

Heidegger's Pot — The Gathering of the Four Elements of Heaven, Earth, God and Man

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Abstract—Heidegger, as a master of German existential philosophy, generally believes that he has experienced three stages: early, middle and late. The thoughts and investigations of existence are the focus of Heidegger. The more important part of it is his long-term exploration and reflection on the existence of things, and it runs through his entire thought evolution. In the late Heidegger, he combined his thoughts on things with the traceability of etymology, and tried to find the original meaning of the language by tracing the etymology of the language. Based on this, he examined the essence of the object. "Summoning the world through language" is an important tendency of Heidegger's thought in this period. In Heidegger's late works of thought, especially in the thinking of things, one can't ignore the article "Das Ding"(The Thing) he wrote in 1950. In this article, Heidegger uses the pot as a metaphor to reveal the nature of the pot through a rigorous logical deduction and etymological investigation, thus exposing the nature of the thing. In the end, in Heidegger, the existence of pots and the thing is ultimately positioned in a gathering of heaven, earth, god and man. Therefore, the close reading and interpretation of "The Thing" will help us to describe the thought context of Heidegger's late thoughts, as well as a glimpse of his late thoughts.

Keywords—component; Heidegger; The Thing; pot; gathering; four elements

I. INTRODUCTION

Heidegger's investigation and reflection on the things runs through his whole thoughts, and as his thoughts continue to flow forward, he gradually gathers into a complete depiction of the essence of matter. Heidegger's thought changes and movements generally go through three stages: Early Heidegger discussed things in the world in *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*). Although things were not often mentioned, they were presented as artifacts. At that time, Heidegger still focused on depicting the outline of the world. Seeing things in the world was actually borrowing to understand the world.

II. HEIDEGGERS THOUGHTS ABOUT THINGS

In the mid-term Heidegger's discussion of the origin of the *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* (*The Origin of the Artwork*) and *Die Frage nach dem Ding* (*Questioning concerning of the Thing*) began to increase and more detailed.

During this period, Heidegger's thinking on things showed a tendency to think in the historical dimension.

In the late Heidegger, in 1950, "*Das Ding*" (*The Thing*) was written. In this article, he uses the pot as a metaphor, looks at the specific things around him, directly faces the matter itself, follows his late thoughts of trying to summon the world through language, and uses the etymology to locate things in a four-dimensional pure gathering of four elements. This article is a summary of his thoughts, including the continuation of his early and mid-term thoughts, and more of the characteristics of his later thoughts that combine philosophical thinking with linguistic structure tendency. It is an article that can be used to grasp Heidegger's late thought direction, and at the same time, he can completely understand Heidegger's philosophical thinking about things. Through the careful reading and interpretation of the article "*Das Ding* (*The Thing*)", this paper takes care of the clues and philosophies contained in Heidegger are other ideological works to sort out Heidegger's thinking path in the late period.

III. THE CLOSENESS (DIE NÄHE)

A. "*The Closeness*" (*Die Nähe*)

In the opening of "*The Thing*", Heidegger raised a question to lead to thinking about things, that is, what is the closeness (*die Nähe*)? What is the nature of the closeness? Heidegger believes that the development of modern technology (such as aircraft, film and television) can eliminate all distances in space and time: "*Der Mensch legt die längsten Strecken in der kürzesten Zeit zurück. Er bringt die größten Entfernungen hinter sich und bringt so alles auf die kleinste Entfernung vor sich* (Man puts back the longest distances in the shortest time. He puts the greatest distances behind and brings everything to the smallest distance in front of him)". [1](P.167) But this elimination of distance does not bring any closeness, because whether it is near or far, its premise is the distance. If the distance is removed, it is not near and far away. If it is near or not, it is not the distance between time and space, how do we know the nature of the closeness? Heidegger believes that closeness itself cannot be directly accessible, but it can be thought of by "the existence of being close to the present", that is, things. Through the

matter can be used to examine the nearness. "Nähe läßt sich, so scheint es, nicht unmittelbar vorfinden. Dies gelingt eher so, daß wir dem nachgehen, was in der Nähe ist. (Closeness, it seems, can not be found immediately. This succeeds more so that we pursue what is nearby.)" [1] (P. 168)

Heidegger examines the materiality (das Dinghafte) of the thing through the metaphor of the pot. The logic of the famous pot-metaphor in *Das Ding* of Heidegger is that, the pot is a thing, so the nature of the pot can reveal the essence of the thing. Therefore, the question to be answered becomes what the pot is. Here we can sum up Heidegger's path of speculative logic: nearness? —> thing? —> pot? We can ask, the source of Heidegger's investigation is actually nearness, what is nearness? Heidegger also responded in the discussion of the material properties. Therefore, the pot is the entrance to the inspection of the nearness.

IV. THE METAPHOR OF THE POT — THE APPEARANCE OF THE THING

The pot is a vessel, a vessel that stands by itself and controls itself. Its characteristics are achieved by stand (stellen) and manufacture (herstellen). From the production of raw materials, or through the medium that allows it to stand on its own, such as a bench, you can inspect the pot. But when we look at the raw materials and media of the pot, we still regard the pot as a kind of presentation, not just as an object (der Gegenstand).

But in fact, we are using the pot as an object. Pot is, in sense of the media, which makes it stand on its own feet or manufactures it, not just the appearance of the object, but also because the manufacture and facilitates cognitive object on the epistemological sense before the people: "Zwar gilt er nicht mehr nur als Gegenstand des bloßen Vorstellens, dafür ist er aber Gegenstand, den ein Herstellen zu uns her, uns gegenüber und entgegen stellt. (It is no longer seen as an object of representation, it is a production process that puts it before us and relative to us.)" [1] (P.169) The object of representation here is to understand the pot as something that was created. The second "object" (der Gegenstand) in the expression is the object of epistemological meaning. According to Professor Sun Zhouxing's explanation, this still regards the pot as the object of manufacturing behavior in the form of representational thinking. The understanding of the pot as the object of manufacture, the self-sustaining object of production, is still only the experience of the thing as a certain thing or a certain existence, but fails to reach the nature of the thing.

So what is the materiality? We have to think about what the thing is, and here we must first answer how the pot becomes the pot.

The pot is first of all a container because it can contain. The craftsman who made the pot made it, because the pot had the property of being built, before it was manufactured. "Der Krug ist ein Ding als Gefäß. Zwar bedarf dieses Fassende einer Herstellung. Aber die Hergestelltheit durch den Töpfer macht keineswegs dasjenige aus, was dem Krug eignet, insofern als Krug ist. Der Krug ist nicht Gefäß, weil er hergestellt wurde, sondern der Krug mußte hergestellt

werden, weil er dieses Gefäß ist. (The pot is a thing as a vessel. Although this vessel requires a production, the potter's manufacture is by no means what makes the pot so far as a pot. The pot is not a vessel because it was made, but the jar had to be made because it is this jar.)" [1] (P.169). This means that the pot is a container. Although self-sustaining needs to be manufactured, the pot is not a pot because of the manufacture of the craftsman, then it becomes a container, but because the pot must be manufactured, because it is a container. The containment of the pot needs to be achieved and released by manufacture, by its appearance. But the essence of the pot cannot be thought of from the appearance. Therefore, Heidegger believes that even Plato and Aristotle have the appearance of the present (anwesend) state, without the thinking of essence. That is, Plato is the thing of experience made by those present. The materiality of the pot (das Dinghafte) lies in its containment. Pot receiving pot and the pot bottom is not to have its wall structure, and in that the pot bottom and pot wall intermediate constituting emptiness (Die Leere) "Die Leere ist das Fassende des Gefäßes. Die Leere, dieses Nichts am Krug, ist das, was der Krug als das fassende Gefäß ist. (The emptiness is the mouth of the vessel. The emptiness, this nothingness at the pot, is what the pot is as the grasping vessel.)" (P.170) Thus, Heidegger believes that the materiality of the pot is not in the material, but in this void.

But the emptiness is not really empty. Physical scientific explanation is "der Krug sei mit Luft angefüllt und mit alledem, was das Gemisch der Luft ausmacht. (Clay pots filled with air and the air was filled with the mixture of all things.)" (P. 171). If we inject wine is Change the air inside as another filler. Heidegger believes that things in the scientific sense are not their essence. "Die Wissenschaft trifft immer nur auf das, was ihre Art des Vorstellens im Vorhinein als den für sie möglichen Gegenstand zugelassen hat. (Scientific face only those types of scientific description of prior permission, may become something of a scientific object.)" (P.171), Heidegger believes that the way science grasps things is limited. It can only grasp what can be its object. Void, infinity, etc. cannot be grasped as objects in the scientific field of vision. Heidegger used this to criticize science, thinking that the scientific view is forcing (zwingend), and will eventually turn the pot into something nothing (das Nichtige), rather than a decisive reality (Maßgebende Wirkliche). Heidegger believes that science has eliminated the possibility of things as objects, and the essence of things has never been revealed, nor has it been expressed in words. Therefore, he believes that the scientific viewpoint will lead to a double misinterpretation of the thing: First, science precedes other experiences and directly reaches the reality in the reality of the thing (rather than the appearance of the essence of the thing itself); second, without prejudice to the scientific study of the real thing, things can be made into things, as long as they are already essential things. "Einmal die Meinung, daß die Wissenschaft allem übrigen Erfahren voraus das Wirkliche in seiner Wirklichkeit treffe, zum andern den Anschein, als ob, unbeschadet der wissenschaftlichen Erforschung des Wirklichen, die Dinge gleichwohl Dinge sein könnten, voraussetzte, Daß sie überhaupt je schon wesende Dinge

waren. (The opinion, on the one hand, that science meets the reality in advance of all other experience, and on the other, the appearance as though, without prejudice to the scientific investigation of the real, things could nevertheless be things that presupposed that they were ever already existing things were.)" (P.172) Further clarifies that in the scientific point of view, the essence of matter is bypassed, destroyed, and thus cannot reveal the true body to the mind. In the late Heidegger, in a gesture of obedience, he let the object manifest itself. However, it is clear that science has not yet considered the essence of matter, but directly regards things as manifestations, and as their own research objects. The priori defaults to the reality of reality, as a fact of matter, and skips. Inquiring about the nature of things, this makes it impossible for people to reveal themselves in the scientific field of vision.

Then, after Heidegger asks, why can't the thing shows its own essence? Did people miss the opportunity to delay the appearance of this thing? But people can only miss and delay what has been assigned to themselves, but isn't the thing still not showing up? But people can only go to the things that have already appeared. Therefore, Heidegger continues to investigate what the object is and what is not apparent in nature. Is it not possible to know that the object is not yet close? So I went back to Heidegger's initial path and explored this closeness, that is, to explore the closeness of the thing, the pot. From the expression and questioning of Heidegger here, we also comprehend the closeness that he said, that is, the real world close to us. The sum of everything around us is close. How do we recognize the closeness around us, and when this approach is confirmed by modern society to be independent of distance, we can achieve it by knowing what is in the vicinity. So in a sense, in Heidegger's "The Origin of Artwork", he talks about the traditional form-physical pattern of material, he said, giving things something is persistent and sturdy and causes a sensuous surging (color, sound, hardness, size). It is a hyle. The material has also been formatted. The strength of the thing lies in the combination of form and material. The interpretation of this thing requires direct observation, so that the thing is related to us through its appearance (eidous). [2]The late Heidegger seems to echo the thing of his early investigation in the writing of Being and Time. At that time, things were not an object often mentioned and taken care of by Heidegger. In his philosophical thinking, he devoted himself to depicting the outline of the world, and the object is the entrance to the world.

Therefore, Heidegger continued to investigate why the pot in the vicinity is a pot. The pot is a void that can be accommodated. The void here is an abstract concept that science cannot grasp. According to the scientific point of view, the pot has been described as a kind of cavity, becoming a representational concept. Therefore, the hole here is not the void of the nature of the pot. We have not yet examined the void nature of the pot in this vessel.

The accommodation of the kettle is achieved by "take" (nehmen) and "hold" (behalten). For the acceptance of the pouring (der Einguss) and the retention of the pours (der Guss), the mutual realization of the two is relative to the

dumping (das Ausgießen), so that the essence of the pot is dumped. To understand this logic, you may wish to refer to Hegel's master servant dialectics. Dumping out is a gift of pours (Schenken des Gusses), and this gift is the essence of the containment. The accommodation needs to be empty, and the void is to gather (versammeln) gifts. The gift is not simply a trip, it gathers (versammeln) in the pot's accommodation, gathered in the pouring. This gathering constitutes the essence of the gift. The essence of the "Das Krughafte des Kruges weist im Geschenk des Gusses (The pot-essence of the pot points in the gift of pours)" (P.165) is composed of gifts (Geschenk), so the essence of Heidegger's investigation of the pot is gathered in this gift. What is it? What is the gathering of the pot? Heidegger used a large section of beautiful poetic description to tell us what the gift (P. 174) is.

The gift is a Trunk, which is water and wine. The water comes from spring water and rain, and the two come from the earth's sky; the wine comes from the grapes, the grapes are from the sun, so the water and the wine are gifts, then the gathering in the pot is heaven and earth. The gift of giving is to give a drink to the dead, to quench your thirst and socialize. The wine that is dumped is the wine, and the wine is the real gift in Heidegger's mind. Because he traced the etymology of the word "Trank", he learned that the sacrifice of wine is to preserve the intention of pouring, that is, donation and sacrifice; it is no longer a drink, but a sacrifice of Gods.

After the wine is dumped as a gift, it stays (verweilen) in the person, and the wine is stayed in the gods. Therefore, the gods and gods gather in the gift, and the four elements are unified. They stay in the pouring. And these four elements each retain their pureness (die Einfalt), such a pure one, ancient German is represented by the thing, that is, the object. The essence of the pot was finally examined here in Heidegger as a pure gathering of the ternary. In Old German, the essence of the pot is back to the thing. The essence of matter is through the materialization of the material, or the "thinging" of the thing, (Das Ding dingt). The so-called materialization or thinging, here explained as the whole of the quaternary pure one, stays on one thing, that is, the accumulation of the heavens and the earth in nature, staying in the pot, it becomes the pot.

We are trying to depict the powerlessness in front of the object itself. The essence of the thing is not the object, not the being as noun, but the being as a verb, so we cannot say that the object is essentially something concrete, but only the material is transformed into an object of representation. At this point, Heidegger deduced with beautiful poetic language and meticulous logic, and described how a clay pot reveals itself, that is, how a thing reveals its physical properties, and the appearance is a close object.

Heidegger uses the object as a verb here, namely "dingen". Materialization or aggregation is the operation and generation of things or existence, and it is the process of existence. This manifestation is also the movement of the gods of heaven and earth. Therefore, for Heidegger, things are never a static object that stands opposite us in front of us.

First of all, the "thing" that Heidegger explores here is not the existence but the existence itself. Secondly, the things that gather the heavens and the earth can never be understood as "places". The gathering is not a gathering place. Finally, it is not the existence of things. There is "being up", but the object as a being, summoning the coming of the heavens and the earth, the gathering, the appearance is the thing.

V. THE ETYMOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE THING

In his later philosophical thoughts, Heidegger often used the study of etymology to discover the original meaning of existence that seems to be forgotten. The same is his inspection of the wine. He insists on the exact wording of some primitive vocabulary. He believes that "there are the most abundant meanings in these ancient and simple words, but their fundamental thoroughness and practicality have been forgotten by us." Therefore, Heidegger loves to analyze the thoughts of some philosophers in the former Socrates, because in his view, as the early Greek thoughts still retain the meaning of vocabulary, and ancient Greece is the existence history of his concern. The first beginning contains all the original meanings. Therefore, after examining the nature of the object, he also traced the origin of the word "object". In this etymology, we can see how he "thinks about ancient long-forgotten thoughts" while thinking about the language itself.

What is thing? According to Heidegger's investigation, in the ancient high German, the word "thing" is used as a verb to mean "gather" (versammeln). "Wohl bedeutet das althochdeutsche Wort thing die Versammlung und zwar die Versammlung zur Verhandlung einer in Rede Stehenden Angelegenheit, eines Streitfalles." (P. 176) "especially for considering the things in the conversation, a controversial gathering." In ancient German, "thing" and "dinc" refer to everything that cares about people in any way. Everything is in the middle of talking. "The so-called thing is the gathering of events or things that are related to people and are in people's speech and spoken by people. This kind of thing in the talk, the Romans call it "res", the ancient Greek is called "eiro", meaning Talking about something, considering something. It can be seen that the main point of the original meaning of the word is that, first of all, it is understood as a gathering of things, and secondly, things are related to people.

Here, although Heidegger thinks that "res" and "ens" and the objectivity of things do not negate the interpretation of the word "dinc", he once commented that "medieval mysticism" is not mysterious in our sense and in the bad sense. It should be conceptually grasped in the sense of total excellence. [4]

However, in the development of later Western languages, the meaning of this "thing" of things gradually disappeared and was concealed. Only in English, 'object' retains the full semantic power of the Roman "res". We also noticed that in ancient German, "thing" is used in the meaning of verbs, not things, but the gathering of things, not the "objects" standing in front of people in the metaphysical sense.

When it comes to the meaning of "the gathering of things related to people", Heidegger's investigation of the meaning of the ancient Roman *res* is exactly what it means. In addition, the Romans also use the word *causa*. The Romans' understanding of *res* is based on the union of late Greek philosophy. On is "Latin's *ons*", which means the appearance of the meaning in this place. Later *res* becomes "ens", meaning "the place that is placed here, in the sense of us." "In simple terms, the "thing" as a matter related to people becomes the "object" placed before us, that is, it has evolved into an "object." In the Middle Ages, "res" became "used to refer to Anything on the spot, even the appearance. Old German "dinc" also has similar changes.

Through this paragraph, Heidegger introduced us to the concept that the word "things related to people" at the beginning of its appearance eventually evolved into the concept of "the object that stands before us". Heidegger believes that the meaning of the aggregation of the origin of the object is gradually forgotten with the establishment of modern objects as "objects". He exemplified that Kant's "Das Ding an sich" (the thing of itself) is actually "Gegenstand an sich" (the object of itself) to illustrate. When we say an object, it refers to something that is "opposing" or "opposing in a challenging posture," but this thing is not related to people. The most primitive meaning of things is gathered as things related to people, but they cannot be understood as objects. Heidegger advocates returning to the original essential meaning of things, that is, gathering, rather than the understanding of objects that are now being abused in philosophy and every day. Therefore, since things are gathered, and based on the previous discussion, they return to Heidegger's pot metaphor. The essence of closeness is the materialization of things, which is a four-dimensional gathering of heaven and earth. The last thing Heidegger needs to explain is how to gather?

VI. GATHERING — MAPPING GAME — "WORLD WORLDIZED"

The "fourization" (Vierung) of Heaven and Earth is a mutual mapping, mutual illumination, and mutual transfer (Vereignung). It is a process of the game, and it is not a mixture of indifferences. This game was made into a world by Hegel, a process that is worldization (welten). When it comes to the gathering of heaven and earth, Heidegger refers to this quaternary structure in different ways. "The existence becomes a function, in the sense of unity and diversity. In this sense, the actors, but also the actors, who act, and the things that work, are all existential. The existence of such multiple ways according to the role is realistic. [5] Analogous to the previous "materialization", the "worldized world" here also shares the same expression logic. Such expressions seem to be an unclear word game. Actually, we can't say it clear, when it is essentially a unclear being itself. Just like the interpretation of beings, this is not so much a demonstration of human incompetence. It is better to be objectively unsuitable for the world's "worldization", because of this reason and argument. ("[...] so etwas wie Ursachen und Gründe dem Welten von Welt ungemäß bleiben.") (P. 181). Because the world itself cannot be used

as an object to explain and argue, the world as a "mapping game" has no logic and reason. It is not a concrete "what", it is "as a virtual reality." So it can only be "worldized world" to describe this game and process. The world Heidegger proposed here is not what it is, but how it is, specifically explaining how to gather.

But Heidegger used the "round dance of the occurrence" (Reigen des Erreignens) to try to portray this mapping game and the world. This kind of cyclization cannot be understood as a closed ring, and it is a state of softness, obedience and flexibility. Heidegger's philosophy is unique. He claims to be not realism, nor is it the path of idealism. [6]

The gods in this round dance maintain their own nature; the four elements in the game depend on each other to enter their unified but their own essence, so softly subordinate to the world of chimerism (P.182). This obedience is also consistent with Heidegger's later view. The attitude of the object (existence) should be based on the call of the object itself. The late Heidegger is not explaining and analyzing the existence of the subject of his thought, but listening to the memory. It is a very obedient Accepted with a soft gesture. In this round dance, the four elements maintain tenderness and obedience, and synthesize the world in obedience.

VII. CONCLUSION

In fact, Heidegger used the four elements to clarify what the thing is; the world, the mapping game and the gathering are actually the same thing. The quaternion unity is the four-in-one, and the four-in-one is the mapping game. The mapping game is the world. The world is explaining the gathering. Because the thing itself is the gathering, it is concluded that the thing is calling the world, that is, the gods and four elements map each other in the game."

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