

Death of Art: Truth of Art The Postmodern Transition

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Postmodernism occupies today the centre of contemporary intellectual debate, at least in the West. It is generally accepted that the hitherto western ways of seeing, knowing and representing have irreversibly been altered in recent times. The change marks the *end* of one era (modern period, characterized by 'order' under the dictatorship of reason) and the *beginning* of another (postmodern period, characterized by 'uncertainty' in the celebration of contingency and plurality). This new culture, widely known as *postmodernism* or *postmodernity*, has crept into almost all the spheres of human existence. The vast domain of art and aesthetics too has taken a (post)modern¹ turn. How 'turned' is this postmodern turn of (post)modern art? Is art *dead* in the postmodern period? Or, has it become more *alive* as the powerful means of truth? This paper is a modest investigation into these questions.

1. 'Death' of Art

'Death of art' points to the epoch beginning with the end of metaphysics, the philosophical announcement of

which was made by Nietzsche by his proclamation of the 'death of God'.² Just as 'death of God', so also 'death of art' cannot be understood by means of a notional clarification; it points rather to the historical 'event-ing' (*Ereignis*)³ of the transition or change of the *old* to the *new*. We look at this 'change' from the perspective of 'art and aesthetics'.

When we speak of the 'death of art' in the postmodern period, we take 'art' in the specific sense of traditional and institutionalized art, as different from (post)modern art. A few general characteristics of the 'death of art' are given here as a basis for the second part of our study, which will consider the salient ways in which the 'transition' takes place. Gianni Vattimo⁴ gives three main features of the 'death of art'.

First of all, at the end of modernity art has ceased to be an autonomous realm, confined to the bourgeois institutions such as the museum, the art-gallery, the theatre, the concert-hall, etc. There has been "an 'explosion' of aesthetics beyond the institutional limits" (Vattimo 1988: 53), which has found

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itself in the form of body-art, street theatre, earth-works, etc. When (post)modern art disdains the pomp of marble and uses discarded materials like rope, steel wire, bolts, 'unshapely' stones and logs of wood, it is bringing us, humans, back to the inexhaustible, contingent, brute world that surrounds us (Barrett 1958: 46). Art has come out of its institutional 'sanctuary' to the public realm that is accessible to all, and has opened up its borders to the plurality of discourses in contemporary culture. Thus art with its *aura* and glory, with its mono-tonal expression and meaning, is dead; whereas the (post)modern art – whether or not it is recognized as 'art' by the bourgeois establishment – with its banality and 'earthliness', with its plurality of expressions and meanings, has emerged.

The impact of technology is a decisive fact in the passage to the death of art. With the advent of the ability to reproduce art by mechanical means, where a potentially infinite number of identically reproduced images may co-exist, art has lost its uniqueness and authenticity.⁵ The work of art, together with the artistic genius and the individual originality of the artist, is dead; in its place we have today 'artistic products', which have undermined the traditional definition of art as a unique product of individual genius (Snyder's Introduction in Vattimo 1988: xxix). Thus, it is more accurate to speak today of the *decline* of art, in the sense of its dissolution into a world of hybrid 'artistic products' contaminated by mass culture and mass media.

The way in which artists often respond to the death of art at the hands of the mass media points to its third feature. As a protest against the manipulative mass culture, authentic art has often refused to communicate anything. To put it in the words of Vattimo, "in a world where consensus is produced by manipulation, authentic art speaks only by lapsing into silence, and aesthetic experience arises only as the negation of all its traditional and canonical characteristics, starting with the pleasure of the beautiful itself" (Vattimo 1988: 56). Thus (post)modern art shows itself more as concealing and absent, and less as revealing and present.

Thus, by 'death of art' is meant the decline of the glorious period of aesthetics, during which 'art', which was nothing but an expression of bourgeois culture, was installed on the high pedestal of 'ideal beauty'. The 'fall' of such a pompous conception of art to the level of the 'ordinary' in the postmodern period is taken to be the 'death of art'.

2. Various Expressions of 'Transition'

The change or transition of art from the *old* to the *new* is variously referred to, highlighting one or the other aspect of aesthetics. It is expressed in the form of binary notions. Some of the important ones are the following.

2.1. Monument to Ornament

Traditional art has been *monumental*, in the sense that its focus of attention has been on the eternal, essential, unchanging aspect of the work of art. The value of an art-work is based on its

‘substance’ rather than on its ‘accidental’ or ornamental aspects. ‘Monument’ stands for the ‘institutionalized’ or ‘structuralized’ dimensions, such as the established criteria and laws – in poetry, for instance, the poetic versification and stansification – by which a piece of art is created and judged. These established structures give a piece of art its *perenniality*, making it what it is, its essence, its meaning. Art, perceived through the perspective of monumental dimensions, is reduced to its residue, and is capable of enduring through time, of being perennial.

In the traditional art, which has been eminently monumental, the ornamental or decorative features are considered artistic surplus or excesses, and thus they are generally thought to serve only as a backdrop to the work of art. “The so-called ornamental and decorative elements of the work of art have in point of fact been pushed to the periphery and devalued in traditional thinking about art, precisely on the basis of a strong metaphysical notion of Being as that which ‘truly is’...” (Snyder’s Introduction in Vattimo 1988: xxxiii). In such a conception there exists a binary opposition between the centre and periphery, foreground and background, essence and appearance, monument and ornament, etc.⁶

Postmodernism does not accept a distinction between the centre and the periphery, which has its basis in metaphysical thought. (Post)modern art too does away with the distinction between monument and ornament; nay, it goes even further: art is essentially ornamental. The destructuring analysis by

Vattimo comes to the paradoxical conclusion that art in general has a “decorative and ‘marginal’ essence” (Vattimo 1988: 85). The collapse of the hierarchical difference coincides with the birth of a paradox: ornamental monument or monumental ornament. The ornamental aspect, that was brushed aside during the metaphysical period as non-essential, becomes the central element of aesthetics and, in the last analysis, of ontological meditation itself. The liberation of the ornamental character of art is the discovery of the (post)modern aesthetics.⁷ This transition in art is well in keeping with the *Ereignis* of Being in Heideggerian thought, a marginal, background event.

2.2. Logos to Mythos

Western metaphysical philosophy was forcibly born to replace the *mythical* thinking of the Greeks. According to Heidegger, the beginning of the classical period in Plato and Aristotle marks the end of the ‘great beginning’ of Greek thought (Heidegger 1959: 179). This ‘great beginning’ was nothing other than the poetico-mythical thought that was prevalent in ancient Greece. With the birth of ‘metaphysical philosophy,’ *logos* with its conceptual-logical clarity and precision set in, and *mythos* with its poetico-mythical freedom and profundity was made to die. Thus, begins the reign of *logos* for the last two millennia, not only in philosophy but also in art. The classical art with its monosignificance of eternal and perennial beauty has been but another manifestation of the monolithic structure of ‘logos’. According to such a conception, works of art are meant to be near imita-

tions of the ideal of beauty in the ideal realm. It has been a representational or imitative art, trying to point to the one direction of 'ideal beauty'.⁸ Hence, it is mono-functional in character. It is thus quite understandable why classical art has been constantly trying to be as pompous, grandiose and 'un-earthly' as possible, in the 'what' and 'how' of its expression.⁹

With the 'end' of the reign of *logos* in postmodern thought, *mythos* is slowly making its appearance in philosophy, culture, religion and art. But today it is no longer to be understood as in the metaphysical tradition, namely, as a primitive thought-pattern, playing more on the emotions, with little or no pretence to objectivity. The way *mythos* has to be understood in the postmodern period may be expressed variously.¹⁰ An elucidation of *mythos* in the contemporary culture will enable us to understand the 'transition' from *logos* to *mythos* in the field of art as well.

Mythos, first of all, is an invitation to 'archaism' or pristine purity, uncontaminated by the techno-scientific culture with the Eurocentric ideology of progress, wherein our relation to humans and Nature is inextricably bound to capitalist exploitation and its imperialistic tendencies. It is a call "in favour of a form of thought retrieving the 'authentic' relation between man and nature" (Vattimo 1992: 32), inspired by ecological concerns. The re-emergence of the archaic mythical thought is made possible by the desire for a possible release from the distortions and contradictions of techno-scientific civilization.¹¹ Quite rightly are Nietzsche and

Heidegger considered to be points of departure for an attempted recuperation of myth.¹² Whether or not this transition from *logos* to *mythos* is fully realized, its impact is visibly felt in the various aspects of life. Secondly, *mythos* can be understood as a return to 'cultural pluriformity'. It has to be seen against the univocal and universal rationality that 'cuts' everything to the 'uniform' of a single culture and thought-pattern. With the decline of metaphysical rationality or *logos*, which has been creating the one cultural universe, *mythos* with 'plurality' has gained acceptability in philosophical and cultural circles. Thirdly, *mythos* today is closely linked to the postmodern 'non-rationalism'. Myths display equivocalities and contradictions; in other words, they incorporate the binary opposites (MacIntyre, "myth" *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 1972) transcending the principle of contradiction. In the rational thought-structure, such an approach to *mythos* is irrational and sacrilegious. By its capacity to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable poles and to break open the 'boundary of precision' (Puthenpurackal 1999: 201) *mythos* stands for poetico-mythical freedom, spontaneity and profundity. Thus, the present understanding of *mythos* can be summed up as '*an invitation to original purity*', '*a celebration of plurality*' and '*an exodus from rational rigidity*'.

The transition to *mythos* is evidently present in art and aesthetics. (Post)modern art is more symbolic and two-dimensional, rather than representational and realistic. It is a visual image with its own independent value alongside that of nature (Barrett 1958:

49). Thus it is a 'going back' to the way in which traditional art expressed itself.¹³ Such an art is more of a 'pointer to' than an exact 'representer of' the truth and beauty of reality. Today's art is eminently a celebration of plurality, insofar as a piece of art is not a means for the artist to express his/her intended meaning. The art-work 'speaks' in the way in which it is enabled by the 'beholder/listener' to speak. Meaning emerges from the merging of the object (art-work) and subject (beholder); and such 'merging' is not so mono-jacketed as to have just one meaning. The transition of art from *logos* to *mythos* thus gives a relief from the conceptual rigidity of the classical art.

2.3. Utopia to Heterotopia

The transition from the 'old' to the 'new' in (post)modern art may also be seen as that from *utopia* to *heterotopia*. According to some thinkers, this can be considered the "most radical transformation in the relation between art and everyday life...." (Vattimo 1992: 62). Thomas More who published his famous *Utopia* in 1516 coined the term 'utopia'; and thereafter the term came into popular use. Etymologically it is compounded of *u* (no) + *topos* (place), meaning, 'nowhere'. 'Utopia' refers to an ideal situation that is not actually present; the inspiration for the 'ideal future' is received from a 'golden past' that is said to have existed in remote antiquity (Kateb, "Utopias and Utopianism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 1972). In Marxist ideologues we find the most radical form of utopia, and with them the term began to be used as linked to art. Ac-

cording to Ernst Bloch's *Geist der Utopie* (1918), utopia stands for the meaning of the artistic avant-garde of the early twentieth century. Marxist theoreticians hold that "the experience of the beautiful is linked to the perception of a *fulfilment* that could not survive a separation from the concreteness of everyday life" (Vattimo 1992: 62). In other words, the realm of beauty and harmony that is to be realized – the 'utopia' – should have an existential touch and flavour. Despite the existential and praxis dimension of the Marxian utopia as the aesthetic unification of the beautiful and the everyday, it "implied a framework of universal history as unilinear" (Vattimo 1992: 68). Thus, utopia remains a universal ideal of beauty and harmony, which is taken as the goal for all and to which all move unilineally. The aesthetic ideal or utopia becomes a universal ideal, insofar as all are to be so 'uni-formed' as to have the same dream, same hope, same ideal situation, same utopia. It is the outcome of the conception of a 'universal history'.¹⁴

In the postmodern situation the conception of a universal history and utopia can no longer be held. When the voice of the voiceless and the marginalized becomes audible and louder, when different groups with different 'uniforms' begin to assert themselves, it is impossible to think of history as genuinely universal and unilinear. In the (post)modern aesthetics, "the beautiful is the experience of community [of the world]; but community, when realized as 'universal', is multiplied and undergoes an irreversible pluralization" (Vattimo 1992: 68). Unlike in science – at least as Habermas

speaks of science, where teleological activity presupposes a sole objective world – aesthetic experience shows that the world is not one, but many, with different tones and shades of meaning. This implies that we cannot delimit ‘a world’, or project ‘a utopia’-expression of a unitary system. We are today faced with a multiplicity of models (Vattimo 1992: 70), aesthetic *utopia* articulated as *heterotopia*.¹⁵ ‘Heterotopia’ as the plurality of aesthetic models, emanating from the plurality of the worlds or communities, becomes inauthentic, when community is identified with humanity, or my world with *the* world.¹⁶

What is referred to as ‘heterotopia’ is described variously in literary genre as anti-utopia, dis-utopia, counter-utopia, etc. Works such as Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1926), George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty Four* (1948), Aldus Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), Spengler’s *The Decline of the West*, etc. give negative images of the world that nonetheless retains the ‘optimizing’ character of utopia, and thus they are, in reality, counter-utopias, deviant utopias or heterotopias. What is common in their variety of projections is neither the creation of a terrestrial paradise nor the return to primitive barbarism, but a contemplative attitude to the talismans of progress. (Vattimo 1992: 84). The post-historical humanity does not regard the course of history with the tension of hope or fear; it tries to live the progress poetically. The art-forms in this context are born of a postmodern scenographic imagination.

Let us recapitulate the point that we want to emphasize in our considera-

tion of (post)modern art in terms of the transition from *utopia* to *heterotopia*. Utopia that stood for the ideal of aesthetic unification of beauty and harmony has made a transition to ‘heterotopia’ in the postmodern period, insofar as postmodernism is a celebration of plurality. Works of art today ‘speak’ to us variously, point to different ideals and enable us to dream different dreams.

2.4. Literacy to Oracy¹⁷

Human beings began first to sing and to speak, and then they started to write. In other words, ‘oral culture’ (*oracy*) is more original than ‘written culture’ (*literacy*). The freedom and spontaneity inherent in the oral culture of the primal people¹⁸ was replaced by a more precise and systematic written culture, which continued to wield its power and domination until the twentieth century. The birth and growth of metaphysics and science (*logology*) was the result of a response of distancing from *mythology*, which employed more of an oral culture. With the ‘end of metaphysics’ there took place the transition to postmodernism, gradually shifting the emphasis from *literacy* to *oracy*. ‘Literacy’ (written culture) relies on *seeing*, whereas ‘oracy’ (oral culture), on *hearing*. The written consciousness is *linear*, as the light waves travel as in a straight line; the oral consciousness is *circular*, as the sound waves do not necessarily travel straight. This difference points to that between the reign and end of a linear universal history.

The transition from literacy to oracy is clearly present in the postmodern transition of art. A written

story or a play creates a spatio-temporal distance between the writer and the reader. As the 'space and time' of the narrator is different from that of the narrative, the efficacy of communication by the written text too is minimized. But in an oral culture, for instance a street-play or a story-telling, the narrator's space and time is included in that of the narrative.¹⁹ The 'being' of the narrator is 'immediately' – without the barrier of a medium – translated and communicated to the listener. The so-called medium of 'sound' in oral culture is a transparent one. Besides, *sound* is much more primordial, powerful and gripping (Ihde 1976: 3-15). In humans primal communication takes place through uncontaminated sound.²⁰ Sound envelops and surrounds us; human existence begins and ends with sound.²¹ This being the power of sound, art-forms in the medium of sound carry greater immediacy and efficacy of communication, and have greater plurality of expression. This is the reason why (post)modern art tends more towards oral culture (oracy) than written culture (literacy).

We have been looking at the postmodern transition of art, seen through different expressions of transition, such as monument to ornament, logos to mythos, utopia to heterotopia, and literacy to oracy. The list is not exhaustive.²² From all these ways of transition we note that (post)modern art is taking a 'step back' (*Schritt zurück*) to what has been primordially present. But it is not a mere 'flat' repetition of what has been in the past, rather a reclaiming or fetching back of the metaphysically uncontaminated pristine form of thinking, culture and art.

Postmodernism is, to a great extent, an aesthetico-cultural transition.

3. The Truth of Art

The apparent death of art that happened at the birth of postmodernism has brought about a 'change' in the way truth is considered. In postmodern thought the experience of truth has become more artistic and poetic in character. The model for postmodern or post-metaphysical experience of truth is the one provided by poets and artists, who set truth into works of art, through poetic language and symbols, artistic expressions and images. This way of considering truth aesthetically was initiated by Nietzsche, and was worked out mainly by Heidegger at a later stage of his thought.

In the lecture, "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes," delivered towards the end of his transitional period (1935), Heidegger shows us the direction in which we have to take our thinking on truth, by his philosophical meditation on the work of art. He makes use of two examples: a pair of shoes of a peasant-woman in the painting of Van Gogh, and a Greek temple. The pair of shoes, while remaining rooted on the *earth*, opens to us the *world* of a peasant-woman; the Greek temple, standing on the *earth*, opens up a *world*. The *world* as 'opening up' is limited by the *earth* as concealing. "Truth is present only as the conflict between lighting and concealing in the opposition of world and earth" (Heidegger 1972: 51; Hofstadter (trans) 1975: 62). Thus in "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes" Heidegger has set the tone for his later thought on truth,

namely as a strife or dialectics between revealing and concealing – an aesthetic meditation. This thought-pattern is carried further in his later thought, insofar as he thinks of truth as *essencing* or *un-concealing*, or even in terms of ‘Event-ing’ (*Ereignis*).²³ It implies a two-fold relation: on the one hand, the ‘belonging-together’ or ‘complementarity’ between Being as *giving* or *presencing* and man as *receiving* or *responding*, and on the other hand, the ‘difference’ or ‘un-concealing’ between Being as *concealing* and entities as *revealing* (Puthenpurackal 1987: 144-45, 175-225). In such a thought-structure, Being/truth presences itself to the receptive mortals. “Mortals are irrevocably bound to the revealing-concealing gathering which lights [opens, *lichtet*] everything present in its presencing” (Heidegger *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 273; Krell & Capuzzi (trans) 1975: 122). Standing in the Open of the clearing, man looks into the Open; a human being thus becomes the genuine ‘seer’ (*Seher*)²⁴ of the revealing-concealing process. The role of humans in the event-ing of truth is made clear by Heidegger by his use of the term ‘the shepherd’ (*der Hirt*) as different from ‘the lord’ (*der Herr*). Man is not the *lord* that dictates, but the *shepherd* that cares for and receives the happening of truth as *a-letheia*.

According to the traditional conception, truth is absolute, immutable and universal (Mercier 2000: 48-50) – untouched by the limiting elements of time and space – distancing it from the other alternative attributes; in other words, truth can never be relative, changing or particular. Such a thought-pattern is

functioning in the ‘either/or’ structure. It considers truth merely in positive terms, i.e., truth as opposed to untruth, presence as opposed to absence, revealing as opposed to concealing. Heideggerian thinking of truth goes beyond the distinction between absolute and relative, immutable and mutable, universal and particular, revealing and concealing, presencing and absencing.

Our sketchy look into the way Heidegger considers truth enables us to understand that in the postmodern period *art is the way in which truth shows itself*. In the eyes of metaphysical philosophy, the postmodern understanding of truth is illogical, unclear, imprecise and vague; it is no truth! So also for the traditionalists, (post)modern art too is no art! Instead of making counter-statements of condemnation, sweeping the traditional understanding of art and truth into non-existence, Heidegger thinks of the ‘essencing’ (*Wesen*) or the ‘event-ing’ (*Ereignis*) of art and truth – the ways in which art and truth show themselves. Here, they meet together: truth in the postmodern thought can show itself only in the way of art.

In this short study we have been looking into the question of ‘postmodernism’ which points to a *transition* from the ‘old’ to the ‘new’. We are not yet clear where this ‘new’ is leading us to. Perhaps, postmodernism is nothing other than a ‘Great Transition’! We have yet to wait and see. Our consideration of the transition of postmodernism has been from the perspective of the transition of art from the modern to the (post)modern. The postmodern transition is primarily a

cultural transition, which envelops almost all spheres of human existence. The aesthetic sphere with its encompassing nature carries an added importance.

(Post)modern art, in keeping with its nature, has not established or defined itself with clearly marked out boundaries. Hence, we have considered it as a 'transition' from the traditional (modern) to the (post)modern, and our study has to be taken merely as a '*pointer to*', rather than a '*definer of*,' this realm. (Post)modern art is a movement – a movement that is still on the move. Hence, by referring to the *terminus a quo* (monument, logos, utopia, literacy, etc.) and the *terminus ad quem* (ornament, mythos, heterotopia, oracy, etc.) of the movement, it is not contended that the movement has come to a stop. Art today is in a constant 'move' from the old to the new. This 'movement' or transition was mistakenly taken by the established aesthetics as the 'death' of art. The so-called 'death' of art has been but a 'decline' of art from the high pedestal of monumentality, logology, utopianism, literacy, etc. On a closer look, with the help of Heidegger, we

note that this 'decline' has not been a regress but a progress, insofar as (post)modern art is well suited to 'house' truth in the post-metaphysical period.

With the demise of the idea of a unilinear history and universal rationality in the postmodern period, there takes place an explosion of the multiplicity of local rationalities – ethnic, sexual, religious, cultural or aesthetic minorities – that finally speak up for themselves. With the liberation of diversity and plurality, truth and art too get liberated from the clutches of universality and uniformity. The liberated truth and art, in the liberated era of postmodernism, begin to manifest themselves in the brute immediacy of time and space. The accessibility to truth and art is no more limited to the monopolizing few, but to anyone and everyone; their expressivity is extended even to ordinary things and events. Art and truth are no more far apart, but bordering upon each other. Using a Heideggerian style of expression we can say, *art 'arts' in the way of truth, and truth 'truths' in the way of art.*

Notes

- 1 In the realm of art, the contrast is made between 'traditional art' and 'modern art' with their specific and differing characteristics. But in the area of thought, philosophy and culture, the contrast is between 'the modern' and 'the postmodern'; and the adjective 'modern' means 'belonging to that period and trend of thought that ended during the first half of the 20th century'. Thus 'modern art' and 'postmodern art' have the same reference. To show this link, we use the term *postmodern* with the prefix 'post' within brackets.
- 2 Nietzsche and Heidegger are considered the great stalwarts who made a radical critique of the traditional philosophical trend, generally referred to as 'modern thought' and announced the advent of a new beginning; thus the transition to postmodernism is launched by them. See Puthenpurackal 2000: 96-112.

- 3 *Ereignis* is a Heideggerian expression, which is better rendered by 'event-ing' rather than mere 'event'.
- 4 He is one of the Italian exponents of the postmodern thought through his various books. He speaks of the transition to (post)modern art in his *The End of Modernity: Nihilism and Hermeneutics in the Post-modern Culture* 1988 and *The Transparent Society* 1992.
- 5 Vattimo acknowledges his indebtedness to Walter Benjamin's study of 1936: "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical reproduction," for this characteristic of the death of art.
- 6 Postmodernism vehemently opposes the 'either/or' conception of such binary opposites of modern Western philosophy. Rather than a philosophy of either/or, postmodernism opts for a philosophy of 'difference' that transcends the principle of contradiction.
- 7 For more on the various cultural and aesthetic expressions in the postmodern period, see Sarup 1993: 168ff.
- 8 According to the classical understanding, 'the beautiful' is to be taken as different from 'the ugly'—an either/or conception. In postmodernism this dichotomy is transcended. For more on this question, refer Puthenpurackal 1999.
- 9 By the 'what' of classical art, we refer to the materials used for works of art, such as marble, gold, and other precious and rare materials. Besides the material used, the themes represented in art too are far apart from the ordinary life of the people. Usually they are centred on gods and goddesses, saints and heroes, popes and kings, power and victory, etc. By the 'how' we mean the way art is expressed; for instance, it is expressed in a very 'refined' and 'sophisticated' manner.
- 10 According to Gianni Vattimo, myths may be understood in the contemporary period in terms of 'archaism', 'cultural relativism' and 'tempered irrationalism'. Refer Vattimo 1992: 31ff.
- 11 Nietzsche and Heidegger became so popular in the contemporary European culture, because of their critique of the scientifico-metaphysical culture, and of their thirst for archaic thought.
- 12 Despite their critique of the existing metaphysical thought and avowed interest in mythical thinking, at least Nietzsche has not succeeded in putting forward an alternative thought in his philosophy.
- 13 If we look at the primitive art in the ancient cultures, we note that it was a 'flat' art, with space and time, climaxes and values flattened out. Refer Barrett 1958: 50ff.
- 14 Marxian philosophy, despite its concreteness, follows the Hegelian tradition of a universal history.
- 15 'Heterotopia' is not a commonly used term. It is coined with the suffix, 'hetero-' (other, different, etc.) and 'topos' (place). Thus, its meaning may roughly be expressed as a different place, plurality of places, a place other than the normally considered, etc. Refer *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, 1979 ed., s.v., "hetero-".
- 16 The transition is evident in Heidegger, when he speaks of 'the world' in his *Being and Time* (1927), but of 'a world' (implicitly many worlds) in his *The Origin of the Work of Art* (1936).
- 17 The inspiration for this section is received from an APFF seminar-cum-workshop on "Folkculture and Folklore," conducted at *Vijnananilayam*, Janampet, A.P., (28-29 July 2001), by the Folklore Resource and Research Centre, Palayamkottai, T.N. For stylistic reason, I have changed the term 'orality' into 'oracy'.

- 18 This was a phenomenon present in all the ancient cultures of the world. But the 'distanciation' from oracy to literacy was more evident in the ancient Greek culture. In the Eastern cultures oracy continued to be dominant, despite the introduction of 'literacy'.
- 19 In the language of Gadamer, there takes place a fusion of horizons of the text and of the reader.
- 20 According to Heidegger, fundamental hermeneutics takes place in Dasein's existential dealings, which may be expressed in un-thought-out sounds.
- 21 Life begins with the 'sound' of the lullaby, and ends with the 'sound' of lamentation.
- 22 We can add to this already considered list, transitions such as metaphysics to metaphor, intellect to intuition, enchantment to disenchantment, imitative to creative, etc.
- 23 Although the present author has rendered *Ereignis* as 'Event of Appropriation' in his book, *Heidegger: Through Authentic Totality to Total Authenticity* 1987, he is inclined to render it now as 'Event-ing'.
- 24 Heidegger introduces this notion in his "Der Spruch des Anaximander," *Holzwege*, p. 318; *Early Greek Thinking*, p. 33. The term 'seer' goes well with the Indian thinking, according to which the philosopher is called a 'seer' (*darsanika*), and philosophy is termed as 'seeing' (*Darsana*). For more on this, refer Puthenpurackal 1987: 201, note 226.

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