

# The Solace of the Sojourn: Towards a Praxis-oriented Phenomenological Methodology and Ethics of Deep Travel in Martin Heidegger's Sojourns

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## Introduction

Martin Heidegger's little-read travel journal, *Sojourns* (1962), is a literary-philosophical gem that yields surprisingly fruitful insights into our contemporary era of neoliberal globalization via its implicit exploration of the complex interconnections between travel, phenomenology, and ethics. As I demonstrate in this paper, *Sojourns* contains an implicit praxis-oriented phenomenological methodology and ethics of global travel that together gesture towards a coherent practice of "deep travel," which American literature scholar Cinzia Schiavini aptly defines as "a vertical movement in a closed space which starts from the surface of the land and goes backward in time, searching for the hidden social and cultural dynamics embedded in that [given] geographical context" (94).

## Sociohistorical Context

Originally intended as a seventieth birthday gift for Heidegger's wife, Elfriede, *Sojourns* bears the following dedication: "To the mother, For her seventieth birthday, A token of Appreciation" (vi). Although penned in 1962 during Heidegger's first journey to Greece, the text would not be published until 1989, when it was released in Germany as *Aufenthalte* by the venerable Frankfurt am Main publishing house Vittorio Klostermann. It would not be available in an official English edition until 2005, when it was published as *Sojourns* by SUNY Press via a translation by scholar John Panteleimon Manoussakis.

*Sojourns* opens with the following quote from the poem "Bread and Wine" (1801) by the German Romantic poet Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843), Heidegger's favourite poet:

But the thrones, where are they? Where are the temples, the vessels, Where to delight the gods, brim-full with nectar, the songs? Where, then, where do they shine, the oracles winged for far targets? Delphi's asleep, and where now is great fate to be heard?" (qtd. in Heidegger 1)

Here Hölderlin expresses a sense of longing for the poetically nourishing spirit of mythos that he feels is disappearing amidst Europe's post-Enlightenment culture of burgeoning modernity. In this sterile, technocratic modern age, the fecund and imaginative mythopoetic spirit of ancient Greece has waned and the wise oracle Delphi now slumbers.

As the socio-religious cultural critic Karen Armstrong notes in her book *The Case for God* (2009), it was during

the time period ranging from the Renaissance to the dawn of the European Enlightenment that mythos became overtaken by modern conceptualizations of logos,<sup>1</sup> thereby paving the way for the birth of our contemporary Western society of sterile technocratic orthodoxy:

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries . . . Western people began to develop an entirely new kind of civilization, governed by scientific rationality and based on technology and capital investment. Logos achieved such spectacular results that myth was discredited and the scientific method was sought to be the only reliable means of attaining truth” (xv).

Informed by a utilitarian worldview, this sterile modern ethos has today bequeathed a vulgar “means to an end” psychosocial mentality, which political theorist Janice Gross Stein has defined as the “cult of efficiency” (Stein 3-4).

As a prefatory poetic quote, the Hölderlin lines constitute a fitting introduction to *Sojourns*, in which Heidegger recounts his journey to Greece and his search for its mythic foundations. Similar to Hölderlin, who was concerned about the enervation of mythos in a post-Enlightenment era of burgeoning modernity, Heidegger worries about the enervated state of mythopoetics in a post-WWII world: “We, who are in greater need, in greater poverty for poetic thoughts, we need, perhaps, to pay a visit to the island of the islands, if only in order to set on its way the intimation that we have cherished for a long time” (4). Writing at the height of the Cold War when the world was divided between the opposing blocs of the capitalist West and the communist East, Heidegger undoubtedly recognized that both blocs were dominated by very similar forms of spiritual and mythopoetic stultification.

## Heidegger and Globalization

Although he never employs the term “globalization” in any of his writings, Heidegger is today regarded as an early theorist of globalization.<sup>2</sup> As scholar Eduardo Mendieta observes in his essay “The Globalization of Ethics and the Ethics of Globalization” (2002), Heidegger “contributed to an incipient philosophy of globalization” via his 1938 essay, “The Age of the World Picture” (45), in which he outlines the dawn of a modern perspective that was witnessing the world become apprehended as a totalizing picture, which was subject to humankind’s calculatory desires: “The fundamental event of the modern world is the conquest of the world as picture. . . . In such producing, man contends for the position in which he can be that particular being who gives the measure and draws up the guidelines for everything that is” (134). In his later 1950 essay, “The Thing,” he further elaborated upon this proto-globalizing worldview by associating it with time-space compression, which is today regarded as one of the most salient features of techno-economic globalization: “All distances in time and space are shrinking. Man now reaches overnight, by plane, places which formerly took weeks and months of travel” (163). Writing before the birth of the Internet, he presciently recognized how this late modern worldview was being facilitated by a geo-unifying technological system that was giving birth to a pervasive superficial fascination with images: “Distant sites of the most ancient cultures are shown on film as if they stood this very moment amidst today’s street traffic. . . . The peak of this abolition of every possibility of remoteness is reached by television, which will soon pervade and dominate the whole machinery of communication” (“The Thing” 163).

Intriguingly, Heidegger implies that this technologically facilitated process of geo-unification was not truly uniting the global community in humanist solidarity, but rather further alienating humankind from its rich cultural diversity via a uniform assimilatory matrix: “Everything gets lumped together into uniform distanceless. How? Is not this merging of everything into the distanceless more unearthly than everything bursting apart” (“The Thing” 164). In his most foreboding passage of “The Thing,” he addressed the popular Cold War-era anxiety about nuclear conflict by implying that global nuclear annihilation might potentially give final form to the humanistic and spiritual annihilation that technological geo-unification was already accomplishing:

Man stares at what the explosion of the atom bomb could bring with it. He does not see that the atom bomb and its explosion are the mere final emission of what has long since taken place, has already happened. Not to mention the single hydrogen bomb, whose triggering, thought through to its utmost potential, might be enough to snuff out all life on earth. (164)

As Heidegger rhetorically questioned, “What is this helpless anxiety still waiting for, if the terrible has already happened?” (“The Thing” 164). In other words, if modern humanity had become so entrapped within a technocratic matrix of its own making that it was incapable of fathoming how it was the master of its own potential demise, then had its end not already been accomplished?

With *Sojourns*, Heidegger is clearly building upon such previously articulated concerns about the relationship between globalization and technology, for his motivation in journeying to Greece emanates from an evident desire to escape the malaise of modernity: “Who is to show us the path? What is to give us a hint about the field that we seek? This field lies behind us, not before us. What is of necessity is to look back and reflect on that which an ancient memory has preserved for us and yet, through all the things that we think we know and we possess, remains distorted” (3). In a modern world that has for Heidegger lost its guiding spirit of humanity, Greece holds the potential ability to reinvigorate the mythic impetus that continues to exist as a sort of intimation in the minds of the poetically inclined: “We, who are in greater need, in greater poverty for poetic thoughts, we need perhaps, to pay a visit to the island of islands, if only in order to set on its way the intimation that we have cherished for a long time” (4).

Accordingly, Heidegger is pursuing not just a visceral travel experience, but a mental one as well. In this regard, the title of his journal is a particularly apt one, for as the *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates, a sojourn denotes “[a] temporary stay at a place” (“sojourn, n.”). In journeying to Greece, Heidegger thus seeks both a temporary physical stay there as well as a temporary mental immersion in the mythic essence of its ancient **Dasein** or being.<sup>3</sup> As we shall see, his journey ultimately reveals itself to be less a sojourn in one particular place than a series of sojourns in a variety of Greek locales, several of which afford him temporary mental sojourns via which he is able to experience fruitful phenomenological encounters with ancient Greek **Dasein** and its constitutive mythic elements.

For a man with such prescient insights into globalization, Heidegger did not travel much. As Heidegger scholar John Sallis notes in his “Foreword” to *Sojourns*, Heidegger “took himself to belong to the southwest German region where, except for the five year period in Marburg, he spent his entire life” (xiii). While noting that Heidegger did make “brief lecture trips to other German cities” as well as a “ten-day trip to Rome in 1935,” Sallis observes that Heidegger mostly “avoided” travel and “actively discouraged others from undertaking extensive travels” (xiv). In journeying to Greece, Heidegger seems to have made a “great exception” (xiv), as he finally elected to travel there in 1962 when he was more than seventy years old. Although fascinated by Greek antiquity, Heidegger had “[f]or years hesitated about making such a trip” (xiv).

As Sallis proceeds to note, Heidegger had hesitated to make this journey partly because he feared that the Greece of antiquity had been totally lost and partly because he feared that his presuppositions about Greece might not correspond to the reality he encountered:

Heidegger’s hesitation had to do partly with his doubts about modern Greece, his doubts as to whether the Greece of today could still reveal anything of the Greece of antiquity. Yet there was also, as he confesses, a deeper doubt: he was concerned that the concrete revelation of Greek antiquity . . . might prove at odds with what – in relation to Greek antiquity – Hölderlin had poetized and he had attempted to think. (xv)

To his credit, Heidegger is quite candid in acknowledging his personal doubts. As he notes, the proposal of a journey to Greece was met with initial hesitation on his behalf:

That proposal was followed, of course, by a long hesitation due to the fear of disappointment: the Greece of today could prevent the Greece of antiquity, and what was proper to it, from coming to light. But also a hesitation that stems from the doubts that the thought dedicated to the land of the flown gods was nothing but a mere invention and thus the way of thinking (**Denkweg**) might be proved to be an errant way (**Irrweg**). (4-5)

Heidegger’s account of his initial philosophical hesitation is here most interesting, as it clearly relates to the unique form of hermeneutic phenomenology that he employs throughout his journey.

Indeed, in searching for traces of Greece’s ancient **Dasein**, Heidegger neither relies solely on his rationalist presuppositions about Greece nor argues that the visceral or empirical experience of traveling there is enough to allow for the discovery he seeks. Instead, he seems to fuse rationalism and empiricism in relation to mental attunement, thereby developing a unique form of hermeneutic phenomenology that might grant him a psychogeographic traveling experience via which he can gain sojourning access to Greece’s originary culture. In this respect, he is not concerned with the modernized Greece that is present but rather the mythos-dominated Greece that is absent. Consequently, he is faced with the prospect of seeking out buried psychogeographic fragments of insight in modern Greece that might allow him to experience the call of its ancient **Dasein**: [W]hat matters is not us and our experience of Greece, but Greece itself” (9).

As popular culture scholar Ueli Gyr notes in “The History of Tourism: Structures on the Path to Modernity” (2010), the dawn of the 1960s had heralded the massive expansion of European tourism:

The apex of European tourism began in the 1960s: in response to the economic situations and strategic innovations in the market economy, commercial tour operators and travel companies transformed the nature of competition through increasingly cheaper offers, propelling it in the direction of mass tourism, introducing new destinations and modes of holidaying. (Gyr)

Deeply concerned about the potentially distortive psychosocial effects of this then burgeoning tourist industry, Heidegger associates the “unthoughtful onslaught of tourism” with the manifestation of an “alien power [that] enforces its own commands and regulations” (55). In this respect, he seems to be implicitly channeling his theory of “**Ge-Stell**” or “enframing,” which Manoussakis succinctly defines as follows in his “Translator’s Notes”: “It [**Ge-Stell**] has been rendered into English as ‘im-position,’ ‘en-framing,’ and ‘framework;’ it indicates a certain kind of calculative thinking that deprives things from their possibilities by not letting them appear (as they are) but instead pre-establishing their functionality” (66).

In reflecting on his stay in Venice during the early stages of his journey to Greece, Heidegger alludes to this process of enframing when he notes how Venice has been deterritorialized of its historic spirit via the reterritorializing ethos of consumerist-imbued modernity: “It has become an object of historiography, attractive scenery for confused novelists, the playground for international conferences and exhibitions, loot for the tourist industry to squander” (5). In essence, the tourism industry has enframed Venice within the distortive cultural currents of a modernity that denies this historic city the opportunity of expressing the traces of its historic being: “Aged was everything and yet not exactly old; everything belonged to the past and yet not a past that still continues and gathers itself into something remaining so it can give itself anew to those who await it” (6).

When Heidegger subsequently turns his meditative attention to modern Greece, he explicitly ponders whether it has also been enframed or whether it can still “speak” its ancient cultural **Dasein**: “Can Greece still ‘speak’ what is proper to it and claim us, the people of today, as listeners to its language, we, the people of an age whose world is throughout pervaded by the force and artificiality of the ramifications of the enframing (**Ge-Stell**)?” (10). In his subsequent travels throughout the region, he is often disappointed with what he finds. Upon arriving in Olympia, for example, he discovers a “plain village disfigured by the unfinished new buildings [to become] hotels for the American tourists” (12). Further elucidating his concept of enframing, Heidegger reflects on how the Museum of Olympia distorts the cultural essence of its various artifacts by presenting them for modern visual consumption, thereby robbing them of their mythic power:

At moments a chasm was opened between the act of dedication and the exhibits; the latter were placed in accordance with the contemporary artistic intentions, but, at the same time, were out of place; caught in themselves as they were, they became subjected to the machinations of the industrial era – they remain unable to show even what is proper to themselves to this world, let alone to indicate the paths of its transformation. (17)

In subsequently departing Olympia, the fabled home of Greece’s mythic Gods, Heidegger concludes that while the “Greek world” can still speak “in an immediate way through the sculptures,” the fact that these sculptures are housed in a museum ultimately negates the possibility of a true sojourn from being granted: “[T]he region of Olympia did not yet set free the Greek element of the land, of its sea and its sky” (18-19).

Amidst our technologically interwoven Web 3.0 era of twenty-first-century globalization, Heidegger’s concerns about the process of enframing seem more relevant than ever. What Heidegger is addressing in *Sojourns* is not merely the enframing of ancient Greece, but also the enframing of the international community itself: “What for us today is called world is the inestimable entanglement of a technological apparatus of information that confronted the unscathed and took her place, while the function of the world became accessible and tractable only by calculation” (35). As modern logos now systematically enframes our global community within a unifying neoliberal apparatus that systematically eradicates our humanity and positions us as drone-like knowledge consumers, we are in more need of mythos than ever before. To quote biologist and cultural critic E.O. Wilson, “We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom” (Wilson 294).

To be sure, our contemporary “cosmopolitics” is defined by a form of shallow anomic wanderlust, which is epitomized by the popular Internet meme that reads, “Travel. As much as you can. As far as you can. As long as you can. Life’s not meant to be lived in one place” (“Travel”). By envisioning the world as a sort of global amusement park in which “new” and “unique” experiences can be constantly sought out and consumed, today’s generally privileged global travelers remain ignorant of how their wanderlust powers the very system of cultural homogenization from which they seek to escape. An excellent example of this phenomenon can be found in the current circumstances

surrounding the ruins of the once sacred Inca citadel of Machu Picchu in Peru, which are now suffering from devastating erosion caused by the yearly influx of tourists to the site. Despite UNESCO's recent calls for Peru's government to implement a public use plan to mitigate the devastation to Machu Picchu and its surrounding area, the global influx of tourists to the site had as of 2014 surged to nearly 1.2 million visitors per year ("Drastic new rules"). One can only speculate that this rapacious touristic desire has been fueled by a hypocritical desire to visually consume Machu Picchu's ruins before they are ultimately destroyed and the seemingly inevitable commemorative simulatory theme park is erected on their once sacred grounds.

In specific reference to Greece, we might note how this contemporary wanderlust and its transformative modernizing currents have affected Athens's fabled Acropolis site, which contains many historic buildings, the most notable of which is the Parthenon. As we shall see, Heidegger's experience of visiting the Parthenon proves to be of significance in his quest to attain a pure sojourning experience in Greece. Yet while the Acropolis was once a sacred region, it is currently in danger of being overshadowed and obscured by the construction of two ten-story buildings that are slated for construction in Athens, which is today a trendy global hotspot. As noted in a February 22, 2009 *Neos Kosmos* newspaper article entitled "Petition launched to stop new building projects from 'boxing' in the Acropolis," the decision to build these two structures has enraged local residents. As Athens's current mayor, Kostas Bakoyannis, notes in the article, "The Acropolis belongs to everyone. . . . Therefore we have to respect it. We cannot allow urban monstrosities to pop up around it and cast their own shadows upon its light."

Heidegger seems to have recognized the emergence of this commercialized wanderlust as early as 1962, for in *Sojourns*, he describes the dawn of a globalized era in which "technology and industry" are enabling people to feel everywhere at home while also paradoxically inculcating an insatiable desire for new experiences via travel:

What if, then, this groundless "homeness," secured only by means of technology and industry, abandons every claim to a home by being contented with the desert-like expansion of traveling? As a consequence, even this question could cease to be of interest, because the concept of "content" would have been cancelled out by the supply of an always-increasing demand for new things. (37)

In essence, Heidegger here schematicizes the inaugural phase of the shallow "unity in diversity" rhetoric that now defines neoliberal globalization, which glibly champions the novelty of superficial "diversity" while simultaneously obfuscating the techno-capitalistic uniformity that increasingly engulfs our world's formerly differentiated countries. By enframing the world in this manner, we are fetishizing the most trivial forms of cultural difference while altogether ignoring how a unifying dogma of techno-capitalistic efficiency is exterminating the unique cultural mythopoeics that once granted individual nations their own distinct forms of **Dasein**.

In reading *Sojourns* today, one gets a sense of how Heidegger's insights into his journey constitute a sort of prologue to our global present. Writing roughly five years before the French intellectual Guy Debord would publish his landmark *Society of the Spectacle* (1967), which chronicles the rise of a Western consumer society in which human relationships were becoming increasingly "mediated by images" (Debord 1.4, 12), Heidegger associates the touristic zeal for travel with a superficial desire for visual consumption:

The annoyance with the crowds was not that they blocked the ways and obstructed access to different places. What was much more bothersome was their tourist's zeal, their toing and froing, in which one was, without being aware, included, as it threatened to degrade what was just now the element of our experience into an object read-at-hand for the viewer. (42)

In subsequently reflecting on the crowd that gathers in the once sacred region of Delphi, Heidegger alludes to how tourists practice a form of superficial image consumption that seems entirely divorced from any sense of an attempt to appreciate the mythic currents that once defined the region: "The throw their memories in the technically produced picture. They abandon without clue the feast of thinking that they ignore" (54).

One can only imagine what Heidegger would make of our contemporary Web 3.0 world, in which travel-hungry masses use Facebook to exchange images of foreign locales like trading cards. In our wired global society, travel becomes a game of crass one-upmanship to outdo one's fellow "cosmopolitans" by visually documenting one's latest "exotic" foreign escapade for Internet consumption. What is increasingly lost in this shallow touristic process, however, is the possibility of a deep phenomenological sojourn that might provide a respite from neoliberal techno-capitalism and its mythos-exterminating dogma. While Hans Holbein would caution against envisioning the world as a mere playground for human desire via his painting *The Ambassadors* (1533), which brilliantly juxtaposes the Renaissance impetus for global exploration against an anamorphic **vanitas** image of a skull, such an enlightened

worldview seems unimaginable in our current epoch. Indeed, while Heidegger's journey to Greece was born of his desire to pursue a meditative confrontation with history that naturally entailed that he accept the finite nature of his existence, the shallow restlessness of today's global travelers seemingly emanates from a Thanatophobic angst on their behalf. Amusingly, this angst is insightfully conveyed in the opening scene of the 2009 film *Up in the Air*, in which the film's perpetually traveling corporate protagonist, Ryan Bingham (George Clooney), delivers a glib motivational talk to a rapt audience of "fellow travelers," noting, "Make no mistake, moving is living. . . . The slower we move, the faster we die."

## Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Deep Travel

Yet if *Sojourns* constitutes an insightful critique of globalization, it also functions as a praxis-oriented schematic for a form of phenomenologically engaged deep travel that holds out the possibility of a sojourn from modernity. By having first engaged in a deep intellectual exploration of Greece, Heidegger then makes his empirical-experiential trip there. What results is a psychogeographic journey via which he seeks out gaps within the grid of modernity that might allow him sojourn-like moments of access to the remaining traces of ancient Greek **Dasein** that he is able to phenomenologically intuit.

This somewhat mystical approach leads Heidegger to an unexpected insight into the very historical essence of Greece. The beginning of this insight is first sparked when he visits the island of Crete and discovers, to his surprise, that it "encloses a strange, pre-Greek world" (22) that manifests itself in the "Egyptian-oriental essence" (23) of the palace of Knossos at Herakleion: "Everything is focused on the luxurious, on adornment and embellishment, from the large frescoes to the insignificant utensils of everyday life" (23). Clearly, Heidegger is astute in this recognition, for it is today widely recognized that ancient Greece was in indebted to intercultural dialogue with Egypt, for as Robert Garland notes in his book *Ancient Greece: Everyday Life in the Birthplace of Western Civilization* (2008),

By claiming to be the oldest people on the face of the earth, the Greeks were able to [misguidedly] feed their sense of national pride and to claim special status among the other people they encountered, although it is fair to state as well that educated Greeks, like the historian Herodotus, were open and forthright in acknowledging the debt of Greek culture to other, older cultures, notably that of Egypt (1-2).

Intrigued by what he observes at Herakleion, Heidegger ponders whether the palace's luxurious allure constitutes mere superficial appeal or the trace of a deeply buried history: "And yet, what shines in this amazing shine? Is the question not fitting? Could it be that what shines in the shine is only the shine itself and therefore neither can conceal nor hide anything?" (24). Further ruminating on this experience upon arriving in Rhodes near the coast of Asia Minor, Heidegger pursues a form of deep recollective thinking that leads him to conclude that ancient Greek **Dasein** was the byproduct of an historic intercultural dialogue between East and West: "[T]he confrontation [**Auseinandersetzung**] with the Asiatic element was for the Greek **Dasein** a fruitful necessity" (25).

For Heidegger, the realization of this pivotal East-West intercultural dialogue proves of immense importance. In his view, Greece's historic confrontation with the East holds the potential for an alternative theorization of globality:

This confrontation is for us today – in an entirely different way and to a greater extent – the decision about the destiny of Europe and what is called the Western world. Insofar, however, as the entire earth – and not only the earth anymore – is enclosed and penetrated by the radiation zones of modern technology and the atomic fields that technology has activated, the decision was overnight transformed to the question, whether and how man sets himself free in relation to a power that is capable of warding off the violence in the essence of technology. Faced with such a global situation, the thinking [**Andenken**] of the global proper character of Greece is a world-alienating occupation. (25-26)

By engaging in recollective thinking and resurrecting and confronting the mythic currents that once bound East and West together in an early world interculture, Heidegger discovers a potential alternative path for global awareness that might herald an escape from the techno-capitalistic currents that he fears are now engulfing the modern world.

Yet as potentially "world alienating" (26) as this discovery is, it is still not enough to qualify as a sojourn for Heidegger, who does not experience his first true sojourn until he visits the island of Delos: "Only through the experience of Delos did the journey to Greece become a sojourn. . ." (34). The fabled birthplace of the Greek god Apollo and his twin sister, the goddess Artemis, Delos was an important locale in Greek mythology. As Heidegger

discovers, the location constitutes a sort of gap with the grid of modernity that allows for a temporary sojourn within ancient Greek **Dasein**. In phenomenologically intuiting and accessing this absent presence, Heidegger utilizes a hermeneutic aid that is found in the etymological significance of the Greek word *aletheia* or *ἀλήθεια*, for as he notes, “It is only seldom then and after long preparation that we can succeed in looking at the presence of that which had once received form and measure from the field of *ἀλήθεια*” (35).

While the Romans had rendered *aletheia* as truth, Heidegger recognizes that the term had actually denoted “unconcealment” in ancient Greece. As Barbara Bolt notes in *Heidegger Reframed* (2011), “For the Greeks, as for Heidegger, truth is not propositional, but rather it is a revealing that brings forth the being of something out of concealment forth into unconcealment” (171). By engaging in recollective thinking, Heidegger hermeneutically engages *aletheia* and experiences a sojourn within ancient Greek **Dasein** via the gap or clearing that Delos affords within modernity’s grid: “The meditations that for a long time occupied me with regards to *ἀλήθεια*, and the relationship between concealment and unconcealment have found, thanks to the sojourn in Delos, the desired confirmation” (34). Further ruminating upon Delos’s connection to *ἀλήθεια* during his departure from the island, Heidegger concludes that Delos now functions as a contemporary sanctuary, for he notes how it is essentially concealed in plain sight by the neighboring isle of Mykonos, a “fashionable spot of international tourism” (36): “Perhaps it is good that, because of Mykonos, an oblivion cloaks the lonely Delos, for in this way it remains protected” (36).

Energized and invigorated by this sojourn, Heidegger recognizes that the remainder of his journey will constitute a series of experiences that will necessitate his piercing through many phenomenological layers of meaning. As he notes upon his arrival in Athens, “The awareness that we should go through many layers became stronger, that we should overcome many things that distract our attention, and to leave behind many familiar representations, in order to allow the Hellenism that is sought even here in Athens to show itself” (39). In contrast to his experience of the sheltered Delos, Heidegger finds that Athens has become a popular tourist locale. To this end, it is only during a lonely early morning visit to the Parthenon that he experiences a pure sojourn, albeit a “distantly fitting one” (41) given that he achieves this transcendence only through the contemplation of how modernity has deterritorialized the site of its mythic aura: “Through an inconceivable shine the entire building began to float, as, as the same time, it assumed a firmly defined presence, akin to that of the supporting rock. This presence was fulfilled by the abandonment of the holy. In this abandonment the absence of the flown goddess draws invisibly near” (40-41).

Interestingly, it is not until Heidegger approaches Delphi near the end of his journey that he makes it clear that it is this location that has been the central object of his thoughts throughout his travels through Greece: “Judging from the previous experiences of the sojourns I was expecting that this last one, **which had been considered as the crowning visit of the entire journey** [emphasis added], would surpass all knowledge and imagination carried with me and would speak with its own language” (50). The hallowed site of the Temple of Apollo, Delphi was the veritable locus point of ancient Greek **Dasein**. As mythologist J.A. Coleman notes in *The Dictionary of Mythology*, Delphi was home to the Greek earth-mother and oracle Gaia (or Gaea) and was “regarded as the centre of the world” in ancient Greece (see “Delphi”). In subsequently making his way throughout the region, Heidegger intuits that its sacred **Dasein** comes not from “the ruins of the temples” but rather from “the greatness of the region itself” (51). In this regard, he is able to recognize that the key to Delphi’s essence is not found in its Temple of Apollo, but rather in the entire region, which essentially constitutes a temple in and of itself: “Under the lofty sky, in the clear air of which the eagle, Zeus’s bird, was flying in circles, the region revealed itself as the temple of this place” (51). Paradoxically enough, Delphi engages in the concealment of that which is in plain view.

In subsequently departing Delphi before making his return trip home, Heidegger ponders the immense value of the various sojourns he has been granted. His melancholic conclusion is that such respite from modernity will become ever more difficult as the world becomes increasingly engulfed within geo-unification: “The irresistible modern technology together with the scientific industrialization of the world is about to obliterate any possibility of a sojourn” (56). In essence, he fears that humanity will become captured by the relentlessly future-oriented discourse of globalization, which entails an attendant denial of the recollective thinking that constitutes a core element of the hermeneutic phenomenology that he has found essential for a deep travel sojourn. Amidst this globalizing condition, the potential for the revelation of any form of cultural **Dasein** apart from that of the inauthentic **Dasein** of modern technology will be suppressed.

Commenting on this very phenomenon in his essay “Optical Craving versus Ontological Desire,” Michael E. Zimmerman situates Heidegger’s concerns about technological **Dasein** in relation to the competing geopolitical systems of capitalism and communism:

[T]echnological **Dasein** has ended in the grip of a control obsession that elevates a means – technological mastery over entities – over all other ends. By making power an end in itself, capitalism and communism alike undermine not only traditional religious beliefs and cultural values, but also the ontological motion of transcendence (**ek-sistence**) that makes human existence possible. In his role as ontological therapist, Heidegger sought to diagnose such self-destructive compulsiveness. (515)

Faced with a marked awareness of these then competing geopolitical systems, Heidegger chose to eschew overt political commentary in favor of instead exploring how human **Dasein** was becoming endangered by modern logos, which defined both capitalism and communism alike. In essence, Heidegger recognized how post-WWII humanity was trapped between the devil and the deep blue sea, for he understood that any attempt to enframe the world within a geo-unifying technological system could only succeed at the expense of humanity's richly diversified forms of cultural **Dasein**.

Yet in spite of his contention that “modern technology” and “scientific industrialization” are about to “obliterate any possibility of a sojourn” (56), Heidegger maintains that his departure from Greece does not constitute an ultimate farewell to its originary culture, but rather a pivotal recognition of its absent presence beneath modernity's grid: “The departure from it [Greece] became its arrival. What had arrived and brought the assurance of its stay was the sojourn of the flown gods that opens itself to recollective thinking” (56). To this end, he once again praises Hölderlin by quoting the last strophe from Hölderlin's “German's Song,” a passage from which he divines obvious inspiration for a stand against the “futureless progress” of the technological epoch (57):

Where is your Delos, where is your Olympia,  
For celebration that would conjoin us all?  
How shall your son divine the gift that,  
Deathless one, long you have darkly fashioned? (qtd. in Heidegger 57)

Clearly, Heidegger admires Hölderlin's call for modernity to confront its absence of mythopoetics, an invocation that presumably inspired his own practice of recollective thinking.

If, then, modern technology and scientific industrialization together encompass a sojourn-denying grid, this is only because they have systematically reoriented the collective consciousness of mass society in relation to modern logos. Indeed, Heidegger suggests that a phenomenological sojourn from modernity is still possible for those who are able to cultivate recollective thinking and develop a sufficient sense of phenomenological intuition. In essence, Heidegger is seemingly endorsing a phenomenological perspective that lies somewhere between William Shakespeare and William Faulkner, for while Antonio in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (c. 1611) admonishes that “what's past is prologue” (I.ii.278), Gavin Stevens in Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun* (1951) suggests, “The past is never dead; it's not even past” (92). Accordingly, Heidegger concludes *Sojourns* by cryptically yet informatively advising that Greece, “the birthplace of Occident and modern age, secure in its own island-like essence, remains in the recollective thinking of the sojourn” (57).

If we distill *Sojourns* and relate it to Heidegger's unique phenomenological views, we can divine the core elements of a comprehensive framework via which he intimates a praxis-oriented methodology and ethics for deep travel. To this end, language and its status as a cultural repository of history play a key role throughout *Sojourns*, for as Heidegger had earlier pronounced in his “Letter on Humanism” (1947), “Language is the house of Being. In its home man dwells” (217). In other words, language defines our conceptions and perceptions of social reality; it is the central matrix through which we form and process meaning. Accordingly, Heidegger first explores various historic mythopoetic narrative accounts of Greece before making his actual physical journey there, for traces of Greece's originary culture inhere within the ancient Greek language itself.

Put in more praxis-oriented methodological terms, Heidegger desires to intuitively excavate the remnants of Greece's originary culture. In order to accomplish this feat of knowledge, he does not turn to popular travel guides that will likely distort Greece's cultural history by enframing it within superficial contemporary narratives; instead, he builds upon his accrued knowledge of ancient Greek mythopoetics and the grand tradition of Western Hellenism. For Heidegger, deep travel thus begins with deep reading and deep study, for as he notes, “The Greek element remained an expectation, something that I was sensing in the poetry of the ancients, something that I intimate through Hölderlin's *Elegies* and *Hymns*, something that I was thinking on the long paths of my own thought” (19).



## Deep Travel Ethics

Viewed from an ethical perspective, deep travel involves cultivating a sufficient level of phenomenological perception to intuit the essence of a foreign culture. While this phenomenological approach may initially seem somewhat mystical to contemporary readers, this is only because it rejects the intellectually confining parameters of modern logos in favor of cultivating a mythopoetic sensibility. More specifically put, Heidegger's travel ethics are not commensurate with our contemporary system of techno-capitalism, which enframes the world as a sort of high-tech global shopping mall via which privileged travel consumers can avail themselves of the latest commodified travel experience.<sup>5</sup> For Heidegger, travel is a serious matter that emanates not from the superficial "cosmopolitics" of globalization rhetoric, but rather from a sincere cosmopolitan quest to appreciate international cultural diversity in all of its uncommodified forms.

If one doubts the salience of Heidegger's concerns about modernity's sojourn-denying ethos, then they should consider the current state of Greece. Ravaged by crippling debt and faced with calls for draconian austerity sanctions from Germany, Greece is about to be permanently deterritorialized of the remnants of its originary cultural **Dasein** by the cold, calculatory reterritorializing ethos of neoliberalism. Fundamentally incompatible with neoliberal techno-capitalism and its crude rhetoric of efficiency, Greece is effectively being punished not just for its debt but also for its continued cultural resistance to the lifestyle norms of neoliberal capitalism. As the IMF's 2012 call for Greece to accept a six-day workweek suggests, the international community resents the premium that Greek citizens continue to place upon their distinct lifestyle. Despite OECD findings that clearly indicate that Greeks average longer weekly working hours than any other European workers (McCarthy), Greece is routinely impugned in the Western media for its ritualistic afternoon siesta time and its historic emphasis on valuing leisure as a vital component of its daily life-world. Once considered the bedrock of any enlightened society oriented towards the *jouissance* of existence, the very concept of the leisured life has today become anathematized in a global neoliberal society calibrated to the insatiable velocity of techno-capitalism. Amidst this new global condition, the prospect of achieving a sojourn from neoliberal ideology has become a near impossibility.

Long accused of intellectual sophistry by philosophers working within the Anglo-American analytic tradition, Heidegger is, of course, an easy critical target for those seeking easily articulable answers to highly complex problems. In this respect, the British philosopher A.J. Ayer undoubtedly spoke for many within the Anglo-American analytic tradition when he uncharitably opined of Heidegger, "The question of Being? A senseless querying of what must be an absolute presupposition. . . . Heidegger has displays of surprising ignorance, unscrupulous distortion and what can fairly be described as charlatanism" (qtd. in Collins 7). Yet in contrast to analytic-minded individuals like Ayer who would likely contend that Sojourns is a mere embodiment of sophistry or "charlatanism," I would counter that the work is actually highly amenable to praxis-oriented application.

## Deep Travel Phenomenology and Ethics: From Theory to Praxis

It is my view that *Sojourns* contains the theoretical fundamentals of an ethics of deep travel that can be distilled and applied. To cite a recent personal experience that involved the praxis-oriented application of what I term Heidegger's phenomenology of deep travel, I had the unique and valuable experience of first reading *Sojourns* and applying its implicit deep travel techniques while visiting Central Europe for the first time. As I wandered the cobblestone streets of Prague throughout the resplendent chill of a mid-February week, I found myself surprised to discover that this historic city had seemingly become completely reconfigured as a marketplace for global neoliberal capitalism and its attendant culture of conspicuous consumption. What, I wondered, had happened to Prague's historic **Dasein**? Surely, the historic being of this city was not expressed in the omnipresence of such varied multinational corporate brand names as Rolex, Cartier, H&M, and Starbucks? What had happened to the Prague of history? Had Prague been completely deterritorialized of its historic cultural **Dasein** by the reterritorializing and geounifying ethos of global neoliberal capitalism?

Interestingly, a visit to Prague's Franz Kafka museum helped me work through all of the above questions. Although initially hesitant to visit the museum because I feared Kafka's life and works would be distortedly enframed by a hoary touristic apparatus, I found myself pleasantly surprised to discover a nuanced commemorative site that avoided enframing Kafka and his works within some simplistic exhibitional narrative. Having studied Kafka's works

at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, I found that the museum did justice to the immense complexity of Kafka and his literary masterpieces. Of particular use was a guidebook sold by the museum, *The City of K.: Franz Kafka and Prague* (2010), which I happily elected to purchase. It was in perusing the opening section of this guidebook that I came across a passage that reminded me of a key aspect of Prague's historic culture that I had been exposed to during my formal study of Kafka but had subsequently forgotten during the intervening years. Situating Kafka in relation to Prague's historically complex and divided urban culture, the passage notes,

Frank Kafka was born inside a vortex named Prague. A city in which three ethnic groups (Czechs, Germans and Jews) had lived together for centuries, yet still separated by differences in language, customs and culture. This conflict leaves its mark on the city's physiology, transforming it into hermetic compartments and defining invisible borders, without determining the size or the very essence of the cage. That cage has to be intuited from the bird's perspective. (9)

As the passage reminded me, Prague had been historically marked by unreconciled sociocultural differences that had resulted in a psychosocially conflicted urban society characterized by varying forms of cultural neuroticism.

This cultural neuroticism was, of course, manifested in Kafka's deeply introspective literary works and Prague's historically creative intellectual milieu, the latter of which was obviously born of the city's collective socioexistential anxiety about the indeterminate state of its cultural identity. Intriguingly, Prague's historic sense of cultural neuroticism and its attendant penchant for intellectualism were continued throughout the Communist period. Even during Soviet totalitarianism, Prague had maintained a vibrant culture of creativity and difference that proved resistant to the crude assimilatory dictates of Soviet socialist realism. Only recently, it seems, has the city's creatively fruitful cultural neuroticism approached its seeming end – an end that has been ushered in via a totalizing global neoliberal apparatus that preaches the rhetoric of difference as it systematically proceeds to geo-unify all cultural diversity within its assimilatory ethos.

To this end, I could only appreciate Prague's historic **Dasein** by engaging in the practice of recollective thinking that was triggered by my visit to the Kafka museum, an experience which subsequently provided the avenue for a deep phenomenological sojourn via which I was able to fuse my rationalist presuppositions about Prague with my actual experience of it. By harnessing my knowledge of Kafka and his relationship to Prague as a hermeneutic aid, I experienced the phenomenological realization that traces of Prague's originary cultural **Dasein** were still discernible throughout the city's landscape. Paradoxically enough, however, I was only able to achieve this realization by observing how Kafka had become commodified and assimilated within the giant neoliberal marketplace that contemporary Prague had become.

If Kafka had once been a marginalized voice of a neurotic yet creative culture, he was now firmly integrated within the cultural monomania of consumer capitalism that had come to define contemporary Prague. As I wandered the city's consumer-inundated streets I was constantly bombarded by kitschy Kafka dolls, Kafka mugs, and Kafka T-shirts that were available for sale via countless stores, newsstands, and street vendors. Once a tortured, introspective writer who had toiled away in virtual obscurity, Kafka was now an essential "brand name" that had become indelibly associated with Prague. Curiously, this had the effect of rendering Prague even more surreal than in Kafka's writings. If Kafka had toiled away creating works that he feared would neither be accepted nor comprehended by the reading public of his era, his name was now omnipresent in a city that had embraced his image while seemingly having ignored the introspective content and quality of his works.

Again, the overall effect of experiencing this phenomenon was even more Kafkaesque than a work by Kafka himself. While Kafka had achieved ubiquitous status in contemporary Prague, the majority of the city's tourists had likely never seriously engaged with a work by him. Only by harnessing Kafka as a hermeneutic aid and drawing upon my knowledge of his life and works could I intuit Prague's historic **Dasein** of vexatious cultural neuroticism, the remnants of which were still detectable in the city's unique art, architecture, and monuments. A deep travel sojourn was thus possible in Prague, albeit one born of a concentrated phenomenological effort to pierce through the city's contemporary cultural monomania of neoliberal capitalist consumerism.

## Conclusion

Heidegger's *Sojourns* is perhaps now more relevant than ever, though its praxis-oriented methodology and ethics of deep travel will be accessible only to those who are able to achieve a temporary break from neoliberal

techno-capitalism and its attendant forces of **Das Man**.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, a journey abroad must be preceded by a sojourn within one's self, for cultivating an authentic sense of personal **Dasein** is a virtual necessity for those who harbor the ultimate ambition of pursuing a deep travel experience. Undoubtedly, there will be those who will argue that this very notion of deep travel is rooted in mystic sophistry. Should this be the inevitable case with some people, however, this is perhaps because the calculatory coordinates of neoliberalism have simply rendered them unable to fathom the inherent solace that a deep travel sojourn might provide.

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## Endnotes

1. Our modern understanding of logos as "reason" or "logic" differs considerably from its ancient Greek meaning. As Heidegger notes in his chapter "Logos" in his book Early Greek Thinking (1975), logos had meant "the Laying that gathers" in ancient Greece (76). Roughly speaking, this had denoted a process of cultural deliberation via which ancient Greek society had laid ideas out and gathered them together in a manner that disclosed their fundamental essence.

2. For an excellent recent anthology of essays exploring this topic, see editors Antonio Cerella and Louiza Odysseos's Heidegger and the Global Age (2017).

3. Defining **Dasein** in her book Heidegger Reframed (2011), scholar Barbara Bolt notes, "From [the German] 'da' (there) and 'Sein' (being). Heidegger uses the term '**Dasein**' for the fundamental fact of being-right-there that characterises human existence. It relates to the German term for 'Being,' '**das Sein**,' i.e. 'the to be' or '**existenz**': . . . **Dasein** is constituted by being-in-the-world."

4. In employing the term "Web 3.0" I am borrowing from cultural critic Andrew Keen, who coins it in his book

Digital Vertigo: How Today's Online Revolution is Dividing, Diminishing, and Disorienting Us (2012) to distinguish between "the Web 2.0 of Google, YouTube, and Wikipedia" and "the Web 3.0 of Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn (17).

5. As John Carlos Rowe notes in The Cultural Politics of the New American Studies (2012), the model of the American shopping mall has now become a global phenomenon: "Whether directly exported by U.S. business interests or developed by multinational corporations to look like its U.S. prototypes, the international mall is often traceable back to U.S. funding, design, and marketing sources or models" (108).

6. Literally translated from German, **Das Man** means "the one" or "the they." As Heidegger scholar Daniel O. Dahlstrom notes in his book The Heidegger Dictionary (2013), Heidegger employed **Das Man** "to designate **Dasein** in its average everyday way of being-with others, where, figuratively and literally, it exists by following the crowd" (207-208).

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