefore one must say, over against this representation, that be-ing holds sway – whereas a being ‘is’” (Heidegger, 1999: p.333, emphasis in original). This echoes his earlier claim that time *is not*: that one cannot say of time that it is, only that there is the “temporalizing of temporality” itself (Heidegger, 1962: p.428). The trap, in Heidegger’s opinion, into which our metaphysical thinking leads us, is to assume that, much like the being of objects, the time of *Dasein* should be treated in the same “objectified” way (*ibid*: p.430). Rather, *Dasein*’s relation to the time of history is predicated, via *Dasein*’s be-ing, as incompatible with the Western metaphysical conception of being. In one of his foot-stomping, italicised, and frequently re-quoted, emphases in §72 of *Being and Time* concerning *Dasein*’s relation to the time of history, he claims that:

In analysing the historicity of Dasein we shall try to show that this entity is not ‘temporal’ because it ‘stands in history’, but that, on the contrary, it exists historically and can so exist only because it is temporal in the very basis of its Being.

Nevertheless, *Dasein* must also be called ‘temporal’ in the sense of being ‘in time’ (Heidegger, 1962: p.428-429, emphasis in original).

⁹ See Stephen Pickett and Simon Haines’ (Eds.) *European Romanticism: A Reader* (2014) for an extended engagement with each of these themes.

¹⁰ Says Slavoj Žižek of this happening, “[a]s such it is an event: at its most elementary, event is not something that occurs within the world, but is a *change of the very frame through which we perceive the world and engage in it*. Such a frame can sometimes be directly presented as a fiction which nonetheless enables us to tell the truth in an indirect way” (Žižek, 2014: p.10, emphasis in original). Speaking mostly of Heidegger’s concept of *Ereignis*, which will be the topic of the next chapter, I particularly like Žižek’s description here as it explains why I have taken recourse to the fictional character of Sanjay, as a frame through which I can tell the truth in an indirect way.

In keeping with this formulation of originary temporality, as a form of time that *is* not, as one which only temporalizes itself, the be-ing of history should be similarly treated. So as not to objectify either time or be-ing, and thus to avoid the self-same error from which machination arises, it is easier to describe be-ing as an historical (*Geschichte*) happening with which we are held in sway, from the beginning. Even saying that it can be described leads us back into the error of metaphysics, which is why it is more of a decision, as we saw at the start of this section where be-ing “happens but once” (Heidegger, 1999: p.63). By way of a reminder as to the importance of this decision for this thesis looking at chronic and *Kairotic* time, be-ing happens, as temporal historicity, *non-sequentially*: only time ascribable to beings as (Western metaphysical) objects happen sequentially. History, for Heidegger, should not be thought of as a sequential passage of bygone times (*Historie*), where the bygone sequence of events and objects has slipped into a sequential past (Heidegger, 1962: p.430): instead, history as *Geschichte* for *Dasein* is conceptually dependent – I would say, intoxicatingly so – on a framework of non-sequentiality, of *Kairotic* time. As such, *Geschichte* offers the best hope for pulling the plug on the lifeless, standard, chronic – because sequential – and stupefyingly habitual time-dimension of the order-execution cognate as it stands in contemporary executive education, and substituting a dashing, ecstatic, multi-storied and disruptive (to the cognate, at least) sense of time, one kissed by the Romanticised urbanities of a “grander time,” as the contemporary Romanticist novelist and playwright Peter Handke terms the sophistication of such a time sense (Handke, 2007: p.43). So, given this reminder, and this strange new candidate for temporality, which will we decide? Being or be-ing? Or is there another way of approaching this decision?

5.5 Time and Historical Be-ing

In the guise of the corporate executive, I believe there is reified Heidegger’s epitomised sense of machination *par excellence*. Machination: that bogeyman for the sake of which Heidegger reminds us of our historical be-ing, of our original historical happening; a hope that in our living from this be-ing we might recognise and overcome machination in all its alienating force – a force whose metier of productivity the corporate executive is master. Though, the corporate executive, and the order they stand for, is not a perfect incarnation of machination. Not that the rest of us are not either complicit in, or hapless dupes of (delete as appropriate), Western democracy, consumerism, capitalism and neoliberalism, religious and nationalistic extremism, or any other competing Lyotardian meta-narratives or fundamentalist eschatology, or mendacious and alienating propaganda, against which liberating forces are equally arrayed, from atop equally inventive soap boxes. Only, with the executive, there’s a handy reminder of a means by which it is

possible to stave off machinating tendencies – in the *sequi* (Latin: sequence) of *ex-sequi* (sequence-out) in “executive” – when it comes to enacting the order-execution in a temporal sequence. A revised mastery of time that could be well within reach of the executive to seize and make their own. Not that this reminder of execution is any more persuasive than Heidegger’s reminder of being. Why should we be more leery of machination than with any of the other bogeymen? I would say, parroting Heidegger, because the above more familiar sounding roll call of ne’er-do-wells are the consequences of machination, not the cause of it. They are the consequences of our habit to found beingness on instantiations of being, rather than on, say, that neighbour of be-ing – *time* – that Heidegger gave a front row seat to in *Being and Time*, in that (faulty) attempt to provide a non-instantiated, non-grounded (not un-grounded; rather, “ab-grounded”) ground for be-ing. In *Being and Time*, says Susan Schoenbohm;

Heidegger orients his rethinking of the question of the meaning of being by giving priority to the *temporality* and disclosive phenomenality of beings, that is, to *temporality* as the occurrence of being in distinction to a representation of beingness. In this way, *Being and Time* begins Heidegger’s reorientation of philosophy to the task of engaging in the as yet insufficiently answered question of the meaning of being by locating itself where it is, namely, within temporal, historical, always questionable being-in-the-world (Schoenbohm, 2001: in Scott *et al*, 2001: p. 16, my emphasis).

What does it take to firm-up our hitherto limp grasp of what it means “to be, or not to be,” by recourse to temporality? In a very real Hamlet-like sense, it requires that, as *Dasein*, we attend to our historicity as it encompasses our contexts of living. In other words, that we attend to the mortal, hence temporal, fragility of our lives as Heidegger’s concept of care has us appreciate, which was introduced in chapter two. With respect to history, we’ve seen what it takes to grasp be-ing via temporality: namely, to be mindful in regarding the past, regarding history of the *Geschichte* kind, not as an inventory, or chronicle, of representations of beingness, as *Historie* would have us do on behalf of our legacy of a metaphysical sense of being. Instead, by regarding the happenings of history as the happenings of the (“disclosive phenomenality of” as Schoenbohm has it) being-in-the-world as *care*, we stand a chance of living our lives not as a succession of experiences between the thrownness of our birth and the anticipation of our death, but within the timeliness that Heideggerian care is.

It is worth reminding ourselves of the care concept, since it forms the basis of my claims for a non-sequential temporal sense of the order-execution cognate. Let me compare Heidegger’s original formulation of the concept in *Being and Time* (the first of the quotes below) with one of its less frequent occurrences in his later writings, on this occasion from *Contributions*:

The formally existential totality of Dasein's ontological structural whole must therefore be grasped in the following structure: the Being of Dasein means ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-world) as Being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world) (Heidegger, 1962: p.237).

In this way the inceptual mindfulness of thinking becomes necessarily genuine thinking, i.e., a thinking that sets *goals*. What gets set is not just any goal, and not *the* goal in general, but the one and only and thus singular goal of our history. This goal is the *seeking* itself, the seeking of be-ing. It takes place and is itself the deepest find when man becomes the preserver of the truth of be-ing, becomes guardian and caretaker of that stillness, and is resolute in that. *Seeker, preserver, guardian, and caretaker*: this is what *care* means as the basic trait of Dasein (Heidegger, 1999: p.13, emphasis in original).

Aside from the interesting comparisons these quotes afford, I suggest this combined *Geschichte* sense of history opens up a *Kairotic* sense of time: or speaking of time in a spatial sense, of a *vertical* sense of time; a time distinct from the standardly conceived *horizontal* or chronological senses of time. Care, in the strictly Heideggerian senses outlined above, gives onto this vertical prospect of time in a unique way.

As we saw in the conclusion of the previous chapter, Charles Taylor also champions this *Kairotic* or vertical sense of time extensively in his writing on "closed world structures" (Taylor, 2003: p.47f.). In that work he equates "closed" with "horizontal" and states that our world, in the Heideggerian sense, abandons any sense of vertical or "transcendent" time (*ibid*). I disagree with the sentiment expressed with the term "transcendent," when it is used to describe the time of care and of historical be-ing, since Heidegger was at pains to have us engage with our lives – through historical be-ing – more thoroughly than through the objectification of (even) a transcendent being. Recalling Heidegger's injunction, we have to exercise *mindfulness* in discriminating our be-ing oriented from our being oriented locutions; and as with any form of mindfulness, this can be tricky. Charles Taylor has, however, gone on to expand his "closed world structure" sense of time in his book *A Secular Age* (2007), calling it, variously, "Kairotic" (*ibid*: p.54, 124, 712, 715), "quasi time" (*ibid*: p.69), "higher time" (*ibid*: p.54, 59, 195, 208, 265, 541, 713), "the time of carnival or misrule" (*ibid*: p.129), "everywhen" (*ibid*: p.153), "exemplary time" (*ibid*: p.194), "God's time" (*ibid*: p.265), and "multiform time" (*ibid*: p.712), among others. It is gratifying to see the extent of Taylor's engagement with temporality throughout his examination of the negative effects of "secular time". It is also understandable, in a book about the secularisation of modern societies, that Taylor account for a supreme and "transcendent" ground for all beings, in the *onto-theological* sense: though, despite the considerable disagreement with Heidegger's critique of onto-theology (in particular, see Wrathall, 2003), the use of "transcendent" in my immediate context is inappropriate.

Other travellers towards and articulators of a peculiarly vertical time include many writers in the Romanticist aesthetic, too many to enumerate under the strictures of this thesis, but

including the recent and noteworthy engagements with Romanticism of Peter Handke (b. 1942) and Botho Strauß (b. 1944), as recommended (along with others) by Margarete Kohlenbach in her useful overview of the legacies and transformations of German Romanticism across the arts (Kohlenbach, 2009: p.257f.). And that's really the glaring issue here isn't it, if we can bracket for the moment our Romantic meddling with temporal appearances: all of this stands a chance of making sense in the domain of art and fiction and storytelling, but not, for some crucial reason, in the domain of business, of politics and the execution of capitalistic imperatives, art's antipode. For us moderns, perhaps we have come up against the final, though idealised, antithesis between these contrasting domains. On the one side, that of a desire, and a corresponding ability, as C.S. Lewis describes allegory, "to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms" (Lewis, 1936: p.55), in distinction with a thoroughgoing disenchantment of the material world by Enlightenment reason. Or, speaking of irony, as Manfred Frank describes ironic speech, as keeping "open the irrepresentable location of the infinite by permanently discrediting the finite as that which is not intended" (Frank, 2014: p.24), versus Madonna's material girl, living in a material world: or, the ethereal versus the concrete.

Let me test the sanctity of this division, along with your appetite for experimentation. Let me test with you, dear intermediate reader¹¹, what part of the business domain comes crashing down, what cherished business, or capitalist, or commercial, logic becomes corrupted, once I hand over the narrative to a supposed antipode to business – let's say, a Romantic fairy tale. And remember the task I set the intermediate reader: namely, to suspend the sharply delineated disciplinary regimes of Heidegger scholarship and/or executive profit-making respectively. The challenge I'm laying in front of you is to allow you to *experience* that which is beyond language; to lay bare language as the "order" that, itself, can be gone beyond, in the manner in which I'm having us look beyond the merely sequential aspects of the order-execution cognate; to enact a mood of restraint¹², a holding back on our (scholarly or executive) impulses to consider truth as a representation of some state of affairs, i.e. outside of our heads and in the "real world," as well as a restraint to theorise. If for no other reason, consider the following as a re-enchanting enactment of *Kairotic* time, but one you have to carry out/execute.

o-----o

Once upon a time there lived an ambitious potter who, through no fault of his own, was extremely poor. One day, walking through the forest to gather berries for his supper, he came

¹¹ See last paragraph of the Introduction.

¹² As Richard Polt says of the mood of "restraint" in his *The Emergency of Being* (2013), "[r]estraint lets us respond to the strange without reducing it to the familiar" (*ibid*: p.17), which is what I'm expecting the reader to do in what follows.

across the king of the land who was out hunting with his servants. "Potter!" ordered the king. "Make me a pot so I can cook this stag. I will give you whatever you want for it." The potter said in reply: "With clay from the land, the pot from my hands, no payment is necessary sire." The king was pleased. So masterful was the potter at his craft that he'd quickly made the pot and handed it to the king. The stag cooked to perfection in the lovely pot and the king was well fed. Next, the king ordered "Potter! Make me a hundred more pots so I can cook these fowl. I will give you whatever you want for them." The servants looked at the potter, wondering what extravagant reward he would claim. The potter said in reply to the king: "With clay from the land, the pot from my hands, no payment is necessary sire." The king was even more pleased, though the servants were surprised. In next to no time, the potter had the pots ready and presented them to the king. The fowl cooked to perfection in the curvaceous pots and the king handed them to his servants to eat. They were all well fed. Sensing something magical, next the king ordered "Potter! Make me a thousand more pots, decorated with gold, so I can serve dainties to the entire royal household. I will give you whatever you want for them." In a dreamy instant, with the glimmering pots ready, and surrounded by a host of incredulous servants, the potter addressed the king "With clay from the land, the pot from my hands, no payment is necessary sire." The king's party returned to the castle with the pots, buzzing with chatter from the astonishing event. The potter disappeared back into the forest.

The king and queen had a son and a daughter. The prince was haughty and conniving, while his beautiful sister, the chaste princess, was loved by everyone in the land, especially by the king. It just so happened that the prince, who had many spies amongst the royal servants, soon heard of what had happened in the forest between the earnest potter and the king, and decided to trick the potter into admitting his secret. With great fanfare he announced a competition to reveal the best craftsman in the land. However, unbeknownst to the king he offered as a prize the ultimate royal favour; the hand in marriage to the princess, his sister. As a result, on the appointed day, hundreds of spinners, weavers, cooks, potters, candle makers, craftsmen and journeymen of all trades and ranks of life crowded into the lofty great hall of the castle, all with samples of their excellent wares, all expecting marriage to the beautiful princess. The glorious items were arrayed on the high table for the prince to judge, among them a handsome cooking pot, which caught his eye. "This pot," announced the prince, "is fit for a princess. May the proud maker of this pot come and claim his rightful prize." The throng in the great hall fell silent, until a voice from the back called out "With clay from the land, the pot from my hands, no payment is necessary sire." In embarrassment at being found out, our poor potter dashed from the hall sobbing and ran back to his simple hut in the forest. Waiting for him by the modest hearth was the chief goblin who, along

with his thousand strong goblin workforce, the potter secretly employed to make all of his pots, since time was very precious.

“You treat us ill, sir,” said the chief goblin, in a weak voice, to the potter, “Stealing our time to make your pots, which you give away for nothing, in order to curry favour. We demand all of our pot-time back, time that has worn out the period of our longer goblin lives. Along with it, we want back all of our walking-to-work-time, our gossip-time, our dancing-in-the-woods-time, our uncanny-time, our sand-between-the-toes-time, our sky-in-the-treetops-time, our time-to-look-at-stars-time. A word to the prince and he will disgrace you in front of the king.” The now contrite potter thought long and hard about what the once loyal goblin had said. He resolved to make amends, though not before he had found out how to recover these grander times and return the balance owed to all the hardworking goblins.

The prince, in the meantime, had a long wait before news of the potter’s fate reached him. The potter had put himself under apprenticeship, over many years, to a wizard potter in the heart of the cloudy mountains, far from the castle. With persistent wizardly guidance, and with clerky training, over the years our potter became the most skilled in the land at making and selling the most ravishing pots, one at a time, without assistance from the goblins. With little effort his wares began to fetch huge sums, and before long the king became a generous benefactor, recognising in them the hand of the potter he had met in the woods all those years ago. One piece in particular, silken to the touch and with a breath-taking lustre, sold in amazing numbers, due to its unusual properties. Amid the melancholy of life’s travails, taking a moment to glimpse the reflection cast upward from the gleaming wine within this enchanting bowl was sufficient to stay fleeting time for whomever held the bowl. So pleased was the king to be in possession of such a pot that, unbeknownst to the prince, he offered the potter, who was now very wealthy, the hand in marriage to his still beautiful daughter. The first the prince heard of the potter’s fate was on the day that an impressive phalanx of a thousand goblins trooped through the castle gate, each in high spirits, and each carrying one of these bowls. They had come to join in the high times at the royal wedding of the potter-king to the princess.

The potter inherited the kingdom and lived happily ever after with his wife, until they died¹³.

O-----O

¹³ I am thankful to Maria Tatar and her beautiful book *The Annotated Brothers Grimm: The Bicentennial Edition* (2012), and to the Grimm brother’s *Household Tales*, as well as to E.T.A. Hoffmann and his *The Golden Pot and Other Tales* (2008), for the inspiration behind my own (fictional) fairy tale

What is it about this mode of narrative that is so at odds with the domain of business and execution? What does the limit that this fairy tale touches tell us about the order of business, the order of capitalism, or the standing orders of commercial logic, in contrast? I present it as a Romantically-inspired, and *Kairotic*, pitch against the dominant order, in as open-handed a manner as I can gesture in words. I offer it not as a riddle or something to be solved; nor as a text to be cross-referenced against Sanjay's fairy tale life story¹⁴; nor against any specific aspect of Heidegger's thinking; not even as a token of levity with which to decorate the moment with suitable Romantic ostentation: I offer it as an antipode plain and simple, in the same manner in which I believe Heidegger is offering "originary temporality" in *Being and Time*. Says Novalis of fairy tales generally:

In a true fairytale everything must be marvellous – mysterious and unconnected – everything must be animated. Each in its different way. The whole of nature must be mixed in a strange way with the whole of the spirit world. Time of general anarchy – lawlessness – freedom – the *natural state of nature* – the time before the *world* (state). This time before the world brings with it, as it were the scattered features of the *time after the world* – as the state of nature is a *strange picture* of the eternal kingdom. The world of the fairy tale is the *absolutely opposite* world of truth (history) – and just for this reason it is so *absolutely similar* to it – as *chaos* is to *accomplished creation*... In the *future* world everything is as it is in the *former* world – and yet *everything is quite different*. The *future* world is *reasonable* chaos – chaos which penetrated itself – is inside and outside itself – *chaos squared* or infinity. The *true fairy tale* must be at once a *prophetic representation* - an ideal representation – an absolutely necessary representation. The maker of true fairy tales is a prophet of the future (Novalis, 1798-9: p.34, emphasis in original, quoted in Prickett, 2014: p.149).

In a not especially self-explanatory way, but in attempting to keep with Novalis's sentiment from this quote, I present my fairy tale as a breakthrough; a rather blunt one, it has to be admitted, and rather fey, but a breakthrough all the same, to a *Geschichte* sense of history, one that bares the sense of both objective history and continual happening, but by way of marking the time-ness and the epoch-making-ness of being as it is disclosed by *Dasein*, where we are alive to the past that is still coming towards us.

Chances are this needs to sit with you some more: in which case, I will move on to looking at this blunt and slow-motion breakthrough from the angle of Heidegger's Event of Appropriation, and his baffling concept of *Ereignis*.

¹⁴ With the assumption that the fictional Sanjay is a member of the *Dalit* or untouchable caste; and given his miraculous climb out of poverty, his esteemed education and ascent to the top of X-Corp, it is as if the Sanjay story can not only be regarded as fictional, but as a fairy tale.

The Event of Appropriation

Appropriation grants to mortals their abode within their nature, so that they may be capable of being those who speak. If we understand "law" as the gathering that lays down that which causes all beings to be present in their own, in what is appropriate for them, then Appropriation is the plainest and most gentle of all laws... Appropriation, though, is not law in the sense of a norm which hangs over our heads somewhere, it is not an ordinance which orders and regulates a course of events.

(Martin Heidegger, *On The Way to Language*, p. 128-129)

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I want to remain with this type of breakthrough, but on the level of the breakthrough *as an event*, one that we feel comfortable staying with: not as an event in time so much, as strange as that sounds, since don't all events occur in time, but as an event which marks our ability to *abandon ourselves* to that self-same event. This excess of circularity here should not distract us, nor come as a surprise – not now. Heidegger, of course, has a name for this remaining with and abandoning ourselves to such an "event" – he calls it *Ereignis* – the grasping of whose meaning requires, quite possibly, the most exotic philosophic effort of imagination we will have to muster across his entire oeuvre, whose effort will make some more sense of the vertical time we met with at the end of the previous chapter. But I feel as though we now have the requisite conceptual resources at hand, this far into the thesis, to understand *Ereignis*, for the sake of taking possession, on behalf of the sequencing-out of execution, of the time of executive education. I want to examine *executive education as an event*, and the (new) role that time plays in that educative event.

The term *Ereignis* itself is essentially untranslatable. It is formerly rendered by most translators as "appropriation" or the "event of appropriation," and sometimes just as "event," though perhaps it is more appropriately (pun intended) translated as "enowning," as we shall see.

Even turning to the opening page of one of Heidegger's books with *Ereignis* in the title¹, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*, where the key term lies secluded in brackets, but where you'd at least expect, early on, to be provided with a clear definition of said key term, we get instead the elliptical statement "being owned over into enowning" (Heidegger, 1989: p.3) as an early sense of *Ereignis* (we'll come back to this quote later). That book's public title is translated as *Contributions to Philosophy*: Heidegger himself says of its bracketed subtitle (*From Enowning*) that this is the book's "Essential Heading" (*ibid.*); so we are dealing with hot property (properly speaking)² here, and have found ourselves under the knife, yet again, of translation³. However, when one realises, as Hans Ruin does, that "being owned over into enowning" translates rather straightforwardly into German as "to abandon oneself to the event" (Ruin, 2005: p.365), one begins to see that something else is at play – something like the act of owning, deciding to own, or *en*-owning some such, and via this act, this "*en*" of enowning, one gives oneself over to something worth owning – that is spectacularly short-changed by "event" in the sense we normally give that term.

My strategy for reading *Ereignis*, and of using the concept to explore the event of executive education, emerges naturally from the notion's attendant responsibility of "owning," itself: namely, as Richard Polt says, "[t]he responsible way to gain a sense of *Ereignis* is to combine close reading with independent thought" (Polt, 2005: p.375). I want to own my response to the term, and my appropriation of the term to my own ends. In fact, given the spats in the secondary literature over owned-interpretations, I'm self-conscious of not owning the term; of, instead, bandying around Heideggerian language in the fashion of mere imitation and intellectual dandyism, distinct from responsible interpretation, especially when Heidegger himself spoke of

¹ Besides *Beiträge*, the other two books in Heidegger's complete edition (the *Gesamtausgabe* or GA) with *Ereignis* in the title are *Das Ereignis* and *Zum Ereignis-Denken* (GA 71 and 73 respectively, both as yet untranslated), as per Daniel Dahlstrom's *Heidegger Dictionary* (2013).

² To my punning about "appropriate" and my usage of "properly" and "property," it is worthwhile referencing in full a quote from Carol White, in one of her own instructive footnotes, who admirably captures the etymological characteristics of the 'proper' "*eigen*" language Heidegger is using when he writes about "*Ereignis*". Says Carol White: "Heidegger is playing off '*eigentlich*' ('authentic') and '*eigen*' ('own'), and many of his points tacitly appeal to the etymological connections of the '*eigen*' words he uses. I am tempted to translate all the '*eigen*'-rooted words with terms related to 'proper,' that is, to use 'proper' and 'properly' instead of 'authentic' and 'authentically,' 'appropriate' instead of 'own,' and 'most proper' instead of 'ownmost' (*eigenst*). This would have the very distinct advantage of linking them all etymologically, both with each other and with '*das Ereignis*' as 'Appropriation,' as they are in German" (White, 2005: p.40). Carol White continues, "[t]he proposed translation would also have the advantage of emptying words of all the meaning associated with authentic as the term has been used by other philosophers, psychologists, and assorted commentators...However, the usual translations of these terms are well entrenched..." (*ibid.*). The ensuing discussion will reveal this entrenchment, though a position not without promise (see next footnote).

³ Not only do I have no choice but to stick with the translated versions of Heidegger's texts, given that English is, sadly, my only language: I will go on to claim that translations are perhaps the best way of grasping notoriously difficult concepts such as *Ereignis*. My interest in situating Heidegger alongside the conceptually sympathetic and parallel theme of European Romanticism – a movement for whom translation was essential – stems partly from, as Novalis says, the need for the translator to "be an artist himself and be able to produce the idea of the whole at will in one way or another" (Novalis, 1797-99: p.34).

how *Ereignis* was untranslatable (Heidegger, 1960: p.16-17). This has led, as Thomas Sheehan mentions, to the sad fact “that Heideggerian thinking has become a prisoner of its own hermetic jargon,” which leads him to say that “[a]s a result, practitioners of Heidegger discourse end up warbling to each other like a flock of narcissists” (Sheehan, 2013: p.382). This was a particularly pointed harangue of Hubert Dreyfus’, in his podcasted lecture series on *Being and Time* (Dreyfus, 2007: “*Philosophy 185*” *Heidegger*), at fellow scholars ostensibly concerned in interpreting *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999) but who, in his opinion, merely imitated his language. As Richard Polt warns, in his introduction to the concept *Ereignis* in the chapter of that title, in Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall’s *A Companion to Heidegger* (2005: p.375-391);

if Heidegger is right that interpreting is the pursuit of a projected possibility rather than a disengaged staring at the given (SZ: 150), then we have to bring words and concepts of our own to bear on Heidegger’s texts – otherwise we are parroting instead of reading. However, these concepts continually have to be tested both against Heidegger’s own words and against ‘the things themselves (SZ: 153)’ (Polt, 2005: p.375).

Standing up to the issue of ownership, I draw two distinct conclusions from this observation of Richard Polt’s, regarding *Ereignis*, both of which will influence my strategy for reading this concept in this chapter: namely, that the act necessary to appreciating it is *interpretation*, distinct from “disengaged staring”; and that the act of interpretation itself is *subjective*, despite the appropriate correspondences against Heidegger’s texts. While somewhat underwhelming seeming conclusions, their simplicity will serve us well as straightforward entry points into the difficult concept that is *Ereignis*.

Before we turn properly to this business of elucidation of *Ereignis*, and by way of a loan to kick-start this enterprise, it’s constructive to remind ourselves of how critics of Heidegger’s thinking perceive his endeavours; principally, his subversion of our inherited Western metaphysical structures of thought with regards to understanding *being*, and, more importantly, in un-forgetting *Being* (properly, “be-ing”), as the opening injunction of *Being and Time* has it (Heidegger, 1962: p.1). A particularly damning criticism of Heidegger’s thinking comes from Jürgen Habermas, that arch critic of any and all attempts at a deconstruction of reason and metaphysics, who points out that “[t]he totalizing self-critique of reason gets caught in a performative contradiction, since subject-centred reason can be convicted of being authoritarian in nature only by having recourse to its own tools” (Habermas, 1987: quoted in Behler, 1990: p.132). Though, as we saw in the previous chapter, Heidegger was acutely aware of his explanatory failings of *Being and Time* in attempting to get beyond the language of Western metaphysics; so much so that he invented a new language in *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999) to circumvent having to use the same “tools”.

Thus, Habermas' critique is cruel, betraying a reluctance to engage with this new language. Nonetheless, he remarks of Heidegger's method that he "flees from this paradox [of tool abuse] to the luminous heights of an esoteric, special discourse, which absolves itself of the restrictions of discursive speech generally and is immunized by vagueness against any specific objections" (*ibid*). Perhaps the reader has sympathy, at this stage, for such a basis of criticism. For, as we venture further into the intellectual territory of *Ereignis*, it will become apparent what Habermas is getting at, when Heidegger attempts to go beyond the history of being, beyond common language, even, and thereby "beyond everything that can be named by it", as Derrida says of his own intellectual sponsor (Derrida, 1973: p.157: quoted in Behler, 1990: p.130); a thought which plays out in Derrida's famous aphorism, "*il n'y a pas de hors text*" (there is no outside of a text) in *On Grammatology* (Derrida, 1974: p.158), where even he affirms that it is better to brave the text than look beyond it. So what is the transition point, I ask, between jargon and communication? What is at stake in this 'beyond'?

To talk allegorically for a moment, the particularly Gothic monster and sense of danger that is invoked and overflows from Heidegger's dense texts, scurrying off into the dark undergrowth of the text's own "beyond" as it were, is the marvellous-taken-as-fact and the marvellous-known-to-be-fiction, as CS Lewis calls these equipment of the poets in *The Allegory of Love* (Lewis, 1936: p.103). Given Heidegger's affinity with the poetry of Hölderlin (and Georg Trakl, for that matter) I cannot but conclude that Heidegger's appreciation of Hölderlin came from the latter's "enthusiastic" (Zweig, 2012: p.69) and "creative ecstasy" (*ibid*: p.71) that fully embraced the marvellous-taken-as-fact and the marvellous-known-to-be-fiction. It is in this poetic spirit that I offer my own Romantically inspired imaginings of my fictional character, Sanjay, and his fairy tale doppelganger, the potter king, as suitable equipment – because owned by me, as a bizarre-seeming, but "ur-responsible," interpretation – with which to appropriate Heidegger's own thinking.

This is where I find myself wanting to nullify Thomas Sheehan's accusations of "warbling" and Jurgen Habermas' negative impression of "luminous heights of an esoteric, special discourse" that Heidegger's texts deliver. I want to own for myself his "immunized" method of vague and non-discursive speech that seems beyond specific "objections," not least with regards to his "explanation" of *Ereignis*. Not for any love of the man: yikes! But out of sheer admiration that he even attempted such a Romantically inspired deed in the way he does. For this is what I think it can be explained as: a "Romantic" form of execution, a Romantic form of interpretation, that bares all the hallmarks of his intellectual forbears of the *Frühromantick*, or early German Romantic philosophy; namely, Novalis (Hardenberg, Georg Philipp Friedrich von; 1672-1801), the Schlegel

brothers (August Wilhelm; 1767-1845: and his brother, Friedrich; 1772-1829), Schleiermacher (Friedrich Daniel Ernst; 1768-1834), and, Hölderlin (Friedrich; 1770-1843). As Frederick Beiser says of the growing scholarly interest in the philosophy of early German Romanticism:

Many scholars are beginning to recognise that antifoundationalism, historicism, and hermeneutics had their origins not in the twentieth century – in thinkers like Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Gadamer or Dewey – but at the close of the eighteenth century in the reaction against the *Aufklärung* [Enlightenment] among the early romantic generation (Beiser, 2003: p.3).

Frederick Beiser goes on to caution against the excesses of postmodernism – for the sake of which my identification with Romanticism may appear as an apology – which the early German Romantics cannot be accused of:

It must be said, however, that the postmodernists have pushed their case too far, so that it has become one-sided and anachronistic. For in other important respects, the early German romantics continued with, and indeed radicalized, the legacy of the Enlightenment. They never lost their beliefs in the need for and value of self-restraint, criticism, and systematicity. They continued to believe in the desirability of *Bildung*, the possibility of progress, the perfectibility of the human race, and even the creation of the Kingdom of God on earth. While they were not so naïve to believe that we would actually *achieve* these ideals, they did hold we could, through constant striving, *approach* them (Beiser, 2003: p.4, emphasis in original).

To those readers comfortable classing the movement as predominantly literary, with the above named figures “lost in the swells of passion and with a will guided by nothing more than the indulgences and excesses of the individual creative spirit, and so bent on the path of the destruction of reason and science,” as Elizabeth Milán-Zaibert parodies the common reception of the movement, in her foreword as translator to Manfred Frank’s *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism* (Frank, 2004: p.1), this is not the Romanticism to which, I’m claiming, Heidegger is a direct descendent, and in terms of which his thinking receives a renewed poignancy in light of the machinating delinquencies of contemporary capitalism. Instead, with reference to the avowedly philosophic dimensions of a *Frühromantick* championed by Frederick Beiser (2002: 2003: 2014), Ernst Behler (1990) and Manfred Frank (2004; 2014), it will not only be possible to frame Heidegger’s method as Romantic – with all the attendant affordances that the Romantic methods of irony, catachresis, allegory, metalepsis and ellipsis lend – but even to ascribe to his intent an appropriately political end.

Which brings us back to appropriation, and the site of this Romantic ascription: what of the luminous, esoteric and special discourse that is Heidegger’s notion of appropriation, of *Ereignis*?; what philosophical favours does it bestow on execution? And, where Friedrich Schlegel asserts that “[t]he highest good, and the source of everything useful, is *Bildung*” (Schlegel, 1958:

p.259: quoted in Beiser, 2003: p.26), and where Novalis puts forward the similar view that “[w]e are on a mission: we have been called upon for the education (*Bildung*) of the earth” (Novalis, 1960-1988; p.427: quoted in Beiser, 2003: p.26)⁴, what educative sense can be made of *Ereignis* that allows me to execute on it? How do I own it?

6.2 The Oscillating Event of *Ereignis*?

By way of a preliminary scene setting, I see *Ereignis* as a formative “event,” formative in the raw *Bildung* sense⁵, and one spread over an indefinite duration. What is formed during that indistinct event is an appreciation of *being*, but an appreciation that is no longer assumed as a once-and-for-all, definitive and permanent, most general form of being; nor a sense of being which assumes an a-historical, non-temporal, or a-temporal logic. In the following I will outline a method which I think encourages a *temporal* appreciation of being, but a non-static appreciation; one based on a *movement of appreciation* of time as the meaning of being, as Heidegger presents time in *Being and Time*; a back-and-forth “sway” between our acknowledging our common and chronic senses of time, and a venturing into *Kairotic* senses of time, alternately. It is this method that will form the basis of the “event” so-called. To do all this, I will be drawing from Heidegger’s own words, from his *Contributions* especially (Heidegger, 1999), as well as comparing the approach he adopts against a similarly reciprocal approach put forward by Friedrich Schlegel in the 1790’s, as replayed by Manfred Frank in his (translated) lectures on early German Romantic philosophy (Frank, 2004: p.177-219): thereby to contrast Heidegger’s approach, and provide a means to judge its worth. The subject for the reader to have in mind as undertaking this peculiarly oscillating “event” is the familiar (though maybe less so by now) late-career executive in the autumn of their productivity. The preceding chapters have provided the thematic content of these temporal considerations, and it is to these that I refer the reader to assist with the foregoing. In order to establish some evidence for this so-called “oscillating” interpretation of *Ereignis* within the literature, I present two contrasting but sympathetic bases for understanding *Ereignis*; religious and artistic. That Heidegger drew on his personal religious convictions in his thinking, certainly of his early period, is undisputed

⁴ Frederick Beiser says of the term *Bildung* that it “is notoriously untranslatable. Depending on the context, it can mean education, culture, and development. It means literally ‘formation,’ implying the development of something potential, inchoate, and implicit into something actual, organized, and explicit. Sometimes the various connotations of the term join together to signify the educational process or product of acculturation, or the ethical process or product of self-realization” (Beiser, 2003: p.26). Notice that Beiser’s reference to “self” is a step too far for Heidegger scholars, potentially bringing into question my troubling engagement with what critics could see as a dangerously subjectivised Romanticism. Suffice to say, I acknowledge this criticism and Heidegger’s rejection of a subject-object dichotomy. See note 19 of the Introduction.

⁵ See note 4 of this chapter.

(see, for instance, Kisiel, 1993): equally, his conviction in the distinctiveness of art, in the language of poetry, as complimentary to⁶ but ultimately in excess of philosophy, of his championing of “the fragile force of poetic language as that which pushes back against hard reality and pulls free of flat-footed philosophy” (Critchley, 2014: p.13), is likewise well documented, though not un-questioned. My drastic vigor is applied here to, so to speak, rock the boat. If I’m going to talk about oscillating, I need to enact a movement of destabilisation, of getting what was hitherto in an ordered balance into a sway and some dis-order.

6.2.1 A RELIGIOUS BASIS FOR *EREIGNIS*

Heidegger had strong religious convictions throughout his life, claiming, as we saw previously, that he was “still really a theologian” (letter to Löwith; quoted in Kisiel, 1993: p.150). In this regard, referencing Kisiel’s *Genesis* (Kisiel, 1993), we see that Heidegger had a deep attachment to the religious writings of Schleiermacher, in particular to his *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers* (Schleiermacher, 1799: Richard Crouter, 1988), which is worth spending a while on as it offers an instructive justification for my ‘oscillating’ interpretation of *Ereignis*, whose details will follow.

Schleiermacher regards all religious life to consist of two elements: “[1] that man surrender (*hingebe*) himself to the Universe⁷ and allow himself to be stirred by the side turned toward him, and [2] that he internally transmit this stirring, which is only one particular feeling, and incorporate it in the inner unity of this life and being. The religious life is nothing but the constant renewal of this process” (Schleiermacher, 1958: p.58; quoted in Kisiel, 1993: p.91). Heidegger was certainly stirred by these words (Kisiel, 1993: p.72f, 78, 91, 100, 106, 112, 218), as am I. This accounts, I’m claiming, for how he expects us (you and me) to live under the event of *Ereignis*; to be similarly bathed in the universe, irradiated as it were, and to assimilate this wonder into the (*Kairotic*) time of our everyday (chronic) lives. In other words, we get on with our everyday lives by unifying this awe and wonder we’re bathed in into the tasks in front of us. Now, a less mystical way of saying

⁶ Stanley Cavell is interested in this close relationship between poetry and philosophy. Referencing Friedrich Schlegel’s call for a new relation between philosophy and literature (Schlegel, 1958: p.261; quoted in Frank, 2004: p.219), and reflecting on a climate of scepticism surrounding such an association, he says this: “I guess such remarks as ‘poetry and philosophy should be made one’ would not in themselves have been enough even in my day to have gotten one thrown out of most graduate programs in philosophy, but their presence, if used seriously, as a present ambition, would not have been permitted to contribute to a Ph.D. study either; and like vestigial organs, such ideas may become inflamed and life-threatening” (Cavell, 1989: p.4-6; quoted in Frank, 2004: p.8). An insightful, though rather worrying precedent, given my own attempt in this thesis to mess with the (potentially) pathogenic cocktail of fictional literature, philosophy, and capitalism.

⁷ The seditious, revolutionary, or at least enthusiastic, tone that Schleiermacher adopts in his *Speeches* (1799: in Crouter, 1988) is somewhat hidden in our reading today.

this – and let’s face it, not everyone is appreciative of the elisions (the intentional gaps left to be filled by the reader), and can stomach the metalepses (e.g. “wonder” as a metonym for surrender) of the mystic’s lexicon – is that although be-ing lies hidden and forgotten within (metaphysical) being, be-ing still can’t be thought from out of that forgotten-ness, that place and time of hiding, our everyday dealings in the world. Instead, be-ing (and with it, *Kairotic* time) must be thought from out of itself, which, nonetheless can only be within our worldly (chronic) state of affairs. This begs a series of questions; “How are we supposed to unhide be-ing?,” and “Where are we getting this other view of being from, anyway?”: not to mention the questions, “Is anything actually being said here?,” and, if there is, “Why can’t this be said more straightforwardly?”. Let me share with you what I believe to be Heidegger’s equivalent articulation to Schleiermacher’s, one composed in May 1919 as part of a letter to Elisabeth Blochmann (with whom he corresponded on matters Schleiermachian). The piece comes from the instructive *Genesis of Heidegger’s Being and Time* of Kisiel (Kisiel, 1993). My purpose in presenting this quote is to offer it as a basis of what perhaps might just be a more straightforward articulation of *Ereignis*; though this was not Kisiel’s immediate intention, where instead he offered it into his text as an background to his summary of Heidegger’s “religious phenomenology” (*ibid*: p.112-113). Thinking back to Schleiermacher’s injunction to incorporate the “surrender” into the “inner unity of this life and being,” and speaking of how one should “attune” one’s life to the ebbs and peaks, Heidegger writes that this requires;

inner humility before the mystery and grace of life. We must be able to wait for the high-pitched intensities of meaningful life, and we must remain in continuity with such gifted moments, not so much to enjoy them as to work them into life, to take them with us in the onrush of life and to include them in the rhythms of all oncoming life. And in moments when we immediately feel ourselves and are attuned to the direction in which we vitally belong, we cannot merely establish and simply record what is clearly had, as if it stood over against us like an object. The understanding self-possession is genuine only when it is lived, when it is at once a Being. I do not mean by this the triviality that one must also follow what one knows. Rather, in a vehement life, becoming aware of one’s directedness, which is not theoretical but a total experience, is at once entering into it with gusto (*Schwung*), the propagation of a new momentum through and in very movement of life (Heidegger, 1919, quoted in Kisiel, 1993: p. 112-113).

What stands out for me from this enthusiastic quote is the “ebb-and-flow-ness” between acknowledging some feeling of ecstasy, of being “attuned to the direction in which we vitally belong,” and living that ecstasy by incorporating these moments into “the onrush of life”. Even a sceptic – one not disposed to believe that there is such a *Kairotic* ecstasy to be received, or one willing to reluctantly permit such a revelation on condition of its purely cognitive or neuroscience grounds, or one only content with shifting the register of this whole quote’s sentiment towards meaning and new lucidities of meaning – would still be willing to acknowledge that *something*

Heidegger is talking about is *somehow* incorporated (enthusiastically) into one's life, and that this passing on, this gifting, is continued, in a back-and-forth fashion. This reciprocity, this accepting with grace and passing on via one's living, is what I'm keen for the reader to focus on, at this point.

Before I say more about how this reciprocity of senses of being – for that is what Heidegger is talking about with Elizabeth Blochmann – slides into a corresponding reciprocity of senses of time, let me say more about the source of this sense of “high-pitched intensities of meaningful life”. For this I will use a quote from Friedrich Schlegel which provides a ground to the mystical-seeming *Kairotic* frequencies that Heidegger is attuned to, and perhaps what we also are attuned to but just don't realise. The quote is re-presented in a lecture by Manfred Frank, who is keen to understand the Romantic Movement's artistically and subjectively inspired notion of feeling. As we can see from Heidegger's Blochmann quote, he too talks in terms of feeling, or “the understanding self-possession,” of feeling ourselves attuned, and it is this that I have in mind in reading the following. Says Manfred Frank, of Schlegel, writing about this feeling;

Self-feeling (*Selbst-Gefühl*) (or ‘Self-consciousness’), adds Schlegel, delivers ‘[insofar as it is] related to knowledge, [...only] the certainty of something incomprehensible’... According to Schlegel:

The puzzle of self-feeling which always accompanies us, is also indeed the reason why thoughtful people are put into doubt by philosophers who try to explain everything. They feel certain (even if perhaps they cannot express this) that there exists something incomprehensible; that they themselves are incomprehensible (Schlegel, 1958: p.331; quoted in Frank, 2004: p186).

While hardly appealing to a hard core empiricist or materialist, I think this Schlegel quote nicely calibrates our appreciation of what Heidegger was referring to when he spoke of “inner humility before the mystery and grace of life”. Even given its awkward, adolescent-tinged, anxiety about never being fully understood, this puzzle of self-feeling translates well into relatively common spiritual sentiments, expressed in the canon of most of the world's major religions. This ties back to Charles Taylor's conviction, discussed in the previous chapter, about how the contemporary process of secularisation “has no place for unproblematic breaks with a [sacred] past which is simply left behind us” (Taylor, 2007: p.772), and which renders “homogenized” or chronic time as the only conceivable sense of time available. This, however, leaves us with another area to explore; namely the “us” of the previous sentence; the extent to which the *something* which beckons us – the universe, let's say, from Schleiermacher's quote – is best described in terms of a *subject-object* relation.

Before I introduce Schlegel's understanding of subjectivism – which is of the *idealist* and the Fichtean absolute “I” variety, and which I will use as a get-out clause for when Heidegger's lack of clarity lands his whole enterprise of temporality in trouble with William Blattner (Blattner, 1999)

as we will see in the concluding chapter – it is worth appreciating the subject-object relation of *Ereignis* a little better.

The temptation – certainly given the Blochmann quote, and to an extent the Schlegel quote – is to phrase the *something* in terms of an “object,” and to phrase my appreciating, receiving (and, who knows, living) of that something in terms of a “subject”: hence the putative subject-object relation. But this is completely wrong for Heidegger; wrong because of the metaphysical baggage this conception carries, and wrong because this betrays a substantive being-oriented, or presence-oriented, understanding of being. This means he has no alternative but to find some other way to portray the gift given by the grace he was describing in that quote. To remain true to the metaphysical frame-breaking job he’s signed up to do, he has to change the relationship between the knower and the known: that relationship must undergo a transformation from subject-object to something else; which for Heidegger emerges in the mode of discourse about owning one’s own being, or *Dasein*, or *enowning* be-ing, or simply *enowning*, and which is the complete purpose of *Ereignis*. Hence, and by way of re-cap, on the very first page of *Contributions*, Heidegger says “[i]t is no longer a case of talking ‘about’ something and representing something objective, but rather of being owned over into enowning” (Heidegger, 1999) – we came across this elliptical quote earlier, before we had the time to make any sense of it (if the reader can make any sense of this). Listen out, because this is where the meaning of *Ereignis* comes. He continues: “[t]his amounts to an essential transformation of the human from ‘rational animal’ (*animal rationale*) to Da-sein. Thus the *proper* title says: *From Enowning*” (*ibid*: p.3, emphasis in original). In essence, this transformation from a subject-object understanding – of a subject standing over against an object – to “enowning” is what *Contributions* is all about, and effectively nails the definition of *Ereignis*.

Though hardly... As a *ta-da!* moment for revealing *Ereignis*, it falls a little flat, it must be said. Maybe that’s because we’re so immured in our metaphysical way of thinking that we’re just not ready to see it? Or maybe it’s because the resources available to Heidegger, to express this novel way of getting around the subject-object relation, were not up to the job; or that he didn’t call on a sufficiently diverse range of resources to aid his cause? His recourse to the Romantic poetry of Hölderlin and the call of this last embodiment of German Hellenism; his wish to draw from this poetic tradition, to summon Hölderlin’s evocative and classically tinged invocations to battle the finite bounds of mundane existence with the un-remunerative, un-productive and un-realistic forces of poetry, becomes completely understandable in this regard. Only, I’m not sure if even this draw of Hölderlin’s creativity was up to the enormity of the task Heidegger had set his philosophy; of stopping the apparently unstoppable army of metaphysical barbarians hammering at the gates. Though, it’s in light of the urgency lent by this “sacking” metaphor that the question

of alternative supporting resources, of art in general, say, takes on a renewed relevance. This will be my conclusion, but it will take the rest of this chapter to build the case for a consideration of so-called *art in general* becoming the most suitable supporting resource, even with an emergency draft of the supremely qualified massed ranks of the Romantic Movement in support.

6.2.2 THE TEMPORAL ASPECTS OF *EREIGNIS*

Throughout this thesis, when it comes to regarding *being* or *be-ing*, my interest has been in transposing every *being* sense that we come across in Heidegger into the corresponding *time* sense, given that time is the horizon of being. This has been an implicit process, and usually not a process at all in the preceding; simply one of those Romantic elisions that hand the task of transposition and interpretation over to the reader. I have to say that I feel self-conscious in this act of transposing, only because I've come across very few similar efforts to give me sufficient confidence; very few persistent treatments of the purely "time" components of Heidegger's dyad of being and time (with the exception of William Blattner). If this venture into temporality was "uncharted territory" for Heidegger, as William Blattner's concluding remark has it (Blattner, 1999: p.310), then it is for me too.

There are multiple explanations for my anxiety regarding this act of transposing. Firstly, the fact that Heidegger's overall project of *Being and Time* was never finished. Secondly, that he himself realised the argumentative failure of the temporal aspect of this project. Thirdly, that this admission lead to a general scepticism amongst the academic community, a doubt that anything of significant philosophical value can be extracted from his shaky lines of argument. Fourthly, a feeling – for that is all it need be – that such a project is too transcendental. Admittedly, these need only amount to easily dismissible impressions, especially since I will continue to lobby for the usefulness of an analysis of the order-execution cognate using this focus on the time component of Heidegger's dyad. The confidence I do have is in the negative utility of my project. Not so much the absence of any perceivable, or conceivable, usefulness attributable to the project of "using" Heideggerian temporality as a framework to analyse the order-execution cognate in executive education; rather, the utility that that absence itself confers. This is a form of subversion of a so-called principle of utility: where extrinsic value is a measure of the extent to which the consequences of something, or its relations, can be instrumental for whichever subsequent purpose or profit. Mine is a tempered utility, however, in as much as I'm still interested in how the project of "using" Heideggerian temporality (as a framework to analyse the order-execution cognate in executive education) plays out philosophically and pedagogically: the subversion comes

from disrupting the standard associations of utility (with the notion of instrumentality indexed-out in the context of business as increasing profits, performance, cost-reduction, efficiency, market-share, growth, etc.) with a consequent disruption to the standard conceptions of orthodox executive pedagogy. In that regard this subversion is political, in that it subverts the prevailing order, the capitalist orthodoxy. I think Heidegger's *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999) is an active demonstration of this sort of subversion, though he's not calling it political; a sort of subversion that I think is the role of *time* to carry out, in the context of the new, and politicised, event of *Bildung* for the executive, not to mention a redeemed purpose for executive education generally. I push my tame Gothic monsters of the marvellous-taken-as-fact and the marvellous-known-to-be-fiction to the front of the protest to act as mascots of this disruption.

What I understand *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999) to be actively demonstrating is a mode of philosophical discourse that itself becomes the central philosophical theme. As Hans Ruin explains it, this central philosophical theme "should no longer speak *about* something, so as to represent it, because when it speaks in such a way, or rather when it understands its purpose along these lines, then it will only reproduce a representational objectifying discourse in which the forgetfulness of being is enacted yet again" (Ruin, 2005: p.365, emphasis in original). The only way to avoid becoming bemired in this way of thinking is to live the event of *Ereignis*, over and over again: to own-up to owning, as it were, via one's living, a non-objectified way of being, which is *Dasein* pure and simple. If you remember, John Haugeland defined *Dasein* as a "way of living that embodies an understanding of being" (Haugeland, 2013: p.81-82); this fits nicely with how Heidegger expects us to view *Ereignis*, as this way of living in *Dasein*, as a continual act of appropriating – almost as an act of converting – our objectified and metaphysical sense of being with a non-objectified sense of being, not once-and-for-all but continually. And it's with this thought that my temporal interpretation of *Ereignis* is presented.

Returning to our subject for a moment – the world of the executive – the being-in-the-world of the executive consists of the time they're involved with (caring for⁸) the sequencing-out all of the orders – the standing orders, the received orders, the self-imposed orders, the self-generating orders – they're executing against. Assuming part of their time involves guiding and developing others in receiving and executing against these orders, let's also assume that part of that time allocation is involved in developing, in educating, themselves in improving that order-execution sequence. What would an education in *Ereignis* for the executive consist in, given that he or she must suspend their standard subject-object distinctions, and resist objectifying their time,

⁸ As Heidegger italicises in the crucial §65 of *Being and Time*, "Temporality reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care" (Heidegger, 1962: p.374).

as Heidegger's anti-metaphysical warrant has it? If the subject of the executive should no longer be viewed as standing over against the object of their care, be that either the order or the means of its execution; and if at the time in/during/at/through which their care⁹ is manifest should not be regarded as an object, or in any way objectified – like I just did with my lazy litany of in/during/at/through – then what remains? Referring to our earlier discussion of world collapse in the chapter on death, coming out of an acknowledgement of the groundlessness of our daily projects, I spoke about “project-less projection” as a consequence of an acceptance of that groundlessness, and of how it is possible to have no specific projects onto which to act out one's projection into the future, but to persist with that projection anyway. I proffered the concomitant locution “execution-less execution” as that project-less state. This is what remains of the executive after applying Heidegger's strident anti-metaphysical critique embodied in the living of Da-sein in *Ereignis: execution-less execution*. As a residue, what appears to emerge from the process of boiling off, as it were, all the metaphysical liquids is the *time* of execution: the horizon only in terms of which the being of the executive has meaning at all. So, to avoid becoming bemired in this objectified way of thinking, *pace* Haugeland, one should practice a way of living that embodies an understanding of time, if one is to grasp *Ereignis*.

As I mentioned earlier, in grappling with *Ereignis*, one is exerting perhaps the most exotic philosophical effort of imagination one will ever have to muster with Heidegger's work. Hopefully, the method by which I'm suggesting one practice a living that embodies an understanding of time, one that serves to convert that imaginative effort into praxis, is one relatively unburdened by the exoticness of its theory at least. As I alluded to at the start of this section, the method involves a back-and-forth sway between the executive acknowledging his or her common metaphysical senses of time, and being exposed to non-metaphysical senses of time, alternately. In order to establish a little distance between my idiosyncratic interpretation and Heidegger's own elliptical statements of *Ereignis*, I have been calling these two senses of time chronic and *Kairotic* respectively. It is this differentiation, and the oscillation between these two types of time, that I claim as a method¹⁰ by which to practice a way of living that embodies an understanding of *time*, and which the event of executive education can model. I will conclude that executive education is the mode of experience for the executive in which *Kairotic* time comes to appearance, if fleetingly.

⁹ See footnote 8

¹⁰ This claim is partly based on Felix Ó Murchadha's book *The Time of Revolution* (2013) where he introduces the *Kairos* and *Chronos* distinctions in Heidegger's senses of time. I came across this book towards the end of my research, after I'd begun to draw out my own distinction between sequential and non-sequential senses of time in Heidegger, using similar nominations to Ó Murchadha's. His book was both a heartening and heart-breaking find, ratifying my own work at the same time as precipitating much re-writing.

6.3 Temporal *Ereignis* as the Oscillation between Chronic and *Kairotic* Time

Etymologically, “chronic” comes from the Latin “chronicus,” and the Greek “chronikós,” which is equivalent to “chrónos,” or time. The meaning centres around time; as in something continuing over a long period of time or constancy, as in describing a “chronic liar”; or the suffering of something, often a disease, over a long period of time, as in “chronic illness”. In classical mythology, Chronos is the personification of time and origin of the sequential time measurement of chronometry – time keeping – and the figure of “father time”. In the case of *Kairotic*¹¹ or *καίρός*, or *Kairos*, we have to turn to the ancient Greeks to understand where the term comes from: they used the term to denote the right or “opportune moment,” given that *Kairos* names an ancient Greek god who personified opportunity (see the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* entry for “*Kairos*”), where “Ion...of Chios...called him the youngest son of Zeus (i.e. Opportunity is god-sent)” (*ibid*). In ancient Greek literature, “*Kairos* also encompasses time (differentiated from Chronos) and the seasons” (*ibid.*). In Christian theology, *Kairos* also refers to the time when God acts, for example, “the *Kairos* is fulfilled” (Mark 1.15). As far as I am aware, Heidegger himself did not use these terms to describe time. The only relevant reference to *Kairotic* time I can find is that of Theodore Kisiel, who uses it frequently to describe “a phenomenological chronology” (Kisiel, 1993: p.421), and who acknowledges that Heidegger himself “did not invoke” the term (*ibid*); and Charles Taylor, who likewise calls on it to describe a *carnavalesque* type of time as “kairotic: that is, the time line encounters kairotic knots, moments whose nature and placing calls for reversal, followed by others demanding rededication, and others still which approach Parousia: Shrove Tuesday, Lent, Easter” (Taylor, 2007: p.54). As such, I feel confident having ascribed these two appropriate terms to denote two distinct types of time relevant to a reciprocal appreciation of the new event of executive education.

Chronic time is straightforwardly introduced, and has featured throughout this thesis as our standardly conceived temporal reckoning associated with conceptions of our own death, anxiety and boredom. In terms of the figure of the corporate executive, it’s easily parodied by referring to their headlong dash through their days, between sequencing-out meetings, multiple executions and rounds of major decision making, or strategic projections. While such a parody is not altogether fair, nor exclusive to the figure of the executive for that matter, the straightforward – or as Heidegger would call it, “ordinary time” (Heidegger, 1962: p.278) or *vulgar* – treatment of time is taken as a measured sequence of “nows,” with its Aristotelian pedigree, as we’ve seen. The seeming pride with which our technologically enframed culture is often breathlessly described as

¹¹ See footnote 25 of Chapter 2 of this thesis

“always on,” “24/7,” and “driven by the clock” all find a natural resonance in the “time is money” aphorism of the (parodied) executive, where monetary equivalence is tied to an exclusively chronic sense of time. This chronic sense of time is our common temporal sense. As the prevailing chapters have illustrated, this temporal sense is our (proper) metaphysical inheritance, a sense of time we’re happy conceiving as objectified, over against which stands the counter force of *Kairotic* time. In that regard, the balance of effort to conceive of the two senses of time is decidedly asymmetric in favour of the chronic sense. But true to my mission of acknowledging new orders of time for the executive, this overwhelming temporal asymmetry is chronic, in the disease sense of that term. Our present, technological, or modern, epoch is an embodiment of how we have forgotten the essence of being, corresponding with a complete forgotten-ness of the essence of time. In the case of time, this forgotten-ness is chronic in our present epoch of “blank duration” (Auerbach, 2003: p.12), where Heidegger designates an epoch as the period through which being, and hence time, is “held back” (Heidegger, 2002: p.265), or “levelled off” (Heidegger, 1962: p.377), resulting in our dis-eased condition. It is conceivable this dis-ease could be appropriated, generally speaking, to account for the societal ills of suffering under delinquent capitalism, or all-pervading neoliberal ideology, with its unrelenting efforts to create markets out of everything: though, speaking generally, an ascription to such a strange-seeming cause of dis-ease with our current epoch would be too vague, too depersonalised, to stand up to scrutiny. Instead, specifically and chronically speaking, any constancy of disaffection with our current condition, I’m suggesting, is more usefully appropriate to our singular, and singularly inadequate, sense of time; chronic time. My hope is that the preceding chapters have given you – perhaps on behalf of our fictional executive, Sanjay – a reason to believe in a different sense of time, one which encourages executive educators (at least) to conceive of a braking (breaking?) manoeuvre on our ordered and sequential sense of chronic time, one which acknowledges the possibility of a deceleration from the headlong market-speed of the executives involved in personalised (not generalised) executions of capitalism and neoliberalism, to a different order/rank of temporal conception altogether.

In parallel to an earlier claim about the *political* nature of subversions of utility, this subversion of our standard chronological conception of chronic time is also a political act. Calling into question and actively disrupting the prevailing ordered sequentially of time has, if you stretch it a little, connotations of sedition, not to mention a disturbing (for the prevailing order) comfort with disorder. I’m not attributing this particular political agenda to Heidegger: he has his own disastrous political legacy overshadowing his reputation (which, in a sense, injects added poignancy to my making a political connection here). But I am, unexceptionally, attributing to him a sense of time which Heidegger would rather we did not hold back or level-off from: this is “primordial time”

first developed in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962: p.377) and only inferred in *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999). In my own act of owning (enowning) *Ereignis*, as a consequence of my earlier promise to execute my own interpretation of *Ereignis*, I'm equating Heidegger's "primordial" time with what Ó Murchadha and myself are calling *Kairotic* time.

For an understanding of the *Kairotic* sense of time – one that opens an acknowledgement, an un-hiding of this proper, or owned, sense of time – we need to have in mind my discussion of the religious basis for *Ereignis* stated earlier, and to Heidegger's appreciation of Schleiermacher's two-sided nature of religious feeling. As Schleiermacher has it, in the act of "surrender" to the "universe"¹², there is a side of us which faces the universe, and a side of us turned away from it to our everyday lives. Heidegger, broadly speaking (see Kisiel, 1993: p.429-439), parses this division as one between the "ontological" and the "ontic"; although, in the Blochmann quote, this distinction is rendered as between a feeling of ecstasy, of being "attuned to the direction in which we vitally belong," and living that ecstasy by incorporating these moments into "the onrush of life" (*ibid*: p.112-113). My interpretation of *Kairotic* time stands as that former ecstatic sense, as ontological in nature, in distinction to chronic time in the "onrush of life" as the everyday ontic sense of time. The point that both Schleiermacher and Heidegger make in the quotes provided is that these two sides – the ontological and the ontic – together constitute "the direction in which we vitally belong," with neither one coming before the other, in a chronological or sequential sense, nor one being more important than the other. My interest in the event of education, of the temporal sense of *Ereignis*, is how it is possible to alternate between these two sides: at one moment, being resolutely focused on the *Kairotic* side facing the "universe," and at the other moment incorporating that resoluteness into the chronic time of our everyday, into particular situations, and then back again; alternating between the ontological and ontic, and back to the ontological, thence to the ontic, and so on. Says Kisiel of this distinction and implied reciprocity; "Kairotical time is the empowering milieu by which resolution, the ultimate ontic thrust of resoluteness, can find the way to its temporally particular situation" (Kisiel, 1993: p.437). Only via our (finite) ontic situation, our temporally particular situation which we find ourselves in moment by moment, can we make sense of our (eternal) ontological existence. Our so-called moment by moment ontic existence presupposes a primordial time that in no way limits our possible senses of ecstasy of the ontological limitless moment. Later, I will illustrate a mode of this oscillation between chronic and *Kairotic* senses of time, and suggest this as a valid form of educative care – in the true Heideggerian temporal sense of care – in the context of our dis-eased epochal condition, especially in light of our impending death.

¹² See footnote 7 of this chapter for what "universe" denotes.

6.4 Heidegger's Romantic Temporal Irony

At the very real risk of tumbling off into Heidegger space, and needing to be mindful of anti-Heidegger criticisms previously encountered – of “warbling” within the “luminous heights” of a closed and esoteric special discourse – I would like to anchor this bizarre talk of types of time in something more down to earth; in irony, or in *Romantic irony*¹³, to be precise. Not quite as far as suggesting Heidegger was simply jesting in all his talk of time: that he didn't really mean it, that he was, for some reason, just being ironic, where here ironic can mean that one was only joking. It would be impudent to suggest, given his career-long engagement with time as a central theme to his work, that he was joking and in fact meant the exact opposite of what all his talk of time indicated. Such a flat denial is not the point I'm making about irony. Instead, I claim there is a valid current of what I formally identify as Romantic irony running through his primordial temporality sense of time – and through my *Kairotic* sense of time – one which I think strengthens the case for its usefulness, since by treating primordial temporality as an exercise in irony one at least is thrown down a challenge by which to disentangle the contradistinction between the terms opposed. In his *The Concept of Irony* (1841) Søren Kierkegaard explains irony thus: “In oratory, for example, there frequently appears a figure of speech with the name of irony and the characteristic of saying the opposite of what is meant. Already here we have a quality that permeates all irony – namely, that the phenomenon is not the essence but the opposite of the essence” (Kierkegaard, 1989). More than just opposition, irony also grants freedom, as Kierkegaard goes on to explain:

If I next consider the speaking subject, I once again have a qualification that permeates all irony – namely, the subject is negatively free. When I am aware as I speak that what I am saying is what I mean and that what I have said adequately expresses my meaning, and I assume that the person to whom I am talking grasps my meaning completely, then I am bound in what has been said – that is, I am positively free therein...I am also bound with respect to myself and cannot free myself any time I wish. If, however, what I said is not my meaning or the opposite of my meaning, then I am free in relation to others and to myself (Kierkegaard, 1989: quoted in Prickett, *et al*, 2014: p.291).

While there is much to discuss in Kierkegaard's remark that is beyond the scope of my survey, this notion of “freedom through irony” resonates strongly with Heidegger, and, as I will elaborate in the concluding chapter, this freedom can be redeemed when one grants oneself freedom from

¹³ In keeping with my continued references to the movement of (predominantly) German Romanticism as scaffolding, so to speak, by which one gains better access to Heidegger's thought, I invoke the standardly received Romantic notion of irony (see Nicholas Saul, 2009: *A Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*). In terms of a convenient artistic periodization, this movement's concerted and well known emphasis on irony as a means to promote an awareness of the contrast between ideality and reality; as a means to promote an avoidance of fixity and its consequences; as a paradox defining the means of true understanding; all of these senses of irony centre around the movements' attempts at encompassing the infinite with the finite. It is with this last sense in mind that I employ the term as a parallel descriptor of Heidegger's pairing of the ontological with the ontic, and my humble analogue of the educative means of playing *Kairotic* time off against chronic time.

chronic time, in favour of *Kairotic* time: one has the freedom, via the negative freedom Kierkegaard describes, to live within irony and to suspend sequential time, and to act from the non-sequential moment of vision, *Kairotic* time. I will come on to call this method “ironic productivity” in the conclusion.

This freedom is also evident in Manfred Frank’s definition of Romantic irony, when he invokes irony as a means to bolster Romantic philosophy’s “yearning for infinity,” as Friedrich von Schlegel deems the purpose of philosophy (Schlegel, 1804: quoted in Frank, 2014: p.24). Says Frank:

Something is uttered ironically when the way of saying it neutralizes the determinateness of the content, brings it into suspense, or sets in motion a withdrawal from it in favour of an infinity of options that might as well have been uttered in its place. Ironic speech keeps open the irrepresentable location of the infinite by permanently discrediting the finite as that which is not intended (Frank, 2014: p.24).

This describes admirably the purpose of what Heidegger calls his method of “formal indication”¹⁴. By viewing Heidegger’s arch concept of time, primordial temporality, in this ironic way, notice is served on how we standardly determine chronological time, bringing chronic conceptions of time into the type of suspense that I (and Ó Murchadha) are calling *Kairotic*. This suspension of sense, this method of neutralisation through Romantic irony, in the manner of Manfred Frank, not only predates Heidegger’s formal indication, but its useful substitution better articulates the ontological-ontic ebb-and-flow between chronological and *Kairological* senses of time. Crucially for my argument, the employment of Romantic irony allows me to cross-fertilize Heidegger’s thinking about temporality with the Romantic’s thinking about infinity, and the role of reflections on the finite in bringing us closer to infinity. A compelling set of similarities are already in place to link the two strands of thought: divinities and man, infinities and finitudes, heaven and earth, ontological and ontic, *Kairotic* and chronic, the universe and our every-day lives. For this flip-flop between the infinite and the finite Fred Rush also uses the term “oscillate”. Quoting Friedrich von Schlegel, he claims that “[p]erhaps the most famous characterization involves the idea that the ironist ‘oscillates’ between or ‘hovers’ over... self-creation...and self-annihilation” (Rush, 2006: p.181). I am claiming that this same oscillation is detectable in Heidegger, between *Kairotic* and chronic senses of time.

Romantic irony also serves as a form of freedom: to free us up to consider how else existential phenomena can be given to us. Freedom through irony resonates strongly with all of

¹⁴ See footnote 5 in chapter 4 for more details of formal indication as a method.

Heidegger's senses of freedom¹⁵, all of them related to the freedom for *be-ing* which *Dasein* fundamentally enjoys. In particular, in *Basic Concepts* (Heidegger, 1993), he talks about a particular realm of freedom, one where "the historical human stands out into an open, while subordinating everything needed and useful to it" (*ibid*: p.4f), indicating a type of freedom that liberates us (the executive) from the demands of utility. As Daniel Dahlstrom puts it, paraphrasing Heidegger in *Basic Questions (ibid)*, "[w]e are handed over to this freedom in the thinking that lets be known that there *is* something that need not be productive or useful in order to be" (Dahlstrom, 2013: p.80). Now, I have to ask here, is Heidegger being ironic? Is his a positive freedom? Or do his meaning utterances – about time in particular – indicate the exact opposite of what is stated, thereby absolving him of any obligation to his audience, freeing him from any bond, and thereby releasing him to a negative freedom? One could argue for and against this positively bounded freedom at length. To short circuit such a discussion, my claim is that this liberating sense of freedom can be viewed as both ironic and *transformatively* so, and this has to do with the style of his writing.

A recurring theme throughout this thesis has been the manner in which Heidegger has said what he has said, or usually, written in the manner in which he has written. In this regard, the "medium" of what has been said has been just as prominent as the "what" of what has (actually) been said. There's nothing especially unusual with this particularly "mediumistic"¹⁶ observation about Heidegger, not given his famous interest in language: this, in fact, accounts for the very many departure points from Heidegger's written thought into postmodern literary theory. Mine is a departure point in the same vein; in my case, drawing attention to the educative and formative (in the *Bildung* sense of formative) impact of Heidegger's medium of words on the executive educatee. The rationale for my own departure point is as follows. When the overriding temptation is to mine

¹⁵ Despite Heidegger himself identifying five types of freedom (Heidegger, 1985.b: p.82-83, 88), Daniel Dahlstrom (2013: p.76f) categorises four main types of "freedom" in Heidegger's work: existential, transcendental, liberating, and philosophical. Broadly speaking, in existential freedom, *Dasein* always has the freedom to choose to be itself, to be either authentic or inauthentic. In transcendental freedom, only by transcending beings in terms of the world is *Dasein* able to relate to them and to itself. Liberating freedom is a release from the sheltering of be-ing, a liberation from the idea that for something to *be* it has to *be* productive. And by philosophical freedom Heidegger is referring to a form of philosophical questioning, non-metaphysical in nature, which allows *Dasein's* essence to emerge from beneath the cover of obscurity by which traditional philosophical questioning has traditionally disregarded the question of being. While all of these senses of freedom are relevant to aspects of my argument, the "liberation" sense of freedom is the one most pertinent to my point about the temporality of irony.

¹⁶ Rene Arcilla, speaking about the "medium" of specifically modernist art, which often emphasises that with which it is composed – distinct from non-modernist art which can be said, simplistically, to have subverted attention away from the medium to that which the art supposedly "conveys" – says "that modernist art is not ultimately about medium, but establishes, via the stress on medium, the priority of the experience of *existence, of our strangerhood, to given practical considerations*" (Arcilla, 2010: p.47, my emphasis). The argument of his book *Mediumism* (Arcilla, 2010) attempts to highlight the educational benefits that specifically existential considerations of the medium of modernist art in particular have on the student in the midst of their consumerist lives. I share this educative emphasis on the "medium," in this case, of Heidegger's philosophy. Arcilla attempts to broker his existential enlightenment via a contradistinction via art as an "object," whereas I'm attempting to do it via a closer consideration of "non-objectified time".

Heidegger's texts for meaning, rather than simply enjoy the process of reading his texts for the transformative potential that reading offers, I suggest the longstanding literary device of Romantic irony is a congruent, and familiar, means to execute this alternate sense of meaning. Once granted freedom from what Joshua Landy calls "the meaning mongers," (Landy, 2012: p.8) via irony, the process of reading and interpretation become dangerous at last; conventions are ripe for overturning, the prevailing order suddenly becomes questionable, and the ineluctable order-execution can finally withstand subversion; but where, above all, the acts of reading, interpretation and subversion have to be *owned*. When Heidegger's talk of temporality is considered as ironic, every interpretation is up for grabs; every means of ascribing a truth value to what has suddenly become non-propositional content is merely of secondary importance to *owning* – of grasping, seizing, of standing for, of *eigen*¹⁷, or *Ereignis* – that interpretation to which one commits, and by which one can *form* oneself. This is dangerous talk indeed. There is a name for the class of these dangerous texts of the formative type I'm describing: *fiction*. We normally expect the direct instructional utility of a text to be granted via the outright rejection of the status of that text as fiction: that in order to save a text from utter futility in an instructional context such as normalised executive education, it usually needs to be denied any non-propositional, fictional, basis. Not so, I'm saying, for a new order of executive education based on a Heideggerian notion of temporal sequence. The manifold senses of order here include education in an order as "sequence," and "sequencing-out," but whose educative intent also alludes to the following senses of order: a novel order to the customary mode of educative provision; a reappraised order to the regular fixed arrangement; a redeemed order of econometrically authoritarian control; a revised order for the provision of capitalistic and neoliberal services; an unfamiliar order of the day for execution as usual; an unaccustomed way to order or conduct ones executions; and last, but not least, an unproductive, and hence wholly new type of order or command.

O-----O

I've been ordered by my doctor to rest: she says I have a heart murmur. What with overdoing it at work, and my age, she's told me to slow down and hand over some control to what even she knows to be my capable deputies. I must've bored her with all my stories of encouraging their development and playing with time – planning my succession; who follows-on in my role; how what I've started will, or won't, carry on; and how developing staff, bringing them on and seeing them flourish, has been my role in life. All of which is why I'm awake early this morning: I couldn't sleep: I never seem to sleep on flights. It was the birdsong in the trees just outside my open window

¹⁷ See footnote 2 of this chapter.

that woke me, in this slightly shabby guesthouse which I arrived at yesterday evening, in the dark. I picked a small *ashram* on the Tapti River for my retreat, in the state of Gujarat, near the Arabian Sea coast up in north-west India: as soon as I heard the doctor pronounce I had Hanne make the arrangements: I'd wanted the excuse to come, and the family are used to me travelling. They weren't surprised I chose an *ashram* to take some time out of the business. The place came recommended, though this bed isn't comfy. Not sure what I'll do. I've brought my battered old *Bhagavad Gita*, which was a prize from senior school, with my juvenile markings and profound underlinings in it: what was I hoping back then? What did I imagine I could see? I also packed a Dostoyevsky, a blank covered *Lotus Sutra*, and a well-thumbed thin-paper copy of the *Diamond Sutra*, with a Japanese print of *Hui-Neng* chopping wood on the cover: I used to have that as a screensaver. I'm happy with my portable pantheon, these books and my phones: my *ying* and my *yang*: my order and disorder; sacred and profane. Though, unlike with the books, I feel anxious without my phones. I can almost *feel* them, even though they're at the bottom of my case, on the other side of the room, under the open window: nowhere to charge them, it seems. I need to let them go whilst I'm here: I've given myself a chance to suspend my normal daily structure, to decelerate, like yesterday's bumpy plane landing. Travelling at market speed has made me into a chronic case, it seems. So I'll join in the community stuff today, and begin my own braking manoeuvre: the lady last night said something about this... I should know the names of those birds, and that tree. What gorgeous blossom. I'm sure the whoosh of work in my head will die down; I can already feel myself opening onto something: enchanting... I can hear kids playing outside; I never seem to hear that back home. I wonder what time it is. Or rather, I wonder what episode I'm entering: it seems easier to talk of episodes, each with different times, or speeds of time, which I can step in and out of at will. Lying here in this episode in the lumpy bed, I seem to be at the mid-point between a promise and its fulfilment: halfway between my doctor's order and my execution of them, in who knows what way. Really quite liberating: I can obey or disobey, extemporise with time to my heart's content: there are only different episodes, like this one where time is one way; and like the sixteenth floor, when time is, was, will be, another...

Conclusion

Ideal Romantic Reminders

If what the term 'idealism' says, amounts to the understanding that Being can never be explained by entities but is already that which is 'transcendental' for every entity, then idealism affords the only correct possibility for a philosophical problematic. If so, Aristotle was no less an idealist than Kant. But if 'idealism' signifies tracing back every entity to a subject or consciousness whose sole distinguishing features are that it remains indefinite in its Being and is best characterized negatively as 'un-Thing-like', then this idealism is no less naïve in its method than the most grossly militant realism

(Heidegger, *Being and Time*: p.251-2)

Now, since originary temporality is the mode of time that structures Dasein's being, and since therefore it obtains as the form of Dasein, time is explanatorily dependent upon an essentially human phenomenon. Time requires Dasein

(Blattner, *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*: p.231)

By endowing the commonplace with a higher meaning, the ordinary with mysterious respect, the known with the dignity of the unknown, the finite with the appearance of the infinite, I am making it Romantic.

(Novalis, *Philosophical Writings*, vol.2, §4, no.105: quoted in Stoljar, 1997: p.60)

7.1 Introduction

This final cascade of epigrams is a knowing nod towards what has become, by some accounts, a “considerable controversy in the secondary literature” (Gordon, 2013: p.224) concerning whether Heidegger’s notion of originary temporality has a reality independent of *Dasein*, or whether originary temporality requires *Dasein*, and is therefore an ideal. The William Blattner quote holds that Heidegger is in the idealist camp: whereas the Heidegger quote is a tad ambiguous. I feel as though I should have an interest in the terms of this debate, if only to register my commitment to wanting my ideal – my upholding of the *Kairotic* – to be real, by which I mean, to matter: in other words, for there to be a parity between the realism of a reassuringly horizontal

view of chronic time, and the reality of plunging, “vertical”¹, *Kairotic* times that are ecstatically unproductive.

What the above epigrams also serve to represent, in shorthand form, is my own rationale for having played with the concept of Romanticism whilst exploring Heideggerian temporality (and execution): namely, that early German Romantic philosophy (and to an extent European Romanticism generally) throws some light on this idealist-realist controversy. This thesis has been an experiment in extending Heidegger’s stance on idealism – whose precise definition will come later in this chapter – to include what is conceivable as a Romantically-oriented conception of idealism², but one which neutralises our negative assumptions of idealism as concerning self-conscious subjects isolated against an independent reality, at the same time as tipping us towards (a sense of) the eternal. A downer mood of mine throughout this work has been a fear that my tinkering with Heidegger’s precocious thinking was nothing more than vacuous mentalesse: until, that is, I realised I should just call the shot. “But even a bad shot,” to quote C.S. Lewis commenting on poorly executed medieval romantic allegory, “may sometimes give us a rough indication of where the target lies” (Lewis, 1936: p.111). So, by way of a provisional, bite-sized and semi-serious, statement of my overall argument, I present the following *amuse-bouches* of a conclusion. My claim is that the only way to defend *Kairotic* temporality is from the position of an idealist; though one needn’t fret over any distasteful subjectivism of that position, since, using the method of Romantic irony, one needn’t be a subjectivist for very long: irony ensures you’re always in a state of flux between chronic and *Kairotic* senses of time, using one’s everyday melancholically-tinged moods from chronic moments to propel towards more *Kairotic* moments, from which one makes sense of the chronic melancholy, so that one can glimpse the *Kairotic*, and so on back and forth: in a sense, living with the sublime, from within the mood of melancholy, for who knows what revolutionary effect. Chances are that this trailer to my conclusion may not have satiated the reader, in which case I present the more substantial haunch of my argument.

Using what is still regarded as the primary monograph on Heideggerian temporality in the secondary literature, William Blattner’s *Heidegger’s Temporal Idealism* (Blattner, 1999), I will be concluding not in favour of a “grossly militant realism” (Heidegger, 1962: p.252) that opposes idealism – a forceful opposition which explains some commentators’ discomfort with William Blattner’s pro-idealist argument³ – but in favour of a boldly Romantic form of idealism, one which

¹ Along with Charles Taylor’s use of the term “vertical” (Taylor, 2003, 2007), I also borrow its use from Eric Auerbach’s book *Mimesis* (1953: p.17, 74, 194) who uses it in the same sense as Taylor.

² The argument as to whether the philosophical movements of Idealism and Romanticism are wholly distinct, or nigh incompatible, will be discussed later in this chapter.

³ One such (admittedly throwaway) expression of discomfort, from a prominent Heidegger commentator, came during a conversation with Mark Wrathall over tea and cake in the Senior Common Room of Christ Church College, Oxford, on a

resituates the chronic, but traditionally Romantically expressed moods concerning death, anxiety and boredom as integral to Heidegger's understanding of time; moods out of which emerge more *Kairotic* and brighter temporal moments, moments suited to challenging the delinquencies of capitalism via the event of executive education. Personifications of this movement, as I have attempted to provide, go like this. The movement is from the disposition (*Befindlichkeit*) of an unfortunate malcontent⁴ – such as Sanjay in chapter three, in the throes of his melancholic moods – to the affective state of someone open to the mystery of life and to multiple senses of the eternal⁵, living in the presence of the gods and the sublime – such as Sanjay in chapter six – then back again to the chronic, since this is where we must find a “way of living that embodies an understanding of being” (Haugeland, 2013: p.81-82). Such a bi-direction of travel is beckoned to in Novalis's definition of the Romantic in the last of the epigram quotes above, where he points to the other dimensions of the “everyday,” the quotidian, of which Heidegger was keen to remind us.

The remainder referred to in the chapter title is what Albert Borgmann identifies as the “Romantic complaint” (Borgmann, 2006: p.241); the complaint that a residue still remains, that something is still left over, that an excess still persists, even after ardent modernists, materialists, positivists, industrialists, and executives strip superstition and enchantment from what they see as a purely mechanical universe:

Yet it remains that no one has been able to answer the romantic complaint that there is more to the world than a mechanical universe and a mercenary world and that we cannot be fully human beings until the missing regions of reality have been recovered by an appropriate ontology and appropriated by vigorous practices (*ibid*).

Mine has been a working out of what I take to be an “appropriate ontology” for corporate executives, those (not unique) individuals whose extreme possibility of being is equating their time with money. I have chosen to acknowledge this remainder, to uphold the Romantic complaint as it were, using the supportive opposition between Heidegger's two main temporal orders⁶ of chronic

visit I paid him during his Fowler Hamilton Visiting Research Fellowship, in November 2014, as part of my research on this thesis.

⁴ Such as how Shakespeare's character Proteus is described, by his friend Speed, in act 2, scene 1 of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. In this context a malcontent is someone made melancholy by love; or, as Shakespeare has it, to be disposed or affected by love (*The Norton Shakespeare*, 2008: p.120). Interestingly, Felix Ó Murchadha translates Heidegger's notoriously untranslatable *Befindlichkeit* as “affective state,” distinct from “disposedness,” (Dreyfus), “state of mind,” (Macquarrie and Robinson), and “attunement” (Stambaugh), all of which nicely illustrates the transhistorical value of translation (see next footnote).

⁵ Such as how Eric Alliez (in Barbara Cassin's *The Dictionary of Untranslatables*, 2014) apportions eternity between *Aevum*, *Aeternitas*, *Sempiternitas*, and *Perpetuitas*, in his cross-linguistic and cross-cultural working out of the Greek *Aiôn* or *Chronos*. Especially revealing to this thesis are some alternatives Eric Alliez has for *Aiôn*, which include *Dasein*, eternity, God, history, moment and world.

⁶ Main orders of time which contain Heidegger's “world time,” “ordinary” or “clock time,” and “originary time” distinctions that come at the end of Being and Time (Heidegger, 1962: §78-§83), only the last of which played much of a

and *Kairoitic* time, which are just about simple enough to grasp, but whose limits are nonetheless finite and infinite, temporal and eternal. *Kairoitic* temporality, the vision it gives of the eternal, does not lend itself to a mechanical view of the universe; its reach is in excess of capitalism's standard, and puny, models of how the world can be received monetarily and rationally patterned. "It doesn't chart," to use the line from David Cronenberg's 2012 film *Cosmopolis*. The film's 28-year-old billionaire, Eric Packer (Robert Pattinson), in a fantastic and disturbing ride across Manhattan in a stretch limo to get a haircut, receives advice from his currency adviser Michael Chin (Philip Nozuka) about betting against the Yuan, one of the many in-car advisers that bring the mercenary Eric Packer up short, as they inch through traffic; "what is happening doesn't chart...we're speculating into the void". However, Packer's ontology – his monetary ontology – is not a sufficiently appropriate ontology to have him appreciate just how far away from the void, and from the "missing regions of reality" (Borgmann, 2006: p.241), his currency speculations and wealth management regimens have carried him. Subsequent in-car advice from his fabulously titled Chief of Theory, Vija Kinsky (Samantha Morton), that "time is a corporate asset now; it belongs to the free market system; the present is harder to find; it is being sucked out of the world to make way for the future of markets and huge investment potentials. The future becomes insistent," reveals the sad, the chronic, and calculative grasp in which his view of time is framed. As a lament this advice chimes with the disappointment of my chief goblin in Chapter 5. You'll need to watch the film, but I'd say Packer does recover a sense of grander time before the film ends, the time of his death, held in eternal suspense by the movie's last cut.

The final element to introduce, in support of my conclusion, is some account of why the finite and infinite, temporal and eternal distinctions are relevant to Heidegger at all. The archetypal reference for my argument comes from Friedrich Schlegel's (off with the fairies) model of irony, with his back and forth glances from eternal unity to the time of our lives, his own brand of irony. Since I'm putting great store in associating Heidegger with this method of Romantic irony, I'd like to present Manfred Frank's gloss on Schlegel's model of irony, as it's the model's "perpetuity" which fascinates me most, and which I take from it, thus:

In order to become comprehensible, that which is pure must limit itself; any border contradicts the essential infinity of that which is pure, however; therefore it must always overstep the limits which it sets to itself, and then limit itself again, and then overstep these limits, and so on and on...the limits conflict with the infinite activity, which itself dismisses

role in his later thinking: and his *Zeitlichkeit* and *Temporalität* distinction (between temporality and Temporality, in Macquarrie and Robinson; or between the time of our lives, and the overarching time of being) in *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (Heidegger, 1982: §19-§22). The chronic (*Zeitlichkeit*) and *Kairoitic* (*Temporalität*) categories of time I'm using simplify Heidegger's technical jargon, though at the expense of a certain, and possibly mis-directed, fidelity.

any limit imposed upon it. Precisely this surpassing of all self-imposed limits is what Schlegel calls irony (Frank, 2014: p.216).

This is precisely the mode in which I see the chronic and *Kairotic* senses of time playing off of each other, whose reciprocal effects on Heideggerian reflections on death, anxiety, and boredom (collectively, a chronic sense of time), and technology, history, and the event (collectively, a *Kairotic* sense of time), I will show in this conclusion.

So, in what little time remains, I will, firstly, summarise each chapter in the light of the above. Secondly, I will expand on the type of idealism I believe to be appropriate to Heidegger, in response to William Blattner. Thirdly, in the fashion of the Schlegelian ironist, I will explain how this reckoning with time equates to something like an “ironic productivity” for the corporate executive, and what this oscillating irony affords my critique of current executive education practices. Fourthly, I will account for the fiction-based method I have used to illustrate my arguments. Finally, I will attempt to reconcile this counter-productive ecstasy of time against the supreme productivity enshrined in the order-execution cognate.

7.2 The Melancholically Chronic

In simple terms, I have distinguished a quantitative from a qualitative sense of time in the chronic and the *Kairotic* respectively, with Part One of the thesis emphasising an orderliness that comes with time conceived purely as a continuity, as an inviolable sequence, as a mathematisable sequence. The inherent melancholy to this orderliness emerges from time’s allocation to us of a lifespan, however long that may be, and our getting lost in our own certain little parcel of time. With respect to the executive, the melancholy comes not only from the “living death” of contemporary management practices, outlined in Carl Cederström and Peter Fleming’s laugh-out-loud book *Dead Man Working* (Cederström and Fleming, 2012), but from a growing realisation that our zombie-manager existence only exacerbates the obscene disparities of wealth outlined by Thomas Piketty, in his *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Piketty, 2014), the direction to the target against which this thesis is pitched.

Our reflections on death, part of the natural order of things, can provide us with our first concerted existential considerations. Whilst not necessarily beautiful reflections, they are more often than not noble, where I can at least question my existing, or “*Dasein’s* being” as an issue. I can go further and not only ask why my being is an issue, but answer that question, provisionally at least. And this is what I suggested take place for the executive in the demise/death distinction in Chapter 1; to move from considering one’s demise, to considering what living through existential death might mean, using the tsunami metaphor. The suggested result, for the executive, was

execution-less execution, the mere potential of still being able to execute, even after a so-called existential death of the Heideggerian variety. Now there's irony. I've presented this as a form of exercise in acknowledging one's pure ability to execute – irrespective of whichever order one is executing – along with an acknowledging of the limits that our own mortality, our own finitude, brings to this pure ability to execute. My categorising of this unusual exercise under the heading of “melancholy” names the usual mood under which we suffer on mere mention of death, despite melancholy's somewhat archaic charm. But this is my point in resurrecting such a disregarded term, since “[f]or most of western European history, melancholy was a central cultural idea” (Radden, 2000), where use of the term at least attests to this longstanding cultural history, serving again to knock a deeper temporal sense into us.

Along with existential death comes another melancholy mood, anxiety, which in the Heideggerian register at least reveals how everything in our world can become insignificant, or to which we can become indifferent and detached, given our reflections on existential death. The abiding sense of melancholy comes from how the mood of anxiety reveals the contingency of our world, bringing us up against a sense of nothingness, a looming daemon who dissolves the motivations out of which we pursued what we thought we cared for. Heidegger attributes a positive outcome to the mood of anxiety, but only in those rare instances where that in the face of which anxiety is anxious is our being in the world, rather than anxiety as just plain old fear. Such an authentic mood of anxiety is productive, in that it reveals to us our world, a world in terms of which *Dasein's* being is an issue. Combining a Heideggerian consideration of death with one of anxiety gives one a stronger temporal appreciation, a stronger sense of the time one spends on that for which we care the most, and along with it the potential to audit our time spent on those executions of uncertain value: we become able to enact a transvaluation of our values, an ability which emerges from our new temporal sensibility. Such is my wink to this normative, cliché, and frankly rather comic sense of “time management” alluded to in the thesis title.

The last of the overtly melancholic chapters, in the fashion of the previous two, champions boredom as an additional means through which to come to terms with the time of one's life. As with the other fundamental moods that Heidegger identified, the concept of boredom rides on its own extensive history, annulling the years separating us from the acedia of the desert fathers, the spiritual desolation of ancient ascetics and mystics, the dark nights of medieval souls, affording us the opportunity to reappraise our own efforts at killing time. Most educative of Heidegger's three levels of boredom, but equally the most costly to our established senses of self, is profound boredom. If contemplation of death and anxiety were not enough to raise our temporal awareness, profound boredom drops us right in it, leaving us to flounder in notional (at least) eternities of

time. In this sense, melancholy is the beginning of philosophy: by acknowledging one's melancholia through boredom, one is opening oneself to thinking philosophically about the world and one's executions in it.

It took a survey of Heidegger's main time-related themes⁷, across a broad span of his work, to discover what I've decided to class as a glorifying of melancholy, certainly in his early work. Not only do I believe it uncontroversial to gather these strands of thought under the Romantic banner, whose staple in the late eighteenth-century centred on the mood of melancholy, the movement famous for questioning the ineluctable rationality of the Enlightenment; it would seem as though Heidegger himself paid an unconscious debt of gratitude to his intellectual forebears of the Romantic by orienting significant portions of his thinking towards similar challenges to one-dimensional, and certainly technicised rationality⁸. Interestingly, writing in the context of a Marcusean one-dimensionality, and commenting on our headlong embrace of technology, at the same time as acknowledging the clear debt Herbert Marcuse owes Heidegger, David Lewin goes on to *accuse* Heidegger of Romanticism, as if Romanticism was a standalone class of logical error. Says Lewin, "Heidegger faces the charge of romanticism or sentimentalism" (Lewin, 2011: p.89), with regard to a regrettable "nostalgia for pre-modern naïveté, about which philosophers of technology have been especially critical" (*ibid*). I agree that pre-modern nostalgia is an ineffective rebuttal of enframing and machination. Though simply parroting the standard critique of nostalgia dulls any shred of grace one may use to see something authentically Romantic in Heidegger: his resistance to consumerism, his disaffection of our exploitation of the earth, and of the ills of mass media, in preference for the world of simple peasants, peasant cottages somewhat like his own, rustic hearths, and jugs raised skywards, from which to serve drink from the earth, and for mortals to pour libations to the gods. Long live Hellenism! In keeping with Heidegger's injunction to own up to thinking for ourselves, and being mindful of the need to break out of the unhelpfully circular critique of technology framed in self-referentially technological terms, I view Heidegger's Romanticist tendency – signified by his meditation on the fourfold – as his attempt at forging a complete tangent not just to technological thinking, but to the task of philosophy generally. This is the task of the second part of my thesis to attempt to articulate.

⁷ With the exception of a detailed discussion, towards the end of Division II of *Being and Time* and in Part Two of *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, of how "significance," "datability," "spannedness" and "publicness" explain time: and with the exception of his notion of "conscience," of coming to realise how we are lost in our falling into the present, in §55 of *Being and Time* (see also footnote 4 of this chapter).

⁸ See David Lewin's excellent account of how Herbert Marcuse saw technology as essentially enslaving, distinct from sharing Marx's view of technology as an essential aspect of liberation, in *Technology and the Philosophy of Religion* (Lewin, 2011: p.64).

7.3 The Sublimely *Kairotic*

Part Two of the thesis emphasises a higher order, an order more transcendental, consequently less articulable⁹, and as a result an order that provides a moment of pause and disruption; herein lies this order's political import. This higher order is rarely encountered within the precincts of the global corporation¹⁰. Often associated with a spiritual realm, with feelings that we are no longer at home in the world (the Heideggerian *unheimlich*), and where our imaginations are subordinated, in part, to the media, to the internet, to entertainment and to technology corporations, the order I'm referring to is the one summoned by Albert Borgmann's Romantic complaint, a notion of order that can so easily be dismissed as "pre-modern nostalgia" and mocked for its saccharin sentimentality – a sentimentality characterised and upheld by the sensibilities of these very sentences.

First in line for treatment under this dangerously Romantically-oriented salvage is the relation between technology and time. It would have been easier for me to have framed the whole thesis in Heidegger's approach to technology, rather than to remain with the temporal theme, by dint of the technological theme's worthier philosophical-productivity, and the theme's sheer wealth of commentary. However, the temporal theme has allowed me to experiment in articulating the *sublime* Romantic remainder, the nagging bit that's left, the excess that is usually spoken over, which would've been relegated to some lyrical concluding flourish otherwise. In my case it involves a playing out of Heidegger's *das Geviert*, the problem-child that is the un-(re)presentable fourfold. Most definitions of sublime¹¹ contain some reference to Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), and to how he asserts that the moods of astonishment, danger, horror and terror form part of the overall feeling of the sublime, as do obscurity and hiddenness, wonderfully summarised as "gloomy pomp" by Burke (Burke, 1757: p.55). My risking of a sober acceptance of this particular interpretation of *das Geviert* (fat chance) into the folds of business school academe, on a hunch that Romanticism was a safe bet, is perhaps whimsical at the least, foolhardy at the most. But to my critics that accuse me of an ultra-orthodox interpretation of, and fealty to, Heidegger, I would say that it is just this sort of risky stunt that responsibility to his thinking requires, and which I found little of in the secondary literature on

⁹ David Lewin's account of Albert Borgmann's often evocative challenges to our unthinking acceptance of technology, upholds Borgmann's championing of a certain loss in the transition from "craft" to "industrialised production" as an "*articulate inarticulacy*" (Lewin, 2011: p.115).

¹⁰ Given the rise of religious fundamentalism – in the form of Islamic State, its non-Islamic antagonists, and equivalent inter-religious intolerances that such fundamentalism escalates into – and the religiously oriented geo-political considerations that global corporations should take account of when formulating their medium and long-term operational and human resource strategies, it is not acceptable to say that religion is out-of-scope for a study of executive education.

¹¹ I've gained a lot from Philip Shaw's book *The Sublime* (2006), who also draws heavily from Burke.

time, and none in works on the philosophy of executive education. In what I'm taking to be the same sense in which I read Homer, by invoking a god Homer is invoking for me a fundamental mood which attunes me to what matters most in my situations, allowing me to respond appropriately without much thought. Acting on mention of gods is becoming open to what a mood attunes me towards, which, for the executive, is a philosophical way of thinking.

It is by way of a test of that way of thinking, and of some of our assumptions about the sequentiality of time, that I offer an exploration of Heidegger's notion of history. On the edges of our (perhaps fragmentary) awareness of the Romantic movement is the *sine qua non* of Romanticism, the French Revolution, and how the first phases of the Revolution inspired most early Romantics (Hobsbawm, 1962). By grasping what Heidegger calls, in his typically hyphenated relation style, historical be-ing, equivalent new beginnings, new revolutions, can be imagined. As a form of mindfulness of what we care most about, a new moment arises, the *Augenblick*, or *Kairotic* moment presents itself. In its sublimity it is terrifying and dangerous, and to the non-revolutionary who is insufficiently anxious to question their own being in the world, the *Kairotic* moment is gloomily obscure. Coming to terms with the *Kairotic* moment offers us the chance to adjust, to break/brake, to regear our engagement with a time that is distinctly at odds to the time of our sequencing-out of executions. To model this I have offered my own peculiar and radical break from the standard discourse of business, by way of indicating the enormity of the fairy-tale-like marvel required to re-period the executive education event.

On cue for suggesting a novel structure for this educative event is an analysis of Heidegger's concept *Ereignis*. It is here that the chronic and *Kairotic* senses of time come together, and where, via this difficult concept, Heidegger comes closest to his appreciation of Schleiermachiian eternity, in a Schlegel-like method of oscillating irony. I am in two minds as to whether I intend this as a practical suggestion – to actually formulate and present, in the fashion of a Zen Master, the infinite restlessness of a *Koan* in chronic-*Kairotic* temporality to the budding executive, as appropriate as this might be – or just as a strategy for reading time into an interpretation of *Ereignis*. But then this is the remainder I'm talking about in this chapter, which is why it is perhaps better left unsaid, stranded as a Romantic fragment¹². This suspense is followed through when we meet Sanjay in the first person this time, realising that he can execute against orders from within differing modes of time, or episodes, and that he can wander in and out of

¹² Romanticism is famous for its method of the fragment. Stephen Prickett, in the introduction to his edited collection *European Romanticism: A Reader* (2014), cites Friedrich Schlegel, who "latched onto the idea of the fragment as being the perfect form by which to express the new spirit by which antiquity was to be experienced by his contemporary world" (Prickett, 2014: p.12). At a stretch, it is possible to conceive of Heidegger's *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999) as following in this vein.

them: that this is the “proper” way of understanding *Ereignis* or, in my case, the event of executive education.

7.4 Idealism & Romanticism

William Blattner concludes his book *Heidegger’s Temporal Idealism* by claiming that Heidegger already recognised the failure of his early philosophy of being. Most notably, that “his philosophy of time could not support his ontological idealism. And this recognition took him into uncharted territory” (Blattner, 1999: p.310). That territory was the quasi-mysticism of *Contributions* (Heidegger, 1999) and the “mystical dimension” (Blattner, 1999: p.309) of his later thought, well documented by commentators¹³. As the reader of this thesis will have gathered, I am not averse to mysticism. My erecting of the well-established intellectual scaffolding, as it were, of literary and philosophical Romanticism around the philosophical task Heidegger set himself, is testimony of this; though perhaps I’m confusing the temporary scaffolding for its permanent host structure. In terms of what does my scaffold of Romanticism compete with its host structure of Heideggerian temporal idealism? Am I erecting scaffolding as a means of (re-) constructing, conserving, or simply inspecting the work of Heidegger, from a more workable height? Continuing with the metaphor: for sure, my reader must have exerted considerable patience to have lain on his or her back on the scaffold for so long, up against the lofty coffered ceiling of primordial temporality, politely examining each filigreed panel of Heidegger’s argument, noticing the cracks. But to what end? Maybe Romanticism is a gruesome execution scaffold, set to dispatch the next clutch of the temporally inarticulate, watched on wide-mouthed by the Multitude¹⁴.

With its aureate glimmer, its love of deliberate enigmas, rich allegory, arabesque allusions to the otherworldly, and its reputation for revolutionary thinking, not to mention the previous form, though now out of favour, it has in philosophy of education circles¹⁵, Romanticism for me is the (only) slightly more presentable assistant to the exegetical task than its close colleague, religious mysticism, for the following reasons. Firstly, despite Heidegger’s religious upbringing and training, he was exposed to, and therefore possibly heir to, at least the late Romantic period’s artistic flowering, on top of which his theological interests flowed and gained expression. This is

¹³ Commentators such as Lee Braver in *Heidegger’s Later Writings* (2009); John Caputo in *The Mystical Element in Heidegger’s Thought* (1986); Steven Heine in *Existential and Ontological Dimensions of Time in Heidegger and Dogen* (1985); and Reinhard May in *Heidegger’s Hidden Sources: East Asian Influences on his Work* (1996). A sustained engagement between Heidegger and these authors I will have to defer to another life.

¹⁴ The multitude, as in Hardt and Negri’s influential book and revolutionary of that name, where “[t]he multitude gives the concept of the proletariat its fullest definition as all those who labor and produce under the rule of capital” (Hardt and Negri, 2005: p.107).

¹⁵ See the two edited volumes by Randall Curren, *A Companion to the Philosophy of Education* (2003), and *Philosophy of Education: An Anthology* (2007).

evidenced by his engagement with key writers of the Romantic Movement such as Fichte, Goethe Hölderlin, Kant, Novalis, Schelling, and Schleiermacher¹⁶. Secondly, his style of writing, namely his catachresis, his strained use of words as a hallmark of his writing, is a standard trait of German Romantic philosophy¹⁷. Thirdly, the proximity of his method of “formal indication” to Romantic irony, as I have explained at length. And lastly, his sustained engagement with ontological idealism in *Being and Time*, where it is the responsibility of the individual *Dasein* to recover her being and her time. I’m not alone in finding this idealism discomfiting, which necessitates an explanation of how we may possibly be ascribing the wrong type of idealism to early Heidegger. How then do I square William Blattner’s positing of Heidegger’s idealism with my charge of Romanticism?

The two main, but opposing, scholars of Romanticism of the present age are Manfred Frank and Frederick Beiser. Their bone of contention surrounds the undesirability of Fichte’s¹⁸ subjectivism, his founding of idealism on an absolute “I”, and the extent to which Romanticism should be distinguished from idealism as a result. Frank contends that German Romanticism was a realist movement, and is opposed to any form of absolute whatsoever. Beiser, on the other hand, believes that the idealists and Romantics held many similar views. I side with Beiser, in support of William Blattner, since by Manfred Frank’s account my resource to Romanticism would be unfounded via Blattner. I quote in full Beiser’s rueful summary of the disagreement between realists and idealists:

The basic error behind the subplot, and the subjectivist interpretation in general, has been its failure to distinguish between two very different versions or forms of idealism. The conflation is understandable, given that the idealists themselves sometimes failed to disentangle them. The two versions of idealism correspond to two senses of the term ‘idea’; the ideal can be the mental in contrast to the physical, the spiritual rather than the material; or it can be the archetypal in contrast to the ectypical, the normative rather than the substantive. Idealism in the former sense is the doctrine that all reality depends upon some self-conscious subject; idealism in the latter sense is the doctrine that everything is a manifestation of the ideal, an appearance of reason. This second sense is perfectly compatible with the equal and independent reality of the mental and physical; and it has no difficulty in ascribing reality to a physical world. The problem with the subjectivist interpretation is that it stretches the mental and the subject to do the work of the ideal or the intelligible, so that it becomes the reality of the entire world; but then the concept of the subjective is in danger of losing all meaning (Beiser, 2002: p.6)

I contend that Heidegger subscribed to the second of Beiser’s doctrines of ideal, as per the opening epigram, where “that which is ‘transcendental’ for every entity” (Heidegger, 1962: p.251)

¹⁶ Rüdiger Safranski’s *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil* (1998), along with Theodore Kisiel’s *The Genesis of Heidegger’s Being & Time* (1993), detail these connections.

¹⁷ See footnote 2 of Chapter 5.

¹⁸ From Johann Gottlieb Fichte’s *Foundations of Natural Right* (1797).

corresponds to the idealist doctrine “that everything substantive is a manifestation of the ideal” (Beiser, 2002: p.6) or normative. The question is, which of these doctrines of idealism does Blattner subscribe to, and will one or the other of the idealist doctrines negate his bummer of a conclusion regarding the failure of Heidegger’s temporal project? Along with Peter Gordon (2013: p.223), I assume Heidegger was just as uncomfortable with the first of Beiser’s subjectivist doctrines of idealism as many commentators are with Blattner’s overall idealism thesis itself, assuming it to be of the Fichtean absolute “I” variety and distasteful to boot. In *Being and Time*, where Heidegger has “Being and Reality are only ‘in the consciousness’” (Heidegger, 1962: p.251), those scare quotes around “in the consciousness” signal his discomfort, I’d say, with the subjectivist sense of idealism (Gordon, 2013: p.223): which leaves me assuming that Blattner would not ascribe to the subjectivist sense, only to the second of Beiser’s doctrines of idealism, that our substantive, or everyday appreciation of time is really a manifestation of a normative appreciation of time: that our everyday, pragmatic, sense of time is dependent on originary temporality, and is just a manifestation of this ideal. As a restatement of what Heidegger claimed of non-sequential primordial temporality, Blattner’s articulation is correct. As Hubert Dreyfus’s précis of an earlier draft of Blattner’s book¹⁹ has it, “the special nature of the originary present is such that the entire structure of everyday temporality – past, present, and future – is incorporated within it... Originary temporality is non-sequential and so does violence to our ordinary sense of time” (Dreyfus, 1992: p.10). This originary present equates to what I’m calling *Kairotic* time, and our everyday appreciation of time, or pragmatic time as Blattner called it here, equates to my chronic time. That fact that Blattner concluded (albeit in parentheses) that Heidegger was not a pragmatist indicates, rather contentiously, that for Heidegger *Kairotic* time is more important than chronic time. More than that, and in distinction to Felix Ó Murchadha’s argument in *The Time of Revolution: Kairos and Chronos in Heidegger* (Ó Murchadha, 2013), who does not engage with the idealist thesis head on, it is not enough just to posit these two types of time, even to uncover *Kairotic* time’s revolutionary potential: it is feasible to claim, albeit with Blattner’s bummer of a conclusion, that chronic time is *dependent* on *Kairotic* time, given the foregoing. All the same, my argument is a weaker statement of that dependency, satisfying myself just with Heidegger’s endorsement of the *Kairotic*: that it is only in a perpetual oscillating back and forth between the chronic and the *Kairotic*, in the fashion of Schlegel’s model of irony, that the executive in this study benefits in an educative manner.

¹⁹ My first encounter with the work of William Blattner was through his article “Existential Temporality in Being and Time (Why Heidegger is not a Pragmatist),” in Hubert Dreyfus’s book *Heidegger: A Critical Reader* (Dreyfus, 1992). It was this article which made me decide to study Heideggerian temporality, and which led to this thesis.

7.5 Ironic Productivity

So what does this look like, and what are these benefits? To help with this I enlist Richard Rorty's use of the term "ironist" in his building a case for pragmatism, from his book *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Rorty, 1989), as well as by reminding ourselves of Kierkegaard's²⁰, Schlegel's and Frank's definitions of irony, outlined in the previous chapter and earlier in this chapter.

As the Romanticist Manfred Frank says, "[s]omething is uttered ironically when the way of saying it neutralizes the determinateness of the content" (Frank, 2014: p.24, emphasis in original) and brings it into suspense. With "suspension" in mind, reconsider now how Kierkegaard's concept of negative freedom chimes with this suspending of the determinateness, or the reality of, the content. When using irony, "[i]f... what I said is not my meaning or the opposite of my meaning, then I am free in relation to others and to myself" (Kierkegaard, 1989: quoted in Prickett, et al, 2014: p.293). Combining these two characteristics of irony one can say of someone who is an ironist, as Rorty does, that she is necessarily a nominalist as well, in that she is willing to neutralise objectively existing content, or reality, in favour of its suspension in lieu of an alternative, or a range of many other alternatives. For an ironist, the determinateness of "reality" is on permanent hold; or as Rorty says, "[s]he thinks nothing has an intrinsic nature, a real essence" (Rorty, 1989: p.74), and that ironists "do not take the point of discursive thought to be *knowing*, in any sense that can be explicated by notions like 'reality,' 'real essence,' 'objective point of view,' and 'the correspondence of language to reality'" (*ibid*: p.75). On this last point, an ironist is someone who, in Rorty's view, is also a historicist, in that they believe our language is historically determined, rather than believing there to be an absolute value system on which our language is ultimately based. In short, our ironist believes firmly in contingency.

You can see how Rorty is indebted to Heidegger here: though as we saw with Blattner, Heidegger was not a pragmatist. Heidegger did not hold with the form of temporal contingency that Rorty is advocating, but instead believed – and believed he'd demonstrated – that an ordinary, common, homogenized, or levelled-off sense of time was entirely dependent, causally and logically, on originary time. As the famous quote from §65 of *Being and Time* has it, "[i]f, therefore, we demonstrate that the 'time' which is accessible to *Dasein's* common sense is *not* primordial, but arises rather from authentic temporality, then, in accordance with the principle, '*a potiori fit denominatio*', we are justified in designating as '*primordial time*' the *temporality* which we have

²⁰ In a footnote in Kierkegaard's (1841) essay *The Concept of Irony* he introduces the fabulously relevant-sounding "executive irony" ("*executiv Ironi*" in the original Danish), of which he offers the alternative name of "dramatic irony" ("*dramtiske Ironi*"), after which he stops using the term "executive" (Kierkegaard, 1841: quoted in Prickett et al, 2014: p.299). Dramatic irony is "a feature of narrative and drama, whereby the audience knows that the outcome of an action will be the opposite of that intended by a character" (*Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Greenblat, 2012: p.A14).

now laid bare” (Heidegger, 1962: p.377, emphasis in original). Notwithstanding the obscure Latin, this is the passage where, metaphorically speaking, Blattner sees Heidegger’s ship hit the iceberg: whilst it sailed on for quite a distance, it was only a matter of time before it sank beneath the waves. To continue the metaphor, Blattner was generous enough to credit Heidegger’s course, his destination, and the purpose of his philosophical enterprise with coherence, nay brilliance; nonetheless, Blattner blamed the ship’s unseaworthiness on its flimsy idealist construction. If only the temporality Heidegger was referring to actually existed in reality, his venture would never have foundered.

Mine is not a completely pragmatic resolution to this foundering, in that I’m still advocating dancing with the fairies; something I don’t believe Rorty would have sanctioned²¹. My pragmatically-tinged salvage of Heidegger’s primordial temporality promotes the *suspension*, not the outright negation, of determinate content. With respect to being a temporal ironist, using the above formulation and assuming the guise of our tame corporate executive, Sanjay, his temporal irony manifests in his being willing to suspend his commitment to the ordered passage of time – as his colleagues ordinarily understand clock-time – in preference for parcelling it up in as many different ways as he can. Clearly he still has deadlines, probably wears an expensive watch, and his day is not whimsically atemporal, Lewis Carroll fashion. All the same, Sanjay’s productivity emerges from basing his executions on his freedom – and determination – to imagine parallel times, or rather, corresponding vertical times; working with his teams, and the wider corporation, to enact as many breaks, disjunctures and changes in tempo to different projects and processes as possible, under his not insignificant control. By inciting and motivating his team to draw from historical precedent – which is usually a stochastic selection determined by a combination of whim, predilection and inspiration – as well as expecting them to foresee as many future scenarios as his teams can predict in the time available to meet internal and external client requirements, securing a permanent position or a secondment into his tight-knit department is not easy, given what Sanjay expects and how flexible the candidates can be. He trusts his executives to deliver the highest quality of results possible, but in return his whole team shows an exceptional loyalty to Sanjay, and hence to X-Corp. Sanjay has gained the trust of his fellow X-Corp board members, who in turn are willing to equate the significant increase in firm performance, as indicated by the standard, and independently verified, metrics and benchmarks, in no small part to Sanjay’s highly competitive

²¹ Though Richard Rorty did have it in for “bosses,” of the sort my Sanjay figure represents. In response to a question about politics and the possible rise of a leftist cultural resistance to oppose right-wing neoliberal policies, posed by Derek Nystrom and Kent Puckett, in their *Against Bosses, Against Oligarchies* (2002), Rorty replies “I think nothing is going to happen until you can get the masses to stop thinking of the bureaucrats as the enemy, and start thinking of the bosses as the enemy” (*ibid*: p.33)

Human Resource strategy and the company-wide processes his department operates, even in the grip of the unsettling shifts in X-Corp's stockholder base.

Ever since he came over to Europe from his time as a call-centre manager in Gurgaon, right up to his promotion onto the X-Corp board and his time at Headquarters, Sanjay has been formulating his unique time-based approach to developing, training and educating his executives. In the call-centre, he had built his reputation on making sure his staff greeted and spoke to his client's callers as if they were in the same time zone, which was often twelve-hours askance from theirs. The method pleased the clients and callers, and his division went from strength to strength. His speedy promotion was a chance for him to extend this reputation and successful culture. He realised time could be played with. His team of senior executives are important enablers of the highly successful, not to mention inimitable, culture that Sanjay has gradually built. Consequently, Sanjay has had to completely rethink how he recruits and develops his staff, especially his senior appointments. What one *knows*, working under Sanjay, is of little importance, despite him being able to attract the best quality graduates into the company: consequently *techne*-based programmes do not feature prominently in the portfolio of executive education opportunities. The manner in which Sanjay's executives are willing to surpass their self-imposed limits is what matters most; executive education, for Sanjay, is all about one's willingness to embrace the fantasy that is "temporal irony".

7.6 Elaborate Fiction

How so? The only way to make real and embrace a fantasy is through fiction, just as the only way I've found to represent ironic temporality is through fiction. Yet, in the business world, nothing seems quite so "Romantic" – so unproductive, so foolish, so make-believe, so spendthrift – as an injunction to embrace fantasy. If the art of storytelling is adequate to the job of contemplating time, does it matter that any particular reality is actually represented in its mimetic act; does it matter that my staging of temporal irony is completely irresponsible? Mark Currie talks about "[t]he temporal structure of a present lived as if it were the object of a future memory" as the basis of his book *About Time: Narrative, Fiction and the Philosophy of Time* (Currie, 2007: p.11), a phrase which represents the usual intellectual panegyrics on the relationship between narrative and time. Though most of us just have to watch movies to grasp this relationship, with their seat-clasping flash forwards and flash backs. Why can't the executive's educative event be as if he or she were at movie school? Answer: because their role is to improve their shareholder's ability to make more money, and the movie school idea is just foolery. Umm... and making money for

money's sake isn't? Sorry: or where "helping to create the economic conditions for growth, where everyone can succeed and look after their own" – the well-rehearsed, so-called "trickle down," defence of free markets from business leaders, economists and pro-neoliberal politicians in the face of overwhelming evidence that neoliberal policies aren't working as stated – isn't an elaborate fiction? Why can't we use the event, the time, of executive education to rescript this particular (disaster) movie? With the make-believe character of the errant Sanjay I have attempted to offer an illustration of the suspense temporal irony requires and affords, in the face of idiocy, possibly *as* idiocy, but as a form of parallel idiocy we feel strangely drawn to, more attuned to, and thrilled by, even if we can't quite pin down why. As if something were left over, some remainder or other.

Where this fictive method fails is on the grounds of a confusion of its utility and responsibility. The manner in which I've framed Sanjay still assumes a neoliberal world order that is far from collapse. In fact, by placing him in that swanky golf resort and faceless corporate high-rise, his clowning around – in these hardly revolutionary quarters – makes him no more than a tolerated jester at court. What agency can he have other than that of a fashion-setter at most, merely persuading us to switch to a different brand of coffee, or become a trendier consumer?²² I have him down as a patsy, providing quirky utility to the neoliberal order, rather than jamming his shoes in its cogs. He's also irresponsible in his foolery, jeopardising viable shareholder return, humiliating the executive yoked to the capitalist treadmill, mocking the nobility of labour, and completely ignoring the Marxist argument's potential for a more active liberation from capitalists than one of sitting on mamma's lap listening to stories. I am guilty on all of these points of failure; as I suppose is Martin Heidegger, and his expectation of us to dig deep into his curious language, his neologisms and frustrating technical jargon, in order to find merit. Though I think his is a brightly coloured world, where *time*, among other things, becomes "purple" again – which is its own form of Romantic repayment to the considerable intellectual effort expended. We must dig deeper, as I've said before, since to be indulgent of philosophical whimsy, yet merciless to our own capitalist whimsy, is the first step out of the prison of our own *Zeitgeist*.

²² Such a consumerist-only swap out is nonetheless evident right now, according to Marc Spitz's in his book *Twee: The Gentle Revolution in Music, Books, Television, Fashion, and Film* (Spitz, 2014), which comes tantalizingly close to my Romantic and melancholic rendition of Heidegger's existential temporality. Says Anna Katharina Schaffner of Spitz's book, writing in the *Times Literary Supplement* (TLS, 18 February 2015), "[t]wee, then, is a symptom of profound cultural exhaustion, a pop-cultural response to the death of grand narratives and radical politics: too weary to fight the corporate capitalist machine, the twee instead create hyper-stylized alternative worlds in which kittens play, ukuleles sound and childhood is eternal. Their basic disposition is melancholy rather than angry, and they will always opt for owl-print wallpaper over kicking against the pricks". I won't be offended if my efforts with this thesis are labelled *twee*.

7.7 Order-Execution Cognate

The final remainder, my remaining explanatory remainder, concerns the placeholder that has been my abiding rationale for describing executive education, philosophically at least, namely the order-execution cognate; that thing, that descriptor, for the sake of which all offerings of amelioration of execution – all forms of education, training and development, and organisational culture development – are directed. Mine has been an attempt to jemmy this thing apart, even though I put it together in the first place. This somewhat solipsistic effort has been my experiment, in ontological miniature as it were, to replicate the full scale political rupture of bringing into question unchallenged hegemonies: a kind of corduroy clad version of Pussy Riot, but this time where the balaclava'd girls are dancing on a Board room table, that other sanctified high altar of respectability. As a staged stunt, mine may have fallen foul of a decadent excess of characters and a mannered style, at the expense of plot: “more matter with less art” opines Queen Gertrude, dryly, in Hamlet,²³ as a relevant critique to a similar comic madness of my exotic staging.

Far from agreeing with Plato (in books 2, 3 and 10 of the *Republic*, in Cooper, 1997) that it is necessary to distrust tragic poets, *mimêsis*, and theatre in general in order to tell the truth, I have been advocating deception, fakery, and elaborate and Romantically-inclined fictional conceit via my mimic, Sanjay, as a way to break into the chronic sequence that moves, seemingly inexorably, from order to execution, as my cognate has it. As Simon Critchley and Jamieson Webster ask about Hamlet, “[i]s the truth best said or perhaps only said in a fiction; that is, in a lie and a falsehood” (Critchley & Jamieson, 2013: p.17) when “[m]elodrama [a melancholy form of drama] is a fortification against the real act”? (*ibid*: p.62), the real act, in my case, of execution that fails to challenge the delinquencies and obscene inequalities of the capitalist order, or of mercantile-predicated education that sanctions these obscenities and this order? If the order-execution cognate has any function at all, it should at least represent the *tragic* lethargy by which we accept the temporal sanctity of the order-execution cognate: an ontological lassitude and indifference to an ironic temporality that is the key to the cognate’s undoing; a state of sloth from which it is the job of executive educators to rouse the inert executive. The cognate – as a proxy for the tensions of precedence and antecedence between order and execution – has been the object of my senses of loss, yearning, despair, and horror in the face of this lethargy.

For mine has been a predominantly ontologically-oriented investigation into the time of executive education; one that has offered its (Romanticised *topoi*) style as a window onto transcendent and transhistorical aesthetic forms, in which I have anchored a novel order of analysis

²³ In act 2, scene 2 (line 95: in *The Arden Shakespeare*, 2006: p.244).

of Heidegger and *Kairotic* time, and with which I have contrasted the poverty of chronic conceptions of time: a novel order of analysis, and a redirecting of the field of the “philosophy of executive education,” which is not especially psychological, ethical, epistemological, organisational, nor financial – all of which one would normally associate with such a field – but an approach which considers an oscillating interplay of the orders of chronic and *Kairotic* time as a new means by which we should frame a new education for the management of our age: as new orders for executive education.

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