RELEASING UPPER LAPLAND

Martin Heidegger and the question concerning nature

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ABSTRACT

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This study is a phenomenological-hermeneutical analysis of the Upper Lapland forest conflict. Reindeer husbandry, state forestry and nature-based tourism are the main sources of livelihood in Upper Lapland. Also large, state-owned wilderness areas have been reserved for nature conservation. Utilisation of the forests and wilderness areas for different purposes has lead to a situation where the livelihoods are forced to compete with each other and conflicts between the different interest groups have arisen during recent years.

The theoretical background of the study is Martin Heidegger's critique of technology and his idea of Releasement (*Gelassenheit*). He was concerned with technology, not as an applied science or instruments, but as the *ontological relationship* we have with our surroundings and how this is inevitably affected by the technological age we live in. This manifests for instance in the hegemonic interpretation of nature through the natural sciences. Technology dominates the western way of relating with nature: the ways of defining, understanding, using and talking about nature, leaving little room for other ways. Nature is revealed as flexible raw material, stripped from other meaning, as mere resources for different purposes: a place to go to, to extract materials from, to use and enjoy, while our actual life lies somewhere else, separated from nature. The case of Upper Lapland is analysed as an example of this change that has taken place. A specific focus in this study is on how reindeer herding still contains elements that resist the technological worldview.

The hegemony of technology becomes apparent with the help of Albert Borgmann's theory of the device paradigm and focal things and practices. The technological lifestyle in Upper Lapland is contrasted with examples of focal things and practices, which have a radically different ontological relationship with nature and can still be found in local ways of living. This study also argues that technology can be seen as a reason why a compromise between the different stakeholders is still lacking.

The research concludes that the Upper Lapland forest conflict is a conflict of clashing conceptions and ways of living with nature. Only on the surface it is a conflict of interests or user-rights or a simple result of the overexploitation of limited natural resources. Moreover this study shows that those focal practices that make life meaningful for the people connected to them are threatened to extinction under the hegemony of technology. For this reason the conflict is so fundamental and comes up time and again. Once this is taken into account a possible compromise can begin to be built.

Key words: Upper Lapland, Martin Heidegger, technology, nature, focal things

Kiitoksen sana:

Tämä tutkielma sai alkusysäyksensä kesällä 2007, kun tein työharjoittelua Metsäntutkimuslaitoksen *Ylä-Lapin metsien kestävä käyttö* –hankkeessa Rovaniemen toimintayksikössä. Ensimmäiset kiitokset kuuluvat siis projektin vetäjälle ja tutkijoille: Mikko Hyppöselle, Arto Naskalille, Timo Helteelle, Seija Tuulentielle ja Ville Hallikaiselle, jotka kannustivat minua rohkeasti ottamaan tämän teeman käsittelyyni.

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Lisäksi haluan kiittää niitä kaikkia läheisiäni, jotka ovat kestäneet loputonta vouhotustani teknologiasta, luonnosta, olemisesta ja Ylä-Lapista.

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Sanna Hast

CONTENTS

1.   INTRODUCTION

Upper Lapland consists of the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki. Together with the reindeer herding co-operative (Fin. *Paliskunta*) in the municipality of Sodankylä this part of northern Lapland makes up the Sámi homeland in Finland. Reindeer husbandry, forestry, particularly state forestry, and nature-based tourism are nowadays the main sources of livelihood in the area. Fishing, hunting, picking mushrooms and wild berries and other forms of gathering are also of considerable economic and cultural importance for the local population. However, utilization of the same natural resources for different purposes has lead to a situation where the livelihoods are forced to compete with each other. For this reason the area has not been free of conflict during recent years and a compromise is yet to be found. (Sandström et al. 2000, Vatanen et al. 2006, p.436) Main issues seem to revolve around deciding who have the *rights* to use and decide over the use of the natural resources. This involves controversy between property- and user-rights, indigenous peoples rights, participatory rights and planning, decision-making locally, nationally, and internationally. Also the differing *values* and *conceptions* of *nature* people are dealing with seem to be tangled in the discourse. Arguments bounce back and forth between these different aspects of the matter, between facts and values, legislative and moral rights. The dispute has been looked at from many different angles: economics, ecology, forestry, tourism studies and social sciences. However, a philosophical analysis would contribute to gaining a holistic understanding about the possibilities for a compromise that has not yet been found.

In Finland the history of humans and forests has been filled with controversy between different interest groups. During the last few decades such "disagreements" between especially state forestry and nature conservationists have often led to rather serious conflicts (see e.g. Roiko-Jokela 1997, 2003). In Lapland relationships have grown particularly tense between state forestry and reindeer husbandry, which is basically considered to be the traditional livelihood of the Sámi people. To further complicate the situation, in recent years tourism has had an increasing influence on the area and local economy, and has taken foothold in the competition over the last "real wilderness" in Europe.

The situation in Upper Lapland is just one example of how *nature* has become political. There is a difference between nature (in itself), our different conceptions of nature and how these relate (also, how we perceive they should relate) to each other. (see e.g. Haila & Lähde 2003) Forest or nature is understood differently when it is inseparable from one's livelihood, when it is seen as something endangered or when it is used for so called recreational purposes. What is nature and how is it perceived through the eyes of the different parties in the case of Upper Lapland?

1.1. Environmental philosophy and Martin Heidegger

It is quite widely accepted that environmental research began in the 1960s mainly based on natural sciences and therefore as a highly technical field of study. Moreover, environmental problems and the possible solutions sought for them were, and are, technical. The tradition of western philosophy (environmental philosophy included) is often criticised, even labelled, for its anthropocentrism and mechanistical relationship with nature, giving nature only instrumental value. Yet philosophy is an ongoing search into different paths of thinking with contradictory tendencies. (Väyrynen 2006, e.g. pp.15-20) Some say that the mainstream of philosophy took a wrong turn when Christianity, in its western form, with its anthropocentric values became dominant (e.g. White 1997). These kinds of ideals of despotism or stewardship are still very strong even though they may have now taken a more secular outfit. It is possible to go further (e.g. Hargrove 1997), to ancient Greece, but often it is Modern time Europe where the man – nature dualism and the instrumental relationship with nature came into full bloom. Overall the concept of nature has taken many turns in the course of history. It is hardly a trivial matter to realise this.

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) has interested environmental philosophers today for his criticism on the prevailing attitudes towards the natural environment as well as the predominant conception of nature in the modern world (e.g. Cooper 2005, pp.339-340). When we try to understand what the reality we are dealing with is like (be our method natural science, social science or a religion of some form), environmental philosophy and philosophy of nature is always somewhere in the background. It is in the metaphysics of our thinking. It is the presumptions, values and understandings of nature that are already there. They often remain subconscious to us, but nevertheless

they are embedded in the structures of our sciences and worldviews. What is the 'environment'? Is it our home, the place where we are and what we are, the entangled meanings and contradictions and sanctuary of our being? Or is it an outsider, a resource, we can handle and enjoy when we choose? *Environment* can be defined generally as the global environment of all humankind, or it can have a particular nature, inseparable from cultural, local contexts. We come to realise, that *nature* is many things, it is not just biology, and it is not just socially constructed meanings, it is also philosophy (Vilkka 2002, p.81).

Environmental philosophers have been disappointed with the so-called western way of life and the highly anthropocentric western philosophical tradition. Many believe that this, along with our questionable conception of nature has lead to an environmental crisis and we are uncertain of where our actions will lead to next, or how we should go about fixing the (global) environmental threats that modern science[1] has brought to our attention. (see e.g. Väyrynen 2006, Attfield 1997, White 1997, Hargrove 1997) Western metaphysics has enabled, even encouraged the exploitation of natural resources for the benefit of humanity, seeing it as the acceptable way to treat nature. Nature has been seen as mere material that humans are free to mould and use as they choose. Or nature has been humanized in a way that encourages controlling nature towards a more "human" direction, as if it would be the right course of development for "nature's own sake".

There have been demands for a 'new global ethic' (e.g. Attfield 2005), a new relationship between man and 'the rest of nature'. The question about this 'new ethic' is difficult one and "new" here should be understood relatively. The history of philosophy is rich and colourful; it has been filled with differing paths of thought. Defining nature or man has not and will not be a matter of simple agreement. There are several paths we could choose to follow in our search for the one, true ethic. (e.g. Väyrynen 2006, Oksanen & Rauhala-Hayes 1997) Yet, the unfortunate truth about the dream of *globally sustainable development* is that it would seem to demand this one mystical, unified global ethic, with a global metaphysics, a hegemonic worldview or whatever one wants to call it. This new unified ethic, where would it come from, on what grounds could we justify it and why exactly would it be better, more correct or more truthful than any other? Not to mention, how would it be possible that all the peoples of the world would

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[1] For without modern science we would be unaware of such phenomena as for example climate change and holes in the ozone layer (to name a few)

unite and stand behind this new universal ethic. Perhaps its time we ask, if it is at all desirable to know only one understanding of the global nature, of humanity's common environment. To have one unified purpose, to find and master the eternal and unchangeable laws that govern the global nature in order to better (and more efficiently) exploit it for our purposes and, on the other hand, conserve and secure it as "nature museums" for future generations to use, enjoy and admire.

Martin Heidegger (1977b) describes in his essay *The Age of the World Picture* how one of the most essential phenomena of the Modern Age is its science (p.116). He then continues by describing our understanding of nature to be a projection (or a plan) that we (in a way) set upon nature, which is then seen as: '(…) the self-contained system of motion of units of mass related spatiotemporally' (Ibid. p.119). Moreover, he continues: 'Every event must be seen so as to be fitted into this ground plan of nature. (…) all events, if they are to enter at all into representation as events of nature, must be defined beforehand as spatiotemporal magnitudes of motion' (Ibid. p.119). In accordance to Heidegger, modern science can be seen as a metaphysical structure that leaves us with a conception of nature, the world seen as a picture, which leaves room for no other conceptions. This conception is static and uniform; it conceals all other possibilities of *nature*. This sort of conception may be *correct*, but Heidegger warns us not to make the mistake of taking this *correctness* as the *truth*. Heidegger figured that by deconstructing language, breaking and rebuilding concepts, shaking off their metaphysical baggage we may begin to understand, remember and find something new.

1.2. Research questions

The general aim of this research is to take a look at the conflict situation in Upper Lapland in the light of the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, particularly his critique over technology (as a worldview) and his idea of releasement (*Gelassenheit*). I want to find out, what light Heidegger's philosophy of technology can shed on the contemporary situation in Upper Lapland. So far the conflict seems to have reached a point where economic or ecological sustainability as guidelines are getting nowhere. Beginning by familiarizing with Heidegger's language and method I intend to open a fresher point of view, perhaps a new, more open field in which the people in Upper Lapland can discuss and dwell more freely.

Another important goal of this research is to take part in the discussion in the larger sphere of environmental philosophy as part of environmental problems and conflicts. In a way, this particular case represents a typical conflict of interests, land-use, rights and exploitation of natural resources. Similar situations can be found practically all over the world. How can Heidegger's philosophy contribute to this multidimensional field of environmental philosophy?

In one of his essays Hubert Dreyfus (1997) places a very significant question: he wants to know, how we can relate ourselves to technology in a way that not only resists its devastation but also gives it a positive role in our lives. In a similar way, I want to explore the situation in Upper Lapland. If, indeed technology is the most compelling mode of revealing of our time, the most compelling way of dealing with nature, how does this manifest in the situation in Upper Lapland and how should we proceed? Furthermore, is a constructive reform of technology possible and is it necessary?

1.3. Methodology

> 'Our investigation itself will show that the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in *interpretation*. (…) The phenomenology of Dasein is a *hermeneutic* in the primordial sense of the word, where it designates this business of interpreting.' (Heidegger 1980, pp.61-62)

The dispute in Upper Lapland has been looked at from many different angles: economics, ecology, forestry, tourism studies and social sciences. I will call the nature of this particular study *(phenomenological) hermeneutic text-analysis*, with a twist that Heidegger seems to give to every word he uses. Text-analysis ought to be understood in the sense that I am relying on the existing research results (texts) regarding the forest conflict in Upper Lapland and approaching it with the heideggerian frame of mind. In other words, the aim of this study is to use Heidegger's analysis of human *being* and the modern technological era that humanity has so to say, entered; adopt and embrace his "method" and approach with certain sensitivity the situation in Upper Lapland through the existing research material. With Heidegger phenomenology becomes '(…) a way of letting something shared that can never be totally articulated and for which there can be no indubitable evidence show itself' (Dreyfus 1991, p.30). In addition to this, 'our understanding of being is so pervasive in everything we think and do that we can never

arrive at a clear presentation of it. (…) Phenomenology, when correctly understood, turns out to be hermeneutic, that is, interpretative.' (Ibid. p. 32) In a way, due to this nature of the study, it will always remain unfinished and open to further questions.

This task of applying Heidegger to a very concrete and contemporary situation is not a simple one. In order to make Heidegger more understandable and applicable I have chosen Hubert L. Dreyfus, Albert Borgmann and Tere Vadén to help me. Albert Borgmann specializes in the philosophy of technology. He was born in Freiburg, Germany, where he attended some of Heidegger's lectures. Nowadays he is a professor of philosophy at the University of Montana. Working from a neo-Heideggerian viewpoint, Borgmann has developed Heidegger's ideas of the essence of technology and Releasement (*Gelassenheit*) further and given a very useful account of them. His notion of the *device paradigm* – another definition of Heidegger's Enframing or framework of technology (*Gestell*) – which Borgmann contrasted with what he called *focal things* and *practices*[2], will be of much assistance to me. In reading Borgmann I immediately see the close connection to Heidegger, but the way he writes is closer to practice and common sense. In a way Borgmann is applying Heidegger, following his path of thinking; precisely what I intend to do in my thesis.

Hubert L. Dreyfus on the other hand, is a professor of philosophy in the University of California, Berkeley. He is considered one of the leading interpreters of Heidegger's philosophy. He has made a very significant contribution to the tradition of Heidegger commentaries and according to some, Dreyfus gives a clearer account of Heidegger than Heidegger himself ever could. These are reasons for keeping Dreyfus along when attempting to understand and apply Heidegger.

Tere Vadén is a Finnish philosopher at the University of Tampere. I am particularly interested in his work on Heidegger, language and local ethics. He has for instance been concerned with the changing meanings in the Finnish language and the changing relationship with nature that this represents. Vadén wants to point out that when we lose the old meanings in our language, it is in fact something more than mere words that disappear. Furthermore, he is interested in what this means for our current possibilities of thinking about nature: what is the 'new nature' that is coming and the language that is inseparably connected with it?

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[2] Borgmann, like later Heidegger highlights the importance of special *things* in our life, their importance for our well-being. These terms I will deal with more closely in Ch.2.

This thesis began to get its form in the summer 2007, while I was doing my internship in the Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla) in Rovaniemi. It is a part of the research project *Sustainable multiple-use of forests in northernmost Lapland*. The existing research material for this project and other studies concerning Lapland, the Sámi, etc. I use as my 'textual data' and background information of Upper Lapland.

Following in Heidegger's footsteps it is possible to bring forth and make apparent the metaphysical structures of our modern time, structures that are also present in Upper Lapland. Finns have long had a very practical relationship with the many forests that cover our land, but this relationship has not always been purely economical, certainly it has not always been a master – servant relationship, and there is still an inkling of something, a seed that can grow, perhaps into a more pluralistic conception of nature and man as part of it.

I will begin by introducing Heidegger's philosophy, with the help of Borgmann, Dreyfus and Vadén, on the part that I consider relevant here. Then I will continue on to Upper Lapland in chapter 3 by introducing the situation. In chapter 4 I search more deeply into Upper Lapland, to see what light Heidegger's critique of technology and Borgmann's focal practices and things can shed on the livelihoods and everyday aspects of the dispute. The last chapter is an opening; a path, that I hope to find as a result of this study. All in all the nature of this study is a venture into Upper Lapland, and perhaps it can help in finding new paths, that remains to be seen.

Heidegger's main concern was Being**,** and more particularly the being of *Dasein*. He is not directly an environmental philosopher, nor is he aiming at creating a refined environmental philosophy. Due to his undisputed interest in the particular nature of the being of human beings he can be defined as an anthropocentric philosopher, but certainly not in the traditional sense. This will become clear from his understanding of human being as being-there or *Da-sein*, always *in* the world; the starting point, if not for us all, then at least for this study.

2.   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Heidegger and human being

Martin Heidegger's sensitivity with words and language is particular to his thinking; he is continuously creating new words and giving new meanings to old ones. He digs down to the roots of words and their meanings, plays with their etymology and puts words from their everydayness into a limelight. He is a verbal acrobat in his own right, and some have thought of his philosophy as nothing more than just that. (e.g. Jalava 2000) But in a way, as will be the guideline of this study, if the reader can bare with the poetic and literary twists and turns in (especially later) Heidegger's works s/he will learn that language is more than just an instrument of communication, it is a skilful way of doing things, of participating in common, social and collective, grounding experiences. As understood here, language is precommunicative and asubjective, this means, that it cannot be separated from its context or background, or indeed from the way of life (and therefore the people) that make it meaningful and intelligible. (Vadén 2004a, p. 413-416)

For Heidegger the aim or purpose of philosophy is to deconstruct, review and reflect on the concepts, categorisations and dogmas that have become self-evident truisms in our time. For instance, he had his reasons for avoiding such a concept as *Man* (Germ. *Mensch*) and instead creating and sticking onto a word combination: *Da-sein*. *Man* is insufficient in reaching and describing the being of humans. For Heidegger, Man (or human being) is not a noun in the same sense as for instance a house, a table or a tree. Man is also not just a class or species in the same sense as a horse or a sheep. Man can never be a mere representant of a species, because what makes his being possible (as a human) is not his species or class but first and foremost his being in the world and understanding of this being. (King 2001, p.47)

On the count of not speaking German, I have to rely mainly on English and Finnish translations of Heidegger's work. I do not find this particularly problematic, since Heidegger himself uses language in a very unusual way, and many have said that it is not German that one has to know, but *Heidegger's language*. Also, since I am not directly interested in doing research on Heidegger, but rather aiming at using his thinking, applying it; I have to try and find a balance between the terms that have been

established in the tradition of Heidegger translations and the original ones in German, without getting too tangled up in the semantics. Heidegger is notorious for his use of language and sometimes difficult to grasp, abstract thoughts. For this reason, Heidegger researches and commentaries have often been accused of being more confusing than Heidegger himself; this is trap that I will do my best to avoid.

2.1.1. There-being (*Dasein*)

Da-sein (Eng. *There-is*) refers to human being in at least three different ways. It can refer to the being that is characteristic of all human beings as entities, but also to a specific person. Moreover it is the *way of being* that is in concern. Above all it is part of Heidegger's attempt to reverse the Cartesian tradition in stating that individual subjects are always dependant on shared social practices. (Dreyfus 1991, pp.14-15) What is particular in the being of *Dasein* is the questioning, interpreting and understanding of its own being. This is what Heidegger refers to as existence and this is the essence of *Dasein*. This way of being, called existence, is shared by cultures, institutions (such as science), language and human beings (Ibid.). The emphasis in this sense is on the non-individual or collective nature of *Dasein* and the special connection 'it' has with language. Language goes beyond every individual's experience and conveys the locally bound meanings of nature and things alike.

Dasein's understanding of being is not a belief system that anthropology or another such scientific discipline could study and dig out the minds of individual subjects; the shared ways of behaving are not mere facts to be studied objectively, but rather, because they contain an understanding they must be studied as an interpretation. There is a network of beliefs that we ourselves dwell in and this makes it impossible for us to contemplate on them from an objective point of view; they are, in this sense, both nearest and farthest to us. What is furthermore crucial about Heidegger is that he states there are no "beliefs" to begin with; there are only skills and practices, and once these are presumed to rest on beliefs, rules or principles we are already observing them objectively. (Ibid. pp. 19-23) This is not to say, that we might not learn something important from looking at skills and practices as belief systems, but to point out the difficulty in studying (phenomenologically, hermeneutically or otherwise) something like the being of human beings in the sense that Heidegger means.

Human being is through and through interpretation; our practices and skills (whatever one wants to call them) cannot be grounded in human nature, God's will or rationality. According to Heidegger this is where our radical rootlessness or homelessness, the feeling of being unsettled (*Unheimlich*) stems from and this is why we try and try to make ourselves feel at home and secure. Heidegger claims that in realizing that nothing is grounded, that there are no guidelines, *Dasein* learns increased openness, tenacity and even gaiety. (Dreyfus 1991, pp. 36-39) A change in Heidegger's early thinking of *Dasein*'s fundamental homelessness evolves in his later works towards his notion of *dwelling* as the essence of our being. (e.g. Young 2000, pp.190-199) This will become clearer in the following chapters.

2.1.2. Being-in-the-world

> '(…) Being-in is not a 'property' which Dasein sometimes has and sometimes does not have, and *without* which it could *be* just as well as it could with it. (…) Dasein is never 'proximally' an entity which is, so to speak, free from Being-in, but which sometimes has the inclination to take up a 'relationship' toward the world. Taking up relationships toward the world is possible only *because* Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, is as it is.' (Heidegger 1980, p. 84)

For *Dasein*, there-being, being-in is definitive, not an option. We can distinguish between the two senses of the word "in", in order to understand the meaning of our being-*in*-the-world: the spatial sense ("being in a box") and the existential sense, ("being in a play, in love" etc.). The former use conveys inclusion and the latter involvement. (Dreyfus 1991, pp. 42-44) *Dasein* is always already inside and involved with the world. There-being, interprets itself from the situation of involvement that it is in. This 'being-in' might be best understood through the term 'inhabiting' or 'dwelling'. When we inhabit something, we feel at home in it, and this mode of being is not comparable with the relationship between subject and object. When we dwell in something, we are thoroughly involved with it and we relate with objects and other people through this dwelling. In Heidegger's understanding, we are not detached observers as the philosophical tradition since the time of Plato has maintained. To break from the iron cage of the epistemological tradition, we must begin with this everyday notion of being involved with the world. According to the tradition, human beings relate to objects by means of their experiences (*Erleibnisse*), that is, through subjective

mental states, yet according to Heidegger, human *experience* (*Erfahrung*) discloses the world and discovers entities in it. (Dreyfus 1991, pp. 45-46) As I understand it, for Heidegger the former has a pejorative meaning: they are *mere* subjective experiences, in a way comparable to events of adventurous (cheap) thrills, whereas the latter is more authentic, engaging and involving in the whole sense of the word; like dwelling, experience as *Erfahrung* connotes discovery and learning, even suffering and undergoing.[3]

According to Heidegger our nature as human beings is to be world disclosers. This means that we open, by means of our equipment and coordinated practices, coherent, distinct contexts or worlds in which we perceive, act, and think. Each such world makes possible a distinct and pervasive way in which things, people, and selves can appear and in which certain ways of acting make sense. (Dreyfus and Spinosa 1997) This 'we' refers to the collective being of *Dasein*, inseparable from its language, as well as its historical, social and cultural ties. According to Heidegger, during the course of history in the West, our understanding of things, of being, has gone through roughly six epochs: first things were understood on the model of wild nature as (1) *physis,* i.e. as springing forth on their own, then on the basis of (2) *poeisis,* or nurturing, when things were dealt with as needing help to come forth. This was followed by an understanding of things as (3) finished works, which in turn led to the understanding of all beings as (4) *creatures* produced by a creator God. The religious world gave way to the modern one in which everything was organized to stand over against as (5) objects and satisfy the desires of autonomous and stable subjects. The final epoch Heidegger called *the technological understanding of being*. (Ibid.) It is important to keep in mind that these epochs are all different ways, different representations of how being, through *Dasein*, the human dwelling in the world, has been understood. They are not to be understood as a linear progression towards an ever fuller understanding of being for instance. Heidegger is careful to emphasise that they are all ways of revealing, one is not above the other, except maybe in the sense that the last one is, in a way, pretending to be, causing us to forget our essence as world disclosers. In other words, we are

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[3] Dwelling, like homelessness, is connected with the notion that all being, the way it precenses to us and the way we live it, is a possibility, it is fundamentally contingent: it could (and we, as mortals could) always just as well, be otherwise or, as Heidegger maintains, *not be*.

'failing to dwell' (Young 2000, p. 194). This is why Heidegger moves on to his criticism of the technological era in his later works.

2.2. The Criticism of Technology

2.2.1. The Question concerning Technology

> 'Technology is not equivalent with the essence of technology.' (Heidegger 1977a, p. 4)

What Heidegger is most concerned about in his later works is the question concerning technology. His curiosity stems from the world that had then in the 1930s, and is still now, increasingly becoming, a world filled with technical relations. These relations seem to live a life of their own resulting in a shift in the kinds of historical events that can take place and the kinds of historical narratives that can be constructed, both of which have become detached from human living. Therefore, these technical relations appear to us as given, not invented. (Hodge 1995, pp. 35-36)

Heidegger begins to lead us away from the common understanding where we imagine ourselves as the masters of technology, as the creators that control. In other words, for Heidegger technology is not the same as its instrumental definition; it is more than the *means*, the machinery and devices we have invented to achieve certain *ends* in our lives. In the technological era, the dominant interpretation of nature comes through the natural sciences, which reveal nature to us as mere resources, stripped from other meaning. The reason Heidegger was concerned with technology was not technology in itself, as an object or collection of instruments, but the *relationship* we have with our surroundings and how that is inevitably affected by the technological age we live in. In this context of inquiry, technology is then not only applied science or engineering, it is the way 'we take up the world' (Strong and Higgs 2000, p. 25).

2.2.2. Enframing (*Gestell*)

> 'The revealing that rules throughout modern technology has the character of setting-upon, in the sense of challenging-forth. (…) Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it

may be on call for a further ordering. (…) We call it the standing-reserve [*Bestand*].' (Heidegger 1977a, pp. 16-17)

'(...) the rule of Enframing (...) demands that nature be orderable as standing-reserve. Hence physics (…) will never be able to renounce this one thing: that nature report itself in some way or other that is identifiable through calculation and that it remain orderable as a system of information. (Ibid. p. 23)'

Technology is a way of bringing-forth (*poiêsis*), which for Heidegger is a way of revealing; something the Greeks referred to as *alētheia*, bringing something out of concealment into unconcealment. Moreover, this is what the Romans later referred to as *veritas* or as we say 'truth'. Furthermore, technology is linked to *technē*, the Greek name for craftsmanship and skill, but also to knowing (*epistēmē*), in the sense of being entirely at home in something, to understand and be expert in it. This kind of knowing opens up, it reveals. (Heidegger 1977a, pp. 11-13) Heidegger emphasizes that 'what is decisive in *technē* does not lie at all in making and manipulation nor in the using of means, but rather in the aforementioned revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that *technē* is a bringing-forth' (Ibid. p.13). According to Heidegger modern technology and modern physics are also modes of revealing, but the revealing that rules in them is a challenging, it is not bringing-forth in the sense of *poiêsis*. Modern technology has the character of setting-upon, challenging-forth so that everything is ordered to stand by, to be there immediately at hand for further ordering, as standing-reserve (*Bestand*). (Ibid. pp.16-17) Heidegger names this challenging that gathers man to order the self-revealing as standing-reserve as Enframing (*Gestell*) (Ibid. p.19). *Gestell* is usually translated as 'enframing', but sometimes referred to as the 'framework of technology'. It is within this framework of technology that humans are in a way forced to perceive the world as 'standing reserve', as resources for different purposes. This way of revealing, the way being is manifest in the framework of technology, precedes modern science and is present in most phenomena of the modern age. It shows in the relationship between man and nature. Nature has been disenchanted, stripped from meanings, just waiting for science to come ever closer to thorough explanation and control of its laws. Like most aspects of modern life, scientific research is essentially technological. They have a similar 'mindset', so to say (Cooper 2005, p. 348). The technological framework is what makes science engage in experimentation, and makes us perceive the environment as standing-reserve: a

resource for timber and energy alike, but also a resource for our aesthetic pleasures, a spring to quench our thirst for thrilling experiences.

In *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life* Albert Borgmann (1984) develops further, specifies and gives a more practical account of Heidegger's interpretation of the essence of technology. The enframing for Borgmann becomes *the device paradigm*. (Strong and Higgs 2000, pp. 25) The observation of a repeated pattern in the contemporary life of technologically advanced societies is Borgmann's main concern. The common understanding of modern technology has a twofold aim: it promises to bring forces of nature and culture under our control, i.e. to liberate us from the shackles of misery, disease and hardship, as well as to enrich our lives (Borgmann 1984, p. 41). To understand how the flaw in the promise of technology comes up, we must look at the difference between *things* and *devices*.

2.2.3. The world of Things and Devices

Heidegger's notion of things is central to understanding what he means with dwelling. A *thing* for Heidegger gathers the fourfold of the earth and sky, gods and mortals (Heidegger 1996, p.58).[4] *Things* are closely connected to the human way of being in the world, dwelling. This means that human being, human dwelling in the world, opens up a space; a place and moment for *things* and their world to represent themselves, to be understood in their fullness of meanings. Heidegger is saying that mortals, human beings, are those capable of understanding the fourfold of the thing and being a part of it.

Heidegger's fourfold can be explained as existential elements of our being-in-the-world: we live our lives on and as part of the planet (earth), in a particular climate

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[4] When Heidegger speaks of the fourfold he poetically writes: 'earth is the serving bearer, blossoming and fruiting, spreading out in rock and water, rising up into plant and animal. (…) The sky is the vaulting path of the sun, the course of the changing, moon, the wandering glitter of the stars, the year's seasons and their changes, the light and dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of the weather, the drifting clouds and blue depth of the ether. (…) The divinities are the beckoning messengers of the godhead. Out of the holy sway of the godhead, the god appears in his presence or withdraws into his concealment. (…) The mortals are the human beings. (…) This simple oneness of the four we call *the fourfold*. Mortals *are* in the fourfold by *dwelling*. (…) *The fundamental character of dwelling is* (…) *sparing and preserving*. It pervades dwelling in its whole range. That range reveals itself to us as soon as we reflect that human being consists in dwelling and, indeed, dwelling in the sense of the stay of mortals on the earth. But "on the earth" already means "under the sky." Both of these *also* mean "remaining before the divinities" and include a "belonging to men's being with one another." By a *primal* oneness the four-earth and sky, divinities and mortals-belong together in one.' (Heidegger 1971)

(sky), among other human beings (mortals) and under the guidance of a given cultural tradition (gods or divinities) (Young 2000, p. 201). This is a simplification, but explains Heidegger's poetical notion of the fourfold well. Borgmann, like later Heidegger highlights the importance of special *things* in our life, their importance for our well-being. Borgmann describes a thing as inseparable from its contexts, from its world, and from our commerce with the thing and its world, namely, engagement. Our experience of a thing is always a bodily and social involvement with the thing's world. A thing is understood as a *focus*, a place where work and leisure gather, where the cultural and natural dimensions of the world open up. (Borgmann 1984, pp. 41-42) This understanding of *focal things* has to do with how local gatherings set up local worlds in our human dwelling in the world. According to Dreyfus and Spinosa (1997) such local worlds occur around some everyday thing that temporarily brings into their own both the thing itself and those involved in the typical activity concerning the use of the thing. Borgmann has usefully called the practices that support these local gatherings *focal practices*.

According to the device paradigm or the technological framework there has been a shift in our world of things to a world of devices. The best-known example that Borgmann gives is the shift from using wood-burning stoves or fireplaces (*things*) to central heating systems (*devices*). The difference can be noticed easily by anyone who has lived in a wood heated house and then moved on to an electrically heated one. Traditionally a fireplace was the focus of the house; it assigned the family members with different tasks every day and also it provided a regular and bodily engagement with the rhythm of the seasons with the physical tasks and skills of building and keeping the fire as well as the cutting, sawing and carrying of firewood. Now, a device, such as the central heating system, provides some aspects of the original thing, but not the context or the ties to nature and culture that the thing provides: the skills and tasks that engage the whole family. The device has a function, it provides a commodity, e.g. warmth, but it disengages people from the other elements the thing would have provided. In devices the machinery that enables the commodity becomes blurred, the means are separated from the ends; these become *mere means* and *mere ends*. The device disburdens, but at the same time it disengages and dissolves social, natural, cultural and historical relations. (Borgmann 1984, pp. 41-44) A thing is something that would call forth active and skilled engagement; it requires practice, whereas a device merely invites consumption (Borgmann 1995, pp. 90).

It seems almost any kind of thing or practice can earn a *focal* status within a cultural context. Horses for example are a result of millennia of breeding; they are a product of domestication conducted by humans. Yet, horses are not mere products (at least not always) to us, in the sense that they are perceived as devices that have lost their focal value or power to those who are connected to them: people engaged in focal practices recognise the immediate and centering power of the focal thing they are devoted to. Horses, when they are appreciated and acknowledged for themselves, their grace, power and gentleness, are an example of such a focal thing. (Borgmann 1992, pp. 120-122) Cows are also a result of breeding. However today, a cow is a unit in the intensive meat production industry, far from being treated or even recognised as an individual animal; they are more comparable to tools or devices than to those focal animals they traditionally used to be.

Craft built by artisans, music played with instruments, plants and animals appreciated in their own right can be other examples of focal things. (Borgmann 1992, pp. 120-122) Even farming can be considered a focal practice (Thompson 2000). These kinds of focal things are grounded in the underlying reality, and focal practises on the other hand are heirs to their immemorial traditions, but they can lose their focal significance and value when they are degraded to mere tools or toys. (Borgmann 1992, pp. 120-122) Focal things and practices are entwined together, to a delicate manifestation of focal realities that are almost constantly in danger of being forgotten. The change is easy to recognise: consider any traditional musical instrument, the building of which requires skill and playing of which usually requires years of practice. It engages the player, mind and body, but also it engages the listener in awe and respect. The modern stereo on the other hand repeats the music to any listener anywhere and requires but a simple pressing of a button. It provides music freely and abundantly to a wide audience, but as a consequence music has become a disembodied commodity, which is easily available almost anywhere. (Borgmann 1995, pp.88-90) As Borgmann puts is: '(w)e respect a musician, we own a stereo. A set and the music it produces are entirely at our disposal' (Ibid. p.88).

Music no longer requires our full attention, it can be background noise, we can carry it around with us easily in CDs or MP3s for instance, we can turn it on and off when we choose. And none of this really requires us to understand how the technological devices that provide us with it really work. It is as Borgmann says: '(i)n a device, the relatedness of the world is replaced by a machinery, but the machinery is

concealed, and the commodities, which are made available by a device, are enjoyed without the encumbrance of or the engagement with a context' (Borgmann 1984, p. 47). This is closely related to what Heidegger refers to as the 'supreme danger' in the revealing mode of the enframing, because the enframing not only conceals a former way of revealing, bringing-forth, but also it conceals revealing itself. This way enframing blocks the shining-forth of truth (*aletheia*), and man is in danger of being denied the original revealing and hence the experience of a *more primal truth*. (Heidegger 1977a, pp. 26-28) Because of the concealment, the technological framework or the device paradigm is seen as the only way of revealing, the only truth about nature, things and our place in the world. Heidegger's intuition is that treating everything as standing-reserve, i.e. as resources; people and things alike will no longer be understood as having an essence or identity, or even the goal of satisfying their arbitrary desires (Dreyfus and Spinosa 1997). Due to the concealment the device paradigm remains unknown to our experience, it is present and at the same time it is absent (invisible) in our lives. It has become the typical norm to our world and it changes the experience of nature and the living world as a whole.

Borgmann sums up his ideas of the material culture in the advanced industrial democracies to span a spectrum from *commanding* to *disposable* reality. He says: '(t)he former reality calls forth a life of engagement that is oriented within the physical and social world. The latter induces a life of distraction that is isolated from the environment and from other people.' Furthermore, commanding reality can be characterised with terms such as 'excellent', 'deep', 'communal', 'eloquent' and 'celebratory', whereas disposable reality is characterised by banality, shallowness, individualism and consumerism. (Borgmann 1995, p. 92) Strong words, but Borgmann seems to deem them necessary. The total dominion of the device paradigm would ultimately result in a twisted understanding of reality. Borgmann sometimes refers to it as disposable reality, or elsewhere, hypermodernism or hyperreality. Accordingly he speaks of the counterforce to it this phenomenon: focal reality or commanding reality. (Borgmann 1984, 1992, 1995)

Borgmann speaks of the change that can be seen practically all over the world: *old* is being set aside and forgotten, cornered into the marginals of social and cultural life, making room for the *new*. Characteristic of modern life is 'a state of mobilization where the richness and variety of social and cultural pursuits, and the natural pace of daily life have been suspended to serve a higher, urgent cause' (Borgmann 1992, p.14).

According to Borgmann, humanity, particularly its western industrial part, is at a crossroads, where there are two paths to follow: the first is to continue on the path that began in the Enlightenment, also referred to as modernism, that holds an unreserved allegiance to technology, only further refining it. The other alternative is to outgrow technology as a way of life and instead work on putting it to the service of the things that command and respect our life. The former will lead to the hegemony of the device paradigm and result in disposable reality, the latter will allow for commanding or focal reality to come forth. (Borgmann 1992. pp. 82-83; Borgmann 1995) The most pressing question for Borgmann and this study is, whether or not these glimpses of commanding focal reality – focal things and practices – are more that mere glimpses, more than small openings here and there, and whether or not they can be more. Borgmann treats these openings as the signs of a counterforce to the device paradigm. Few can deny their existence, but are they more than memories; do they still have the commanding presence and power in our lives? How can we find a balance between the world of things and the world of devices?

2.2.4. Releasement (*Gelanssenheit*)

'Releasement toward things and openness to the mystery belong together. They grant us the possibility of dwelling in the world in a totally different way. They promise us a new ground and foundation upon which we can stand and endure in the world of technology without being imperilled by it.' (Heidegger 1966, p. 55)

'Wilderness is a challenge for technology (…) *within* the framework of technology and *to* the framework of technology (Borgmann 1984, p.185).'

It seems the tables have turned. Our quest for subjugating nature has resulted in our thoroughly technological life; we now search for sanctuary and experiences of authenticity in the remaining glimpses and memories of nontechnological life. Borgmann paints a picture of pristine nature islands, wilderness spaces, locked inside the sea of technology. The Western conquest and domination of nature, born in the Enlightenment, with its roots even further in the history of science and philosophy, was an embodiment and an extension of an approach to reality, namely a technological one. Modern technology goes hand in hand with modern science in its promise of liberty and prosperity from the shackles of nature, prejudice and superstition. Liberating and enriching human existence was the supreme goal in the conquest of nature (Borgmann

1984, p. 185). In some ways we have achieved this, but at what cost? When we look through the technological lens, we perceive only the shallow view of things. We look around and see barely anything but resources and devices. People themselves have become consumers, conquerors or indifferent viewers at best and commodities at worst in the technological realm of reality. We seem to have built a world where market reality, economic values and economic power determine the nation's "rank". This, and the neurotic striving after the ideal of continuous economic growth have produced the illusion of the necessity for even more products and consuming. We are nations producing more and more needs for our citizens, nations that seem to have closed their eyes from the simple fact that Borgmann reminds us of:

> 'Life is always and already full; it is a total fabric. It may contain empty spaces for inconsequential additions. But if anything is added to life that takes time, the web of life is torn and rewoven; a hole is made by the new device. Saving and taking time come to the same thing here. A timesaving device creates a hole in traditional practices no less than does a device that devours time.' (Ibid. p.112)

Borgmann is onto something in portraying the downsides to industrialisation, individualism, economic liberalism and modernisation. Most advanced technological societies today – also referred to as 'developed consumer societies' – have another side to their glamorous front cover.

Another simple, yet perfect example of how devices have entered our world is the television set. It seems there has been the absurd assumption that there was an empty slot for the television to fill in people's daily lives, where in fact the presence of the television has compressed such other alternatives as reading a book, writing a letter, telling a story, going for a walk or sitting down to dinner into that one: what are we going to watch tonight? It has become the pressing choice for the individual to choose any other alternative, but on most occasions contemporary life and the structure of society have been built in such a way that the alternative would require exhausting and excessive exertion and effort of the individual. This can be easily seen for example in the dilemma of transportation in many cities and suburban areas: buying a car or two seems to become the only rational option for a family, whose members need to get to work, school, and pastime activities on different sides of the city. It becomes apparent that it is not only up to the individual (and in fact it is quite rarely possible for one or a few individuals alone) to make any changes on the societal and cultural levels. It comes

down to our collective fundamental and material decisions; it is these that are of the greatest moral significance. (Borgmann 1992. pp. 111-113)

Again, we must keep in mind that technology is not just gadgets and tools, even though it is this as well. A modern suburb for instance is now seen in a different light: as through and through technological. In the suburb we notice that technology shapes our lives, but in a concealed way, it is not apparent to us right away. The machinery of technology is present in the commodities: the food, warmth, cleanliness, and entertainment, carefully cut lawns, shrubs and flowerbeds. Technology has become the new orthodoxy, the dominant character of reality, and nature, has been secured in the little islands of what we call *wilderness*. (Borgmann 1984, pp. 189-190)

Wilderness is the most obvious sign of focal reality, for it possesses the clearest continuity with the land and is the closest descendant of the primeval world; 'it speaks to us naturally' (Borgmann 1992. pp.120). It is a counterforce to our largely technological world, it has the power to awaken us to realise the imprint of technology that is indeed present in practically everywhere today. But even outside the wilderness we can find traces[5] of focal reality: in the focal things and practices central to the culture in question. We can find and experience them in our world, though never determine and define according to universal criteria.

The point we turn to next is not necessarily that we should worship nature or form a new (or turn back to an old) religion, but that we again learn to recognise something as *other* and in its own brilliance; letting it be as it is rather than procuring it to our use (Borgmann 1984, p. 190). Borgmann describes technology as a force that rises to meet the challenges of nature. Technology, he says, dams rivers, drains swamps, logs forests and mines coal. Wilderness areas are the (last?) places left where such things have not yet taken place. Within the framework of technology, wilderness areas should be made available as recreational resources by the very least. But, wilderness is a challenge to technology itself, i.e. the entire technological way of dealing with nature. (Ibid.)

There has been a distinct shift in our understanding of nature from a foe to be conquered to a fragile and vulnerable friend to be cherished and conserved. Understanding human existence as Heidegger understands it through *Dasein*, there-being, is anthropocentric in a sense, but in an including kind of way. Our being is

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[5] as was shown in the examples of the previous chapter.

being-in-the-world, already in the world, with the world, inseparable from the world. Therefore, the understanding of humanity comes with an understanding of nature. This I believe is what Borgmann (1984) means with *higher anthropocentrism*, he says '(…) in the experience of the wilderness we can begin to understand that our significance comes only in the engagement with things that we recognise and respect in their own right' (p. 193).

There is a role for technology to play in this picture as well. For instance, without technology in the form of hiking equipment and other efficient tools and gear we carry with us into the wilderness, our wilderness experience might turn out to be very hazardous, possibly lethal, but uncomfortable the very least. Borgmann emphasises two important points here: (1) where-ever we live today in a physically sustainable way, we have already accepted technology and (2) this acceptance is required of us (p. 194). Accepting these two points is what Borgmann refers to as *new maturity*. The way Heidegger phrased this idea was through his idea of *Gelassenheit*, by which he meant, in a way, an attitude towards all things we encounter; the releasement towards them and openness to the mystery that surrounds them. This includes the attempt to simultaneously say 'yes' and 'no' to technology. The wildness and chaos of wilderness teaches us to *accept* and use technology, but through technology, and particularly if we learn to *limit* technology, we also learn to respect the wilderness for its beauty; the beauty that technology can never fully overcome or secure. When we log forests, build roads, hotels and tourist resorts, and venture into the wilderness in great numbers, we destroy it. Approaching wilderness through technology always either destroys it or at the other end, shuts all human influence outside it, in the name of conservation, nature reserves and even biodiversity. (Ibid. pp. 194-195) Technology, in its seemingly unlimited resourcefulness, has its limits. If we keep to the technological approach, we will ultimately either destroy the wilderness experience or reduce it to a controlled environment of nature museums. The thing about museums is that though they are nice to visit, educating and interesting, they are in the end mere salutary keeping places for dead things: meaning, symbols and traditions that have been lost in the course of time.

For Borgmann wilderness represents a centre, a *focus* that stands against technology in a fruitful kind of way, it goes beyond the procurement of technology. Furthermore, our relationship to it goes beyond mere consumption, and we can learn to accept technology in a limited way. It is only when the technological understanding of

Being has not achieved total domination can we still encounter things as things that gather the fourfold. If technological domination is complete, we will no longer find alternative ways to disclose our surroundings other than as flexible raw material, as resources for different purposes. (Zimmerman 2000, p. 128)

2.2.5. New paradigm

> 'even if the old rootedness is being lost in this age, may not a new ground and foundation be granted again to man, a foundation and ground of which man's nature and all his works can flourish in a new way' (Heidegger 1966, p. 53)

The core of our current understanding of being is nothing more than ordering for the sake of ordering. As Heidegger puts it, it is nothing more than constantly 'driving on to the maximum yield at the minimum expense' (Heidegger 1977a, p.15). We develop our potential for the sake of further growth; we have no specific goals, apart from ever better organisation. We become a part of something that no one directs, moving toward total mobilisation and enhancement of all beings. A perfectly ordered society is the culmination of the technological framework. Yet, once we come to realise that this is an ontological condition, one among many in the history of being, we can step outside of it, we can gain a free relation to it. Heidegger's thinking can open an understanding for us: when we realise that what is most important in our lives is not subject to efficient enhancement; that the drive to control everything is precisely what we cannot control, we have began walking on the path of thinking. (Dreyfus 1993, pp. 306-308)

Dreyfus has also spoken in a similar way as Borgmann (with his focal things and practises) of local worlds that gather the scattered practises of a group unifying them into coherent possibilities for action. He calls these 'worlds' *cultural paradigms*. These paradigms are what guide our actions, but cannot be explicitly stated or categorised as a set of beliefs or values (Dreyfus 1993, pp. 298-299). However, Dreyfus argues that there can be nihilistic paradigms. These celebrate our ability to get everything clear and under control, rationalised, concealing the struggle between earth and world[6]. Our current paradigm, the technological understanding of being, is

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[6] *World* is what the totality of the cultural paradigm stands for; *earth* on the other hand is what comes to resist the attempts to abstract and generalize the point of the paradigm. This means the content of the

dedicated to flexibility and efficiency for the sake of not some further end, but just for the sake of flexibility and efficiency themselves. All cultures have norms for human behaviour and find some order in nature, but it is ours particularly that tries to make the social and natural order total by transforming or destroying all exceptions. (Ibid. pp.301-302) Here again we are getting closer to understanding the "supreme danger" in the essence of technology. Heidegger is not declaring a war against the dominion of nature by technology (or the devastation that has followed) as such, though he does not deny the problems technology presents either. He is careful to emphasise technology is no mere means, that the dangerous situation of modern man is more than technological destruction of nature and civilisation; it is more than the loss or happiness technology can cause in our lives. As Dreyfus rightly claims Heidegger is more concerned with the ontological condition we find ourselves in; the distress that the technological understanding of being causes, rather than the destruction caused by any specific technology. Dreyfus puts it; the *threat* is not a problem for which we can find a solution, but an ontological *condition* from which we can be *saved*. (Dreyfus 1997, pp. 42-43) The vocabulary Heidegger uses when he attempts to lead his reader towards the understanding of the essence of technology or modern age is powerfully charged: he speaks of the ultimate danger and at the same time, the saving power of technology and prophesises about the turning, the transformation that leaves us with a free relation to technology. He says it is because we forget to ponder, to think meditatively (as opposed to thinking calculatively in accord to the modern natural sciences), we cannot begin to understand the situation of our modern world and man's place in it. We cannot come to realise this "new relation" of man to the world, this relation that is in principle a technological one, and has its roots in the seventeenth century Europe. It is due to this relation that the world now appears to us as an object open to the attacks of calculative thought. (Heidegger 1966, p. 50-51)

It seems the only way to create or experience meaning and seriousness in the present age is to make one's own individual absolute commitment. But in order for this individual commitment to be recognised and accepted, it would require a shared understanding of what is worth pursuing. Yet as our culture becomes more and more a celebration of critical detachment, self-sufficiency and rational choice, socially and culturally shared commitments become ever more uncommon and rare. This continues

cultural paradigm can never be fully verbalized or captured, or else it loses its meaning. Both aspects are necessary for the cultural paradigm to work, to be alive. (see e.g. Dreyfus 1993, p. 300)

to the extent that commitment itself is seen as a folly. (Dreyfus 1993, p. 291) Heidegger sees this undermining of commitment not as a lack of determined and strong individuals, but rather as a characteristic of our modern world: things that before have evoked commitment have lost their authority, and as a result, individuals feel isolated and alienated. People turn to their private experiences in search for significance. All aspects of cultural life become mere varieties of private experience and people themselves are reduced to spectators. (Ibid. pp. 292-293) Even so, there are still remaining marginal practices (anomalies) that the technological hegemony has not yet taken over and normalized and it is precisely in these marginal phenomena that we could find the only possibility of resistance to technology. (Ibid. pp. 302-303) Focal things, focal practices and marginal phenomena are traces of the living resistance to technology. They are fleeting and difficult to take into the grip of rational thinking, for it seems the moment you try to put a name to it and secure it, it disappears forever. Nevertheless, it is the aim of this study to cautiously try and seek them.

3.   UPPER LAPLAND: LIVELIHOODS AND HISTORY

Turning now back to Upper Lapland, I will begin by giving a short overview of the situation. The area we are dealing with consists of the municipalities of Enontekiö, Inari and Utsjoki. These municipalities, together with one of the reindeer herders' co-operative units (Fin. *Paliskunta*) in the municipality of Sodankylä, make up the Sámi homeland in Finland. The main sources of livelihood are reindeer husbandry, forestry, particularly state forestry, and nature-based tourism. In addition to this large state owned wilderness areas have been reserved for nature conservation. Fishing, hunting, picking mushrooms and wild berries and other forms of gathering on the other hand are part of the way of life and therefore of considerable traditional and cultural importance for the local population. I will now take a short look at these livelihoods and their history separately in order to give some the reasons for the conflict.

3.1. Lapland

Lapland was divided into Lapp villages (*siidas*) up until the 17th century. The self-sufficiency of these villages required a vast area for the traditional Sámi livelihoods such as hunting and fishing and also for reindeer pastures. Forests were used for gathering wood for building materials, firewood etc. (e.g. Massa 1994, pp.143-145, Sandström et al. 2000, pp.18-19) Human impact on the surrounding environment and nature remained low as long as the population size remained small and people used only what was necessary for providing nourishment and shelter. Reindeer herding evolved slowly over hundreds of years, from wild reindeer hunting to the herding of semi-domesticated animals. Towards the end of the 20th century, reindeer herding adopted more modern technologies and practices as well as market economy principles all of which have increased its status as a livelihood. (Kyllönen et al. 2006, p. 695)

In the mid 1700s, the Swedish government began colonising Lapland with Swedish (Finnish) population. The settlers' main livelihoods were animal husbandry, fishing and hunting. However, due to the harsh and severe environmental conditions the new settlers were forced to resort to the same livelihoods as the local Sámi people. This, together with the population growth, lead to a competitive situation over the

sparse natural resources. (Sandström et al. 2000, pp.18-19, 25-) In the turn of the 19th and 20th century it can be said that the population growth had passed the level of ecological sustainability (Massa 1994, pp.175-176).

Today reindeer herding, forestry, tourism and nature conservation are the four major forms of land use in northern Finland. They all have their own histories, cultures, practices and socio-economic importance. These livelihoods are different, they may even have incompatible requirements and operational modes for the land use. (Kyllönen et al. 2006, p.696)

3.2. Forestry

Nationally speaking the forestry in Lapland was small scale until the 1950s. After the Second World War the meaning and value of the northern forests were connected with the rebuilding of Finnish economy and infrastructure. In addition unemployment was already raising its ugly head at the time, and forestry provided vital jobs for the local population. (Nyyssönen 1997, p.103) The time after the World Wars is often described as a turning point in Lappish forestry. Lapland began to get a new image: rich in its unused, unmanaged and wild forests and rivers, as a storage of natural resources only waiting to be mobilised for the good of the whole nation. (e.g. Massa 1994, pp.204-205, Nyyssönen 1997, pp.104-105) Characteristic of this time was also its total lack of concern for the preservation of the natural resources and its indifference and disregard towards the development of local livelihoods. This whole process of "industrialising the north" has been described by e.g. Massa (1994) as a time of "ecological colonialism" practised by the Finnish government and economic life (e.g. p.205 and pp.263-265).

Upper Lapland differs from Finland as whole, but also from Lapland as a whole. It is unique in its nature as well as land-use and culture. Forestry is practiced primarily in Inari and this is where the main conflicts between forestry and reindeer herding have concentrated in. (Raitio and Rytteri 2005) Today, nearly 90% of the forests in Upper Lapland are state owned and managed by Metsähallitus, a state run commercial enterprise (since 1994). An increasing share of the area is in nature conservation and under restrictions caused by wilderness and recreational demands. (Hallikainen et al. 2006, p.454; Sanström et al 2000)

3.3. Reindeer husbandry

The Reindeer Herding Management Law of 1932 (revised in 1948 and 1990) regulates reindeer herding in Finland. It restricts free grazing of reindeers to the Province of Lapland and northern parts of the Province of Oulu, a region that is currently divided into 56 reindeer-management districts, also known as co-operative units (Fin. *paliskunnat*). These units are all represented in the government funded Reindeer Herders' Association (Fin. *Paliskuntain yhdistys*). In Finland both Sámi and Finns can own and herd reindeer as long as it is done within the co-operative system of the *paliskunta*. The total number of reindeer per district is regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. (Kyllönen et al. 2006, pp.695-696) Upper Lapland is Sámi homeland and two thirds of the population in the area are Sámi. Reindeer herding is significant both as a livelihood and a tourist attraction, but also as part of the cultural identity and way of life for the Sámi. (Raitio and Rytteri 2005)

What seems to have become one of the biggest issues in the conflict between state forestry and reindeer herders are the effects of forestry on the winter pastures of the reindeer. Beginning from around the end of the 19th century and due to increasing influence of forest industry the northern forests have been seen as a means of making profit. Since then, the relationship between forestry and reindeer herders has been problematic. Accusations have been made from both sides. The reindeer are said to disturb the regeneration of forests and on the other hand the harmful effects of the clear felling of especially old-growth forests on the occurrence of reindeer lichens and horsetail lichens (arboreal lichens or "hanging lichens") is undeniable. (e.g. Helle, Jaakkola, Niva 2002, p.86) The meaning of lichens as the source of main nourishment is increasingly important during wintertime when the reindeer have to dig through snow or, when the snow carries their weight and is too thick and hard to dig through, reach for the hanging lichens on the trees. Several researches show that the occurrence and the density of lichens are connected to the age of the forests. The optimal surrounding for the horsetail lichens is in forests 150-250 years old. (e.g. Helle & Jaakkola 2006, pp.239-240) On the basis of different studies made (e.g. Kumpula et al. 1997, 2000, 2002, 2004 in Kyllönen et al. 2006) it can be confirmed that particularly the state of winter pastures has deteriorated significantly in the recent decades. The deterioration is a result of the overgrazing and over-utilisation of the pasture areas by reindeer herding

and other land use practices. Reindeer herders have also had to resort to supplementary winter feedings, which increase the costs of herding and meat production in general. (Kyllönen et al. 2006, p. 697) The maximum number of reindeer per co-operative unit (in most of the co-operative units) ought to be cut down, if the herders are aiming at relying mainly on natural pastures all round the year. This may be the only way to keep the reindeer pastures and the productivity of the reindeer at a relatively good level and the supplementary feedings at minimum. (Kumpula, 2000, p. 92) The discourse regarding the overgrazing of the pastures assumes that the cause and effect of the overgrazing is the increase in the supplementary feeding. The vicious circle becomes full when, according to the allegations, herders are keeping the reindeer numbers artificially too high with supplementary feedings, which then results in the fact that the pastures are unable to regenerate, which further on result in more supplementary feedings. (e.g. Valkonen 2003, pp. 184-185) On the other hand, there is also pressure on reindeer herding as a "livelihood" to keep the number of reindeers high in order to increase production. Reindeer husbandry in the Sámi homeland is very much dependant on natural pastures. Both Finns and Sámi are reindeer herders; therefore the methods and practises overlap. Even though many of the practises have changed over the centuries along with modernisation, reindeer herding still has very strong symbolic and cultural meaning for the Sámi. During its long history as a livelihood it has developed a complex system of meanings, concepts, beliefs and values. (Heikkilä 2003, pp.116-117)

The whole area of Upper Lapland is reindeer herding area. Most crucial area for both reindeer husbandry and forestry is in the municipality of Inari, particularly the forest areas surrounding lake Inari, in the co-operative units of Ivalo (50% of the total area is used in forestry), Hammastunturi (23%), Paatsjoki (19%) and Muddusjärvi (16%). (Sandström et al. 2000, pp.81-82) In Inari, both reindeer husbandry and forestry are considered to be traditionally and culturally the most important livelihoods (e.g. Hallikainen et al. 2006, pp.459-460).

3.4. Tourism

One of the four major forms of land use in Upper Lapland is tourism, which is largely based on the attractiveness of the Lappish nature and landscapes. The impact and influence of tourism has grown at increasing speed since the World Wars. Even so,

visitor numbers remained low until the 1960s and it is not until the 1980s that we can say the tourist numbers in Lapland really shot up. It was in the 80s that many investments were made in tourism: building new resorts etc. Nevertheless, the boom was short sighted and the depression and economical crisis of the 1990 led to problems and bankruptcies for many entrepreneurs in the tourism industry. (Massa 1994, p.219)

Since the mid 1990s tourism has been steadily growing and has certainly earned the status of a nature-based livelihood for many people living in the area. The growth has been particularly strong in international tourism. (e.g. Meriruoho 2006, pp. 25-27) Tourism has become the most significant and still growing source of income and employment in Inari. Simultaneously this has lead to the one-sided dependency on the success of this particular livelihood in the municipality: a situation, which can become a threat to the stability of its economy. Even relatively small changes in the international demand can have drastic effects on the local economy. (Vatanen et al. 2006, pp.448-449) In the long run the positive impacts of the tourism industry on the local economy can be doubted. Yet regardless of this possible instability and history of ups and downs, there is plenty of public discourse supporting the growth of the tourism industry in Lapland in general.

Tourism affects reindeer herding both locally and regionally: for instance, ski resorts reduce the use of surrounding pastures and snowmobile safaris disturb herding in a larger area (Kyllönen et al. 2006, p.697). On the other hand tourism provides additional income and jobs. Thus, it can be seen having both negative and positive effects. In recent years it has become economically more and more important to the municipalities. Of the nature-based livelihoods tourism is also the greatest employer. (Sandström et al. 2000; Vatanen et al. 2006, p.448)

3.5. Nature conservation

Back in the 1970s there were only two statutory conservation areas: Kevo nature preserve and Lemmenjoki national park. However, beginning in the 1980s, the areas have grown larger and new ones have been established. (Sandström et al. 2000, p.32) Today the sum of the all the conserved areas in Upper Lapland is relatively large: 75% of the total area in Enontekiö, 85% in Utsjoki and 62% in Inari. These areas include a variety of different nature types. For example a bit over half of the total conservation

area are open swamps and fells and approximately 10% are old-growth forests. (Sandstorm et al. 2000, pp.105-106) All in all the majority of Finland's nature conservation area is in Lapland and particularly in Upper Lapland, unique as it is in its uninhabited wilderness areas, rich sub arctic vegetation and wildlife.

During the last few decades in the history of humans and forests in Finland controversy between especially state forestry and nature conservationists have led to rather serious conflicts (see e.g. Roiko-Jokela 1997, 2003). Such is the case also in Upper Lapland. One example is the struggle in Kessi in the 1980s for the "last wilderness areas" in northeastern Inari, which is still fresh in people's memories. At the core of the Kessi-case was the conservation of old-growth forests and wilderness areas, but questions about the employment of the locals, rights of the indigenous Sámi and reindeer husbandry were also brought up. (Roiko-Jokela 2003, pp.69-) This is what makes the forest conflicts in Upper Lapland unique: restrictions in forestry are demanded for the protection of local livelihoods and employment as well as nature values (Raitio and Rytteri 2005).

Nature conservation effects reindeer herding by limiting the use of pastures in a few small areas and by demanding the protection of predators such as wolverines, bears and wolves that can damage the herds. On the other hand nature reserves protect the crucial old-growth forests. (Kyllönen et al. 2006, p.697)

3.6. Summary

The conflicting interests of the different stakeholders or resource users can be summed up as follows. The main interest for reindeer husbandry is good reindeer pastures: areas with suitable nourishment and adequate space. Also appropriate snow conditions, good visibility, peacefulness, and a small number of predators are positive characteristics of an area suitable for reindeer. Forestry looks mainly for quality timber, preferably a forest where logging is not regulated by conservation for instance. Tourism values and aims at providing the adventurous and thrilling experiences of nature; the exotic, wilderness-like and pristine experience of nature. The local cultural interests and worldviews hold that the use of the area and natural resources is not too strongly mediated by conservation or other restrictions, nor ruined by excessive and exploitative methods. The home environment and scenery as well as living space and resources are

valued highly. Accessibility, location and individually special places are also aspects that need to be taken into consideration. (Mettiäinen 2007, pp.180-181)

The different interests are more often conflicting than supporting each other. For example, nature conservation and forestry as well as forestry and reindeer husbandry are most apparently conflicting. With forestry and reindeer husbandry and tourism the main questions circles around the preventing or long term postponing of loggings, though total and strict conservation is rarely supported for this might result in restrictions in the tourism industry and hunting for example. The relationship between reindeer husbandry and tourism are primarily good, with only minor and occasional inconveniences between the two. The local traditional and cultural ways of life (hunting, picking berries, etc.) are more often seen as secondary to the interests of the livelihoods, but in connection with nature conservation it is widely accepted that the possibilities for their practising should be guaranteed. (Ibid.)

4.   THE QUESTION CONCERNING UPPER LAPLAND

In Upper Lapland, the different parties appear to be arguing over the use of the same natural resources for different purposes, but what if the situation is in fact so that they are arguing over the different understandings they have of nature, of different *natures*? We now turn to back Martin Heidegger again to look at the situation in Upper Lapland from a different angle. If technology is indeed the most compelling metaphysics of our time, can it be seen as a reason why a compromise is still lacking? In the previous chapters, it has been established that technology is dominating our way of relating with nature, our ways of defining, understanding and using nature; leaving little room for other ways. The forest conflict will now be analysed as a result of clashing conceptions of nature. Perhaps the conflict in Upper Lapland is not merely a conflict of interests or user-rights, nor only a result of the overexploitation of limited natural resources, but in fact a manifestation of the hegemony of technology, which may not have reached completion yet.

If people have to resort to the only language that is considered relevant, the technological language or the language of the natural sciences, they may be unable to convey their whole understanding of the nature they believe is in question, which can result in a situation, where the different interest groups will never reach a compromise. Or, what may be even worse and will be more thoroughly looked at later on, a compromise is found, but it will be at the cost of the other natures: the destruction and forgetting of them, their meanings and the experiences they carry.

It is important to find out the meaning of nature for the local people: if the relationships and definitions of nature differ from each other, whether they have changed during the years and how they are present in their everyday practises. Here, the concept of nature is to be understood as a socially constructed entity, this means its meaning can and does change. Where else would this change occur than in language understood in the wider sense? In those collective meanings, grounding experiences and practices that also Heidegger was concerned with? Language goes beyond every individual's experience and conveys the locally bound meaning of nature, which has been revealed in the communal relationship with nature in the course of time.

In applying the Heideggerian model to Upper Lapland one must approach with caution. Heidegger himself is a representative of a certain culture, a certain people in a certain time and space. The very message he was attempting to convey, in my understanding, was that we ought to approach issues, people, cultures, meanings, words with a precious sensitivity towards them. In order to understand the conflict in Upper Lapland we must attempt to understand the otherness, the unfamiliar nature between the parties (the stakeholders) in regarding one another. Here we are indeed not dealing with a conflict of livelihoods, stemming from limited natural resources and poor distribution of them, but a conflict between *natures*, between the different ontological understandings and definitions of the nature at hand.

Changes in the social and economic structures have been rapid since the Second World War. It is common these days to talk about "natural resources", by which we usually mean the raw materials and energy in nature: we talk about mineral *resources* and wind *power* for example. Yet these are not entities, elements or properties found in nature itself, but become resources for humans when people discover a meaningful use for them. (Valkonen 2003, p.53.) We start referring to them as "natural resources". After the World Wars the nature discourse in Lapland took a turn. Nature is seen having multiple possibilities that need to be harnessed for the benefit of Lapland's economy and the employment of its people. Nature is described as something that will provide jobs and therefore a future for the local population. Same kind of rhetoric is still used in popular discourse on how people would best benefit from nature. (Ibid. p.54.)

4.1. Forestry and Reindeer husbandry

Beginning in the mid 19th century, but even more so in the 20th century, the forests also in Lapland began to look more and more like logs and timber, i.e. resources for the paper industry and export, a step toward modernisation and a source for steady economic growth in Finland. Particularly since the 1950s the increasing use of machinery in forestry and agriculture became evident signs of modernisation and industrialisation in Finland. (e.g. Massa 1994, Ch.3)

Overall the core of modernisation in Lapland has not been so much in the industrialisation, but in the increasing use of machinery in forestry, agriculture and

reindeer herding. This has significantly decreased the need of people as labour force. For example new methods in reindeer herding have been adopted: the snowmobile came in the 1960s, ATVs in the 1970s, motorbikes in the 1980s, since then even helicopters have been used. At the same time reindeer husbandry has become inseparably connected with global economic changes just like any other livelihood. (e.g. Mettiäinen 2007, p.34)

Though large areas in Upper Lapland, also in Inari, are under conservation, it does not compensate the damage caused to reindeer husbandry by forestry, because the crucial winter pasture areas are largely in state forestry use. (Mettiäinen 2007, p 41; Saarela 2003) It is precisely in Inari where the controversial remaining forest areas are. These forests are close to the northern forest line and are very sensitive to any environmental stress. Industrial forestry, loggings solely for the pulp and paper industry, seems rather unwise in an area, where the rotation time of the forests is relatively long and which is ecologically fragile and unique. The timber logged from this area is mainly pine, which is distinctively high quality raw material. Waiting for these trees to come to age at around 150-200 years, and then using them for the pulp industry is an absurdity. Reindeer herders have repeatedly raised their voices on the behalf of protecting the crucial old-growth forests from forestry use. How their voices or the voices of other locals (who do not practice reindeer herding or own reindeers) have been heard is debatable. (e.g. Raitio 1999; Raitio & Rytteri 2005)

As livelihoods forestry and reindeer husbandry are relatively equal in economical terms for the municipalities. They are also an important contributor to the diversity of the economical structure of the municipalities in general. Culturally speaking reindeer herding is considered more important though. (Hallikainen et al. 2006, p.460; Ch.3.) Lately these forests in Upper Lapland, Inari in particular, managed by the Finnish state and Metsähallitus, have not been very profitable. There have been discussions about the necessity of the demand of a fixed annual profit from these forests and it is quite widely admitted that loggings in the area are kept going for social reasons (employment of the local forestry workers). It seems clear-cut loggings for mass production purposes at these latitudes are simply not economically sensible in the long run. Even Metsähallitus might be ready to admit this. However, it is not my purpose here to solve which livelihood or practice is economically, ecologically, legally or juridically most welcome to Upper Lapland. The purpose here is to look at these livelihoods from an ontological point of view.

It is fairly obvious that somewhere around the time after the World Wars and during the rebuilding of the Finnish nation (at the latest) the forests even in Upper Lapland began to look like timber, like units of economical hope for the better of the nation. The industrialisation of Lapland was well on its way. The manner the forestry sector positions itself against nature, to harness its goods for further use, is thoroughly technological, there is little doubt about that. Even the current talk about *sustainability* in forestry is a child of the technological worldview (though it may be a step towards a brighter future in regarding environmental issues). Certainly there can be individuals, forestry workers for instance, who experience the forest and working in the forest as a focal practice, but generally speaking it is purely a livelihood, where the old-growth forests are barely more than a collection of tree trunks. Within the framework of technology it makes no difference whether the trees (or nature in general) in Inari are rather unique, they are simply material for the pulp industry, same as any other tree in the world. When the forest is seen as a source of income and living, one tree also becomes a mere unit in the forest industry.

What then of the reindeer herder? How different is the forest when it is seen as a resource of lichen for the reindeer, compared with a forest seen as a resource of timber? The ontological relationship seems the same. The forest is standing-reserve. The reindeer is meat that requires lichen for its production and the tree is timber and/or material for paper industry. We can see the similarities of these two livelihoods, particularly when they are both perceived as livelihoods. The former was born out of the technological era; forestry is a clear example of a livelihood stemming from the will to understand, control and use the natural resources out there for the benefit of humanity. Reindeer herding on the other hand has changed gradually from the contact with modernisation, adopting the technological worldview and attitude towards nature and things slowly over the centuries. Nevertheless the two now more or less grow from the similar metaphysical basis, relying on technological fixes to problems rising from the technological attitude towards their trade. Is this all there is to it? Does the reindeer herder see the old-growth forests as standing reserves for lichen? New technologies, changes in the environment, deterioration of pastures and EU-membership are factors that are changing the nature of reindeer herding today, towards regular entrepreneurship, turning it once and for all into a business among others. Yet there are those who persistently emphasize the cultural importance of reindeer herding particularly for the Sámi. What has happened to the significance of the trade?

4.1.1. The question about the modern device

Certainly reindeer herding has for centuries been the traditional livelihood and way of life for many Sámi in Finland. Over the centuries the Sámi developed this semi-nomadic lifestyle, entwined with the natural life-cycle of the reindeer and the seasons. Reindeer herding evolved slowly, from wild reindeer hunting to the herding of semi-domesticated animals. This happened alongside and partially due to the slow colonisation process in Lapland: lifestyles and ways of living evolved towards the more western modern way in adopting modern technologies and practices as well as market economy principles. The important thing to realise is that the change from premodern to technological is not an entirely linear process; it is gradual, it happens by degrees and overlapping of the two differing worldviews is common. This means that it is difficult to draw a line between the change from something that used to be a focal practice and something that has become a thoroughly technologically conducted one, a part of the device paradigm. This is true certainly also, because many things have not yet completely become so. The focal value and centering power of the tradition, the practice of reindeer herding, is rather obvious: it is a focal practice and a trace of focal reality even today, though its nature has certainly changed. The question is, how much can the particulars of a practice change without it losing its focal power entirely? In reality we realise the change is present in different situations, people and practices at different levels. We can identify the change more clearly for instance by approaching the matter from the viewpoint of one particular device: the snowmobile.

The snowmobile has become one of the prime examples in the discourse regarding the modernisation of reindeer husbandry. It is rather clearly a technological device designed for the purpose of making moving about in the snow-covered forests easier and faster, replacing and becoming the alternative for the need of skiing. Also snowmobiles are devices that can provide the driver with the excitement and thrills of racing down any snowy opening in the wilderness, breaking the silence with the roar of the engine, disturbing the life of many inhabitants of the wilderness. The snowmobile provides a commodity, but at the same time it disengages the user of the old alternative: the skis, things that have been the traditional mode of transportation in winter. It also changes radically the bodily experience of moving about in the forest and the relationship with nature in general.

As a device, the snowmobile has become a particularly visible aspect of contemporary reindeer herding, by replacing the more traditional, premodern way of skiing after the herd. Does this mean that reindeer herding as a way of life has lost its focal significance? The snowmobile used in the practice of herding reindeer is not exactly the same device that is used in the tourism industry for instance 'to herd' the tens and hundreds of tourists into the wilderness in snowmobile safaris: the user's context and his/her experience makes the difference. It seems to me the snowmobile in reindeer herding represents an example of a *hybrid*: it is a combination of traditional and modern; it has been incorporated into the practice, without completely changing the focal meaning of the trade. Another example is the fact that though the snowmobile may have become an irreplaceable part of reindeer herding today, it has not replaced the use of reindeer dogs as part of the herding. A device can become a part of a focal practice; this is precisely what is meant with a *new maturity* or *releasement* towards technology. We can learn an attitude of saying 'yes' and 'no' to the use of technological devices, while simultaneously remaining open to the other aspects of the cultural practices we are dealing with. This can happen if we realise and keep in mind that what is most important in our lives is not subject to efficient enhancement and control of the technological lifestyle.

4.1.1. The question about lichen

One of the key issues in settling the differences between forestry and reindeer husbandry seem to be the question about the lichens. Forestry affects reindeer herding particularly when the old-growth forests are felled, since they are an important pasture resource and reindeer seem to prefer them especially in late winter (Kyllönen et al 2006, p. 679; Ch.3). This, the question about the winter pastures and the supplementary feedings, are the central aspects in the debate between reindeer herders and forestry professionals today. Certainly many reindeer herding co-operative units (*Paliskunta*) have had to resort to supplementary feedings, particularly during difficult winter times, but some still rely (at least on the large part) on natural pastures. It is in these areas in Inari that the debates have grown particularly heated. The importance of the old-growth forests for the existence of the lichens is indubitable, and it is precisely these forests that are of economic interest to forestry as well.

The discourse regarding the overgrazing of the pastures assumes that the cause and effect of the overgrazing is the increase in the supplementary feeding. The vicious circle becomes full when, according to the allegations, herders are keeping the reindeer numbers artificially too high with supplementary feedings, which then results in the fact that the pastures are unable to regenerate, which further on result in more supplementary feedings. (e.g. Valkonen 2003, pp. 184-185; Ch.3) On the other hand, there is also pressure on reindeer herding as a "livelihood" to keep the number of reindeers high in order to increase production.

We find that in Lapland there is reindeer herding that no longer or barely relies on natural pastures, and there is the kind that on the large part still does. Perhaps the difference between these two may seem ridiculously small, but the difference exists. Ontologically speaking the change may be significant: the way nature is perceived, the relationship with and attitude towards it changes. The culture of reindeer herding has relied on the natural cycle and grazing habits of the reindeer. Many socio-economic changes have affected this traditional system: the restricting of grazing within the reindeer herding district and national borders as well as the global changes in the price of reindeer meat for example. Slowly the change has happened, with the increasing of the number of reindeers per herder, with the acquiring new machinery and ways, with having to rely on winter feedings and other methods similar to farming cattle. If the herders wanted to make a living with reindeer, they had very few options, but to adjust and readjust to the modernizing situation and world they found themselves in. Certainly the experience of herding reindeer has changed, and this has been inevitable given the conditions and structures of modernisation, but again, this does not necessarily imply that the entire practice has lost its focal nature. Reindeer herding can still have the centering power and commanding presence in the daily lives and worldviews of the herders. The cultural value does not necessarily decline from the acquiring of new means and skills. On the contrary, a culture that is alive needs to *evolve* to stay alive. Furthermore it seems rather problematic and arrogant of the dominant culture to try to categorise and *cage the essence* of any minority culture or cultural practice, no matter how noble the intentions. In chapter 2 we looked at the problematic in defining the content of cultures and their practices; the problems related to naming things as beliefs for example. It is, in a way, the nature of *cultural paradigms* to remain hidden from the grasp of our nihilistic technological paradigm, which would like nothing better than to get their essence under control and rationalised. (see Ch.2.2.5)

As a conclusion I want to note that though both Sámi and Finns practice reindeer herding, for the Sámi, the practice has evolved over the centuries (perhaps even millennia) and has a complex system of beliefs, concepts, specialised language, and values tied to it. The continuance of this traditional practice is of utmost symbolic value for the Sámi. (Heikkilä 2003, pp. 116-117) [7] In the discourse regarding reindeer herding the dualistic, even contradictory position of the practice becomes evident: it is simultaneously pictured as a traditional, close-to-nature, culturally significant way of life and on the other hand it is a modern, intensive livelihood and profession. (Mettiäinen 2007 pp. 203-204) Reindeer herding is therefore one example of a focal practice that is still present in the modern world. It is a link, which provides us with an example of the continuous *change* on the one hand and *stability* on the other; it represents the underlying or parallel focal reality, the world of focal things and practices. Reindeer herders have had to yield to the technological mode of being; they have had to adjust to the modern (thoroughly technological), western justice system, using arguments and language that is penetrated by a technological way of speech and calculative thinking. The use of modern technical devices and supplementary feedings are particularly visible and constantly upcoming topics in the discourse. As a traditional practice, reindeer herding is regarded as a cultural element, a part of a particular world, and a sustainable way of living. But with the use of technical machines, it has allegedly become an intensive livelihood: a part of that other, the technical and modern world, which represents economical thinking, calculative and technological controlling of nature. (Valkonen 2003, pp.189-191)

The evolving of reindeer herding, as we have examined here, towards an established livelihood, comparable to agriculture or any (other) animal husbandry, with its close ties to world markets and the laws that govern there, has not been avoidable. In other words, the practice has certainly lost some of its traditional power for those who practice it. Since there are forces outside (the world markets that control or regulate the price of reindeer meat for instance) the local practice affecting it, the willingness to decide locally over the number of reindeers per Paliskunta may not be automatically sustainable in the long run. The public arguing about the meaning of reindeer herding to the Sámi as a cultural group still seems absurd. Though reindeer herding is not and has not been a part of the life of all Sámi, since the group in not homogenous, and is spread

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[7] This is not to deny the possible focal value of reindeer herding for Finns as well.

over an area that has a variety of land types, it has been for many living in the area of Upper Lapland. It has not been the only way of earning a living, but it has been a central part of the people's lives. Briefly we have now looked into the matter of reindeer herding an acquiring of new devices or technologies. It is not my business to say how much new ways can be acquired in order for the practice to keep engaging people in a focal manner and the culture to remain authentic for those who are living it. But I am particularly interested in speculating how a culture or social group could learn the attitude of releasement towards things and still survive in the face of the dominant and pressing technological worldview.

The technological world is like a cage that we are all trapped into; the bars are simply not visible to us. It seems apparent that in Lapland there is a struggle between (at least) two, possibly contradictory, worldviews, and this battle is manifesting in the way people practice reindeer herding today. For reindeer herding learning an attitude of releasement towards the technological paradigm means at least certain things: ecological and economical indicators can become a part of the lives of the herders (as they already have), but not the most dominant in the sense that all other values would become disregarded and forgotten. In practice this means that reindeer herding should not become considered strictly as a livelihood or those who practice it should not have to rely on it as their only source of income. For reindeer herding to continue having the focal significance in the lives of the people it should not be perceived solely through the realms of economics or natural sciences; it should not even be seen as a juridical right of an indigenous people, at least not strictly in any one of these ways. Reindeer themselves cannot become perceived as intensively produced, *mere meat*, with its nostalgic memory and sentimental image of a 'product of nature'. The old-growth forests need to be seen as more than a storage of lichen, otherwise it would seem the practice has become a part of the device paradigm: herders might just as well give in to technological control and began admitting that reindeer husbandry has become an intensive livelihood among so many others.

Different cultures around the world have developed different methods of categorising and understanding their environments. Cultures have thrived and flourished regardless of their differences with the western knowledge system. The realisation that western science is not the only, final epistemology, but in fact one among others ought to shake the eurocentric worldview radically. This is a topic I feel I should not leave untouched. The Sámi and Finns have co-existed peacefully so long

that the cultures and worldviews have mixed: to distinguish strictly between the two may be a difficult task, and not necessarily all that useful. Nevertheless, it would seem short sighted and ethnocentric not to even look into the matter.

4.2. Sámi perspective

The land ownership dispute comes up time and again in Lapland. A recent historical study by Embuske (2008a, 2008b) suggests that the colonial elements in the history of Lapland have often been exaggerated, even misleading. Mythical elements have been attached to it in many previous historical and juridical studies. The Sámi, along with other northern peoples, have gone through and been a part of many changes as a population and on the administrative and livelihood levels in the course of their history. It is important to emphasise that it is *their history*: that there exists a parallel history in Lapland to the one that is written by European and Finnish anthropologists and historicists. The existence of this other history leaves the opening and possibility of *otherness*: another way that being has been revealed, another way that people have lived with and experienced their surrounding nature. Embuske also admits that current conflicts regarding ownership rights have to do with the land areas that were not *owned*[8] by anyone. These so-called no-man's lands were incorporated into the Swedish crown during 1680s by latest and have been used by reindeer and reindeer herding Sámi before and after that. (Embuske2008a; 2008b)

During that time, those lands were not *taken away* from anyone, since they were not *owned* by anyone, this is true, but this also does not make the fact irrelevant, that since the beginning of the 20th century the Finnish government has had, if not colonial in the purely exploitative sense, then semicolonial, policies and practices in Lapland at least on the intellectual and ecological levels. (see e.g. Ch.3 before) Forcing a certain kind of epistemology, namely a western one, on a people is part of the colonisation process. Modern technology as a worldview, as a cultural state of mind, has reached the people living in Finland, understood as a certain geographical location, beginning around the time of the Swedish regime. Though I will not get too deeply into the problems related to colonialism I must take into consideration the existing power structures that have been built during the centuries and are well in the memories of the

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[8] In the sense that the western world understands ownership.

Lappish peoples, obviously the Sámi, but also the Finns. I doubt it would be very fruitful to debate which of the two cultures persisted longer with their traditional ways or linger even today so to say "closer to nature", but there are deep wounds in the minds of people that manifest today as a suspicion towards the "southerners"[9] or the EU for instance. These prejudices stem from a history of being objects of control. The Lappish people (the Sámi in particular) represent a suppressed people within Finland, a nation that has itself been suppressed in the course of history.

One of the main livelihoods in Upper Lapland is reindeer herding, and while in Finland, both Finns and Sámi practice it; it is still more so considered the traditional livelihood of the Sámi. Heidegger wanted to deconstruct the metaphysical structure of the Western sciences, the one-sided approach it has to nature and other cultures, and this is what I also want to use as my guideline as far as it is possible. In order to try to understand the different *natures* (conceptions of nature) people in Upper Lapland have one must keep in mind the history of the Sámi and the Finns. The main aim now is to give clues about what the Sámi understanding of the world today is in contrast to the modern western scientific without trying too hard to impose a certain structure on it.

4.2.1. Focal matters

There is a strong discourse in Lapland about nature, and how the local people have over the centuries of living with the harsh conditions had to adapt and live according to nature, with nature, close to it. Particularly the Sámi are associated to be a culture that has always had a strong bond with nature; they are pictured as a people that understand and respect nature. Today the situation may be different for many: simply because one lives in the close vicinity of large areas of wilderness does not necessarily imply that one learns to respect or appreciate it. As we have learned earlier, the way of life has changed radically in the course of modernisation, even if it has been inevitable or forced in some occasions, today the change is visible and tangible.

We have already looked into the matter of reindeer herding and acquiring of new devices or technologies. Some other possible examples of things that have focal value in the Sámi culture in addition to reindeer herding are: fishing, hunting, gathering

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[9] The Lappish people often refer to "outsiders", people that come from outside the northern areas as "southerners", which has a pejorative meaning.

of berries, yoik, and handcraft among others (many of these apply for the local non-Sámi population as well). The diminishing or total disappearing of these will be a sign of the vanishing of the entire culture as a way of life, since these are central elements of the Sámi identity, and most likely irreplaceable. (e.g. Pentikäinen 1995, Helander and Kailo 1999) For the Sámi themselves this is a matter of subjective and collective experience, attitudes and values as an ethnic group; for me this will be a matter of speculation based primarily on reading books. I want to emphasise the importance of this, since it is not my place to define the focal aspects and practices of the Sámi culture; as an outsider, I can merely speculate on them.

The Sámi handcraft has undoubtedly been a focal practice in the culture. It requires patience and skill to learn how to make good, practical tools and clothing. Traditionally these trades have been taught and learned from older men to boys, older women to girls. These days craft is sold to tourists, the practicality (traditionally practicality was understood as the same as beauty) of the tool or thing has lost value, whereas the aesthetic appearance has gained more appreciation. Yet there are those who stubbornly craft every step of the way by hand, taking the time and patience the manufacturing requires, sticking to those ways that have for decades and centuries proved to be practical. (e.g. Helander and Kailo 1999) These are the kind of people that devote themselves to the focal nature of the practice. These are the kind of people the current world does not appreciate: they are odd, stubborn relics, living in a world that is disappearing, refusing to see the world for what it is. Yet these are the people still resisting, unknowingly, the hegemony of technology.

Sámi poetry and yoik draw their inspiration from nature: elements of nature are used to explain various aspects of human life and the content of the poetic pictures may not open up to a reader or listener who is unfamiliar with the Sámi traditions. The power of yoik is described to be very personal and inseparable from the singer or performer. During the performance the singer describes, or more like paints the picture, of his or her topic, the object of the yoik, little by little; one has to be very familiar with the theme to be able to yoik it. (e.g. Hirvonen 1994, pp122-124; Inga Juuso in Helander and Kailo 1999 pp. 172-188) In this sense, yoik is much more than music as understood in the western world, it is a manifestation of nature as understood in the Sámi culture, the feelings and atmosphere it represents to its people. The subjects or themes of yoik are a part of the Sámi sense of community and society. It is also a way of remembering, for it connects a person with the innermost feelings of the yoik and may communicate

between times, persons and landscapes. For those whom it concerns, yoik is not merely poetic texts, nor plain music, and to divide it into parts, even for the noble purposes of research, is nearly synonymous to committing violence on the tradition. (e.g. Gaski 2000, pp.191-195) For a yoik to have the plurality of meaning it carries in its natural context (culture) it ought to be looked as the unified structure it is. In other words it ought to be understood as a practice with obvious focal power, as a practice that is inseparable from its *world*. Attempts to separate it (for the purpose of scientific research or even for purposes that want to represent it as indigenous art) will result in the diminishing of the focal value it carries.

This is part of the same problematic we dealt with in regarding reindeer herding. In order for reindeer herding to keep having the focal power, it has to be experienced as an aspect of a way of life, not entertainment, nor a curiosity for the tourist who seeks to find the remaining corners of 'authenticity' in this world. A simple 'test' can clarify the difference: when one explains his/her 'nature experience' as a hobby, some form of disengagement has already happened. It is when one's relationship with nature is difficult to put into words, it is more likely that this 'relationship' rises from the dwelling that one person has with his/her world. It is then so close to the person, that defining it is rather impossible. We remember from chapter 2 that the technological framework is what makes science engage in experimentation, and makes us perceive the environment as standing-reserve: a resource for timber and energy alike, but also a resource for our aesthetic pleasures, a spring to quench our thirst for thrilling experiences. It is the ontological separation from nature, positioning oneself outside, what enables us to take up different 'relationships' with nature.

4.3. Tourism – Experience or *mere subjective* experience?

4.3.1. Wilderness experience

According to Heidegger, as we have learned earlier, the history of metaphysics culminates in the western technological world. One of the biggest problems this brings is that man no longer questions the essence of technology, no longer wonders about the essence of his own being. The modern man today does not feel the need to ponder what the change in our worldview has been, i.e. what has been revealed and what has been

concealed and forgotten. Furthermore, technological or calculative thinking, is threatening to conceal our experiences (*Erleben*), replacing them with mere adventurous thrills, drowning modern man into banal sentimentality. (e.g. Toikka 2006, pp.178-180)

As we recall from earlier (see Ch.2.1.2), with Heidegger's terminology we can now look at the nature experience as a continuum: on the one end we find experience as *Erleibnisse*, as *mere* subjective experiences, in a way comparable to events of adventurous (cheap) thrills, and on the other end *Erfahrung*, which is engaging and involving in the whole sense of the word; like dwelling, being-in-the-world, experience as *Erfahrung* connotes discovery and learning, even suffering and undergoing. In this sense we can become to understand the difference between different experiences of nature as well as different relationships with and attitudes toward nature. The experience a local person, who has lived perhaps all his/her life in the area and the experience a visiting tourist has are not similar, in a way they are not even comparable. But again, a continuum can be identified: the tourist can come for the unique wilderness to experience it, by hiking, skiing, hunting, fishing, riding snowmobiles, relaxing in the skiing resort with friends or family, spending the summer in the family cottage etc.[10] All of these have different possibilities, to draw a universal line between where authentic experiences end and banal thrills begin is likely impossible. According to Borgmann (See Ch.2) at least hiking and fishing can provide a person with the authentic, centering and engaging power of a focal practice, but it depends on the way the practice is performed and lived. For example, the experience of wilderness is very different from hiking and camping for a week than from driving around Lapland for the same period of time and enjoying the scenery. It is likely that today both travellers use modern devices, the latter most certainly, but also the hiker. How does the wilderness represent itself to them, how is it revealed? How about to the cottage tourist, who may spend weeks in his/her cottage gathering berries, fishing and maybe hunting? This way we realise that there is a multitude of nature experiences out there: within the local level and between the local, national and international levels.

The importance of the wilderness experience, as a catalyst so to say, lies in its possible significance in resisting the devastation of technology, in waking us to realise

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[10] In some cases it can be questioned whether or not the traveller ever *really* experiences the wilderness, but this is a matter of definitions and conceptualising the subjective experience, not to be examined further here.

the device paradigm. The point is not that we venture into the wilds in large numbers at a time; not everyone would experience wilderness this way even if we did, and not everyone has the possibility to do so. This kind of experience of wilderness or nature does not happen easily; it requires skill and practice, certainly endurance, sometimes suffering and undergoing. This is partially why the tourist cannot experience the nature the same way as the person living there; the experience and relationship requires time. Still, this is not to say that the tourist cannot experience the nature as a magnificent and unique wilderness, a counterforce to his/her otherwise thoroughly technological life. Certainly it can make the visitor perceive his/her life and place in the world differently and work as that vital place of sanctuary in a world that seems to have so little of sanctity and authenticity left.

4.3.2. Capturing a focal practice

Heidegger was careful not to make a moral argument on the behalf of the different ontological experiences, but he did want to make people realise that there is change and a difference. To subdue a culture or natural elements under the eyes of spectators destroys their focal nature. Animals, plants or wilderness areas cannot speak for themselves, but their mystery and centering power disappears with the cultures that have a focal relationship with them. For instance, using aspects of Sámi culture in the tourist industry can be a huge insult and humiliation to the people in question. Even demanding it to be in a certain way, restricts the culture from evolving. The centering and engaging power disappears when it is made into a universal. Capturing the focal thing or practice and putting it into a jar for marketing purposes is impossible. Tourism is a prime example of an industry that tries to provide its customers with ready-made experiences, it aims at capturing the essence of experiencing and selling it on as a package deal. As such it is a prime example of the technological mode of being.

4.4. Nature conservation

The enthusiasm for nature conservation in the western world stems from the concern for the last natural areas that have not been affected or destroyed by human influence. The concern for the global environment, the global nature is genuine, since

environmental problems (both local and global) are undeniable; human influence in the destruction of habitats and nature types is commonplace. We may be able to speak of a nature that is common for all, we may even imagine this abstract concept with the help of photographs of the planet earth for instance, but in practice it is very difficult to agree on the content of this common nature; in practice we find a collection of *local natures* that may have close to nothing in common with each other.

The western faith in the natural sciences to provide a *neutral* description or *truth* about this common nature is very strong. As I have argued earlier, this truth about nature is only a partial truth and one among others; also, it does not provide us with guidelines for action. Nor does it comment on the behalf or the destruction of the other understandings of nature that are silenced in its wake. It is as Vadén (2006a, p.25) writes '(a)t its best [the factmachine-science] can produce nature conservation, which is only a reverse operation for the deliberate destruction of nature. Nature conservation is correct and good (…) yet it does not face the question about the extinction of local cultures or what this means…' [11]. The will to cage nature into a nature museum comes from the technological will to control everything: nature is frozen into a picture, an icon or image of an original, pristine state, that the near poisonous human touch has not yet spoiled.

The general attitude in Inari (Hallikainen et al. 2006) seems to be that enough land area in Upper Lapland is already under conservation. One third seem to believe too much is already conserved. Attitudes vary between different livelihoods: those who get most of their income from forestry have the most negative attitudes towards wilderness and conservation areas. Those who get most of their income from reindeer husbandry generally feel there is not enough land area for pastures etc. Furthermore people feel that conservation, forestry, reindeer husbandry and tourism all belong in Upper Lapland. (pp. 460-461)

Studies have been conducted beginning from the 1990s to clarify the attitudes Lappish people have towards nature. Approximately half of the Lappish population still earns their living in a nature-based profession. They also spend a lot of their time in nature-related hobbies such as picking berries and mushrooms, fishing, hunting, skiing or hiking in the wilderness etc. Compared with the whole nation, the Lappish people

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[11] Parhaimmillaan saamme luonnonsuojelua, joka on käänteinen operaatio luonnon tahalliselle tuhoamiselle. Luonnonsuojelu on oikein ja hyväksi (...) mutta se ei sellaisenaan pääse kohtaamaan kysymystä paikalliskulttuurien katoamisen merkityksestä..." (Vadén 2006a, p.25)

are on average keener to spend their time in nature and on different nature-based activities. (e.g. Kajala 1997, pp. 8-10) What comes to attitudes towards conservation, over half of the Lappish people believe that enough of the total area is already under some form conservation, but also approximately one third believe that more tax money should be directed to the protection of old-growth forests. (Ibid. pp.18-19)

The protection of predators causes some harm to the reindeer herders, as many use reindeer as their prey. The owners receive compensation for the economical damage caused to them from the state. Some conservationists regard reindeer herding as a threat to protection of large predators in the reindeer-herding district; they often criticise reindeer herding by claiming it has become an intensive meat-producing livelihood, and reindeers themselves have changed from semi-domesticated animals to cattle; that they are no longer a part of nature, that the livelihood has become alienated from its roots and is no longer 'natural'. (Valkonen 2003, pp.174-175) The predator question seems particularly controversial, since there does not seem to be a consensus about the number of predators and the number of losses to the herders. Also poaching may be a growing problem in some parts of Lapland, reindeer herders are commonly accused of this.

The question about nature, in the sense of conserving it, is twofold: are we aiming at preserving a biologically and ecologically definable, *neutral* natural state – if this is even possible in practice – or do we want to promote a nature that is defined and built in the process of a functional relationship the inhabitants have with it? At its best conservation in Upper Lapland wants to support authentic diversity and pluralism, the kind that includes human practices that have grown from and are suitable with the land, at its worst its would like to define natural diversity into a standard, which does not include the influence of humans or even, as in some cases, reindeer.

4.5. Releasing Upper Lapland

What can be said about the different understandings of the forests (or nature) people are arguing over? What does it concretely mean that the technological understanding of being is so pervasive in everything we do and how we perceive? Furthermore, how should we react to this realisation? I am not aiming at solving the Inari or Upper Lapland forest conflict once and for all. This study is not a guidebook for changing the

socio-economic structures in Upper Lapland, but it can be a guide for the beginning (of a revolution) of thinking, even in Upper Lapland.

4.5.1. Forests in Finland

Forests have played an inseparable role in the building of a Finnish identity and culture (hence in the conception of nature also), and not merely in the economical sense. Even though forests have indeed been the stronghold for Finland's economical growth and welfare as well. (see e.g. Rinnekangas & Anttonen 2006, pp.169-172 and Ch.3) The complex relationship with forests can be seen for example in the many folklore stories told of and beliefs connected with forests and their inhabitants. Our relationship with forests has gone through some radical changes during the centuries. As established before, the 'forest' has a different meaning now than it did say, in the 19th century or the time before that.

Culture, associated with agriculture and civilisation (the kind born in central Europe) is quite the opposite from the ways of life that have been born in forests. The western tradition has seen the peoples that have earned their living from the forests as slightly inferior, undeveloped and uncivilised. Culture as *agriculture* sees forests as something to be cut down to make room for "culture". Yet there has always been culture in forests. People have lived and thrived there. Over the years they have developed their own ways, traditions and beliefs. Finland is one example of a people that has developed both materially and spiritually co-existing and living with forests. (Reunala 1998, pp. 228-229) Traces of this can be found strongly present even today.

The Finnish word *metsä* (forest) has not always had the meaning of an area consisting mainly of trees and other vegetation. The term *metsä* has signified 'border', 'end', 'edge' or 'frontier'. (Vilppula 1989, pp.286-288) Also the words *pyhä* and *erä* are connected with forest nature and wilderness. Nowadays *pyhä* has the same meaning as 'sacred', but before the influence of Christianity, *pyhä* also signified 'boundary' and 'border' and was used to name areas that were bordering settlements: areas like lakes, rivers, peninsulas, etc. (Rinnekangas & Anttonen 2006, p.171) *Erä* on the other hand has many meanings, but has often been (and still is) connected with a profit, a game, a hunting or a fishing trip. It also has the more general meaning of "a part" of something. The compound noun *erämaa* (*maa* = land, ground), is usually translated as

'wilderness', having the meaning of an area remote from settlement, uncultivated, forest covered (*korpi*), a place dark and lonely and yet peaceful, a land of game and hunting (Hallikainen 1998, pp.16-17; Nykysuomen Sanakirja 1985) When we define *erämaa*, we can say it is a concrete, existing place, it has certain qualities (some listed above for example) that make us believe it is an *erämaa*, but even so, *erämaa* is never simply an area; a neutral object for the natural sciences to define and categorize with a neat little wrapping. (Valkonen 2002, pp.44-46)

Metsä for the Finns has a dual meaning: it is friend and foe, a frightening opponent to be conquered and taken under control, yet also something authentic to be revered. At the same time *metsä* has always been a source of livelihood, a place to be entered in search of valuable products for living. *Metsä*, therefore, is quite analogous in the Finnish minds with *nature*. The interrelationship and connection with humans and forests has been strong, and it is quite difficult to draw a line between where one influences the other and vice versa. *Metsä* signified the border, a kingdom regulated by its own laws that were strange and unyielding to human ones, and once these borders were crossed one was to behave with respect towards the inhabitants of the forest. (Kovalainen & Seppo 1997, pp.56-58)

Due to the thousands of years of co-existing forests have become inseparable from the Finnish tradition and culture, though the relationship has of course gone through some radical changes. Forest management has become more like agriculture in a sense that trees are managed like crop, though the rotation time is much longer, even 150-250 years. Old forest related livelihoods and activities like hunting, gathering of berries and mushrooms, skiing, hiking etc. have become hobbies and leisure time activities. Yet for many even today, forests are a place of sanctuary, peace and quiet, a place where one can escape the hectic lifestyles of the cities. (Reunala 1998, pp.234-236)

Nowadays *metsä* for many has become a forest, an area consisting mainly of trees and other vegetation. It has been conquered by the technological paradigm. But some of the old meanings are still alive, even though they may be losing their meaning. The diversity of the concept is fading, becoming more uniform. This is a reflection of reality, of the change in the Finnish cultural paradigm. But when *metsä*, once and for all, becomes an economical standing reserve with only instrumental value, what then?

4.5.2. Forests in Upper Lapland

Upper Lapland has not been isolated from the changes in the ontological relationship people have with the many forests that cover Finnish land. Forests for forestry are mere resources; they are areas consisting of trees and other vegetation. Forest for reindeer herders have become similar, they are areas more or less suitable for reindeers to graze. Reindeers for reindeer herders have began to resemble something similar as crop for agriculture, logs for forest management and cattle for the beef industry. Nature conservationists are so concerned with saving the last wilderness areas that they would be happy to see Lapland emptied of the last people still trying to live in the area. Forest for them is a pristine wilderness that ought to be kept as it is, unchanged and unspoiled by the cancerous touch of the human hand. Humans might be allowed to visit, but under restrictions in order to not cause changes or damage to the fragile ecological balance. Trees have become devices, forests standing reserve, to provide people with commodities, including the recreational experiences of tourism. But again we see how the change is not yet total: forests for forestry may be mere resources, but for the visitor (be that a hiker, a local berry picker, hunter or fisherman) they may also be beautiful, pristine wilderness areas, full of life, intimidating and inviting at the same time, a place of peacefulness and uncontrolled forces that need to be understood and respected to survive. For reindeer herders the forests are an inseparable part of the lifecycle of their reindeer and as such an inseparable part of their lives. Furthermore, in Upper Lapland there are practices, like gathering berries and fishing for instance that are widely named as 'hobbies' today. But they are not considered as mere hobbies for those who practice them; as practices that connect them to the surrounding nature, the cycle of the seasons and skills learned over the generations, they are an inseparable part of their lives. These kinds of practices are not publicly considered very relevant and are more often seen as secondary to the interests of the livelihoods, but their focal value to the locals is undeniable.

Once one comes to realise the danger of technology in the way Heidegger sees it (see Ch.2.2.3 and 2.2.5), it becomes clear that there is not much one person or even a group of likeminded, strong individuals can do. They cannot just decide to change and give everyone a new sense of reality. It is quite apparent that it does not work like that. Be that as it may, if we are open and sensitive toward the situation in Upper Lapland, we can find inklings of nontechnological practices. It is difficult to name them as we

have seen earlier in this chapter, for attempting this may force them under the technological lens and destroy them, but we have attempted to search for them nevertheless. The examples I have given earlier and above do not mean, that they always, normatively provide a focal experience; they are simply guidelines, to point to the direction of understanding certain aspects that go with focal things. These traces stand as reminders of different realities, witnesses of worlds that have not been suffocated by the grip of technology yet. They are the marginal practices and aspects of everyday life that resist the thinking that represents efficiency and effectiveness as sole purposes. They remind us, if we are willing to listen, that the technological world we live in is not the only one there is, and other kinds can be just as true and functional as the one claiming dominion over the others. In practice this means that first of all a voice needs to be given to these worlds, these other understandings and relationships with the forests in question in Upper Lapland and second of all, these voices need to be heard more seriously. These two steps lead to the path of releasing Upper Lapland from the technological paradigm and perhaps these remnants, inklings, seeds (in lack of a better word), may one day be strong enough (again?) to pull together a new paradigm, give new meaning and enrich people's lives. Or perhaps they will wither away in the face of the total dominion of technology; they will be levelled, settled and unified, controlled for ever greater efficiency, perhaps even ever fairer distribution of wealth. It remains to be seen how the situation evolves.

We have looked at the nature in Upper Lapland through different angles. It seems it is more useful to speak of *many natures* when dealing with different stakeholders in this context. In this sense, since the conceptions, relationships and attitudes towards and effects on nature are so different, it becomes evident that it is not plausible to put the different interest groups and livelihoods on the same level so to say. It would be more constructive instead to allow these different, local natures to come forth, to remain open to them, leaving them to evolve in the minds and practices of the local people. This is not to say that it is not important to become aware and remain alert to the presence of the technological framework. Also, Upper Lapland is not an isolated island in this globalising world: the effects of global changes and 'other natures' will keep finding their way to the local level. In the final chapter I will explore these matter further.

5.   PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE IN UPPER LAPLAND

Let us consider a fictional event that Vadén (2000) presents: two people meet in a vast forest area, say around the same fire. Both are dependent on the forest in one way or another: one being a forestry engineer (representing the state or some forestry organisation) while the other happens to be there as well, perhaps on some business learnt from grandparents, we can call him a shaman. Now these are very different worlds that are colliding. There are, no doubt, contradictory modes of being here, tension, a sensation of threat, even fear between the two worlds. What happens after a meeting like this? Who will have to disappear in front of the other? And why could they not co-exist? When we look at our world today, it is clear which of the two has overcome the other, and which character sitting around the fire is already gone, or at least well on his way. The forest engineer or more generally, the Western culture, prevails simply because it does, not because it gives a more "realistic" or more "truthful" description of reality; it only gives *a* description of reality. The forest engineer prevails because his reality prevails, but he cannot point to an impartial reality somewhere out there, he can only point to his own. We have no means to test and compare which reality is more truthful. This has been known ever since Kant described our knowledge to consist of what the reality is for me (*das ding für mich*) and the reality as such (*das ding an sich*). (pp.11-14.) We may say there is a reality *out there*, but that is about all we can say about it without having to rely on the cultural paradigm we live in, those cultural and metaphysical structures and beliefs we all share within that given paradigm. According to Hubert Dreyfus our current paradigm, the technological understanding of being, is a nihilistic paradigm. It celebrates our ability to get everything clear, under control and rationalised; it is dedicated to flexibility and efficiency for the sake of not some further end, but just for the sake of flexibility and efficiency themselves. All cultures have norms for human behaviour and find some order in nature, but it is ours particularly that tries to make the social and natural order total by transforming or destroying all exceptions. (Dreyfus 1993. pp.301-302; Ch.2) It has been argued here, that this is precisely what is going on in Upper Lapland as well.

It is possible to read a general ethical guideline in Heidegger's works. According to it, people ought to live accepting and choosing their own mortality as well

as the possible fallibility of their lifestyle. In other words, all revealing is both open and has its limits; the way being is revealed is simultaneously contingent, open to mistakes, committed and grounded. (Vadén 2006b, pp.392-395) This means the lifestyles and cultural understandings of nature in Upper Lapland are also not the only possible ones in the area. The course of development is not always from hunter-gathering, to agriculture, to the western technological way of life. Refusing the technological lifestyle is not the same as choosing to be uncivilised or romanticising the past, it is the refusal to see *only* one possible reality. Furthermore, nature can be perceived without the 'force' of evolutive development or direction in the background. The possibilities for thinking about nature are diverse: on these we can built very different and incommensurate (but successful nevertheless) ways of life. Nature *is* in many ways. (Vadén 2006a, pp.62-67.)

5.1. Technology and nature

Heidegger can certainly be understood as a critic of the predominant concept of nature in the modern world. He was concerned with the special kind of being that nature represents and the different ways that this being has been perceived in the course of time. In modern times, it is undeniable that this being is revealed to us first and foremost through the natural sciences. The natural sciences provide information on "how nature truly is", stripped from those properties and meanings that are difficult, even impossible to quantify and measure, properties like colours, meanings, emotions and values. (Cooper 2005, pp. 340-344) Properties like these are referred to as subjective, biased, supernatural, mythical, religious etc. They are the kind of things that are left outside the circle of what is considered objectively true. Heidegger argues that the modern conception of nature is in fact not "closer to the truth", but is simply one presentation of the being of nature – and not a particularly flattering one at that, I might add. The status and self-understanding of the natural sciences in the western world today is mistaken and incapable of gaining access to their [own] essence (Heidegger1977a). This means modern science remains in a way blind to its own metaphysical structure, it is again, simultaneously, too close and too far. As stated earlier, for Heidegger the way modern science perceives nature is a culmination of metaphysics, a final stage of how being has been understood. For instance, during the

time of Aristotle, how things were, was explained through their *telos* (the end-state towards which everything naturally tended for), in the Middle Ages Christianity was more involved in the explanation of how things worked in nature. Scientific explanation rests on the whole establishment of 'causalities', on the ideal, that events or processes must be subordinate to scientific experimentation (Cooper 2005, p.344). This is precisely what Heidegger means, when he speaks of a 'projection' that we set upon nature (e.g. Heidegger 1977b, p.119; Ch.1). The nature that modern science deals with is *a* nature that is quantifiable and measurable. We can ask ourselves: is this *truly* the whole truth about nature?

Heidegger speaks of this new relation between man towards the world and his place in it. He continues by stating that what is particular in this age is that the world now appears as an object to the attacks of calculative thought, that is to say, as an object for the modern natural sciences. Nature has become a gigantic energy source for modern technology and industry. (Heidegger 1966, p. 50) What is most tricky and deceptive of this technological enframing is that not only does it conceal systematically all other ways of revealing, it conceals the matter that it itself is a mode of revealing. What follows now, is an attempt to look at natures or more specifically the forests in Upper Lapland with this in mind.

5.2. Forests as *Physis*

The natural sciences have understood the Greek word *physis* to refer, though still inadequately and vaguely, to the laws of physics. The belief is, that with the development of physics as a science, the concept as well has developed and evolved towards this ideal. According to Heidegger what has happened is the exact opposite: *physis* as a concept has lost its original meaning and strength and has indeed due to the advancements made in physics, become static, self-evident, a mere phrase. (Niemi-Pynttäri 1988, pp. 8-9.) This same change is happening to the Finnish word *metsä*, it is losing its original meaning, becoming a mere forest-covered area, consisting of units of timber or lichen. *Physis*, more originally understood, referred to the process of birth; it does not reduce the being of nature into laws of nature, but means precisely the *change* itself. *Physis* is, as Heidegger would say, *poietic*. For the Greeks it represented the whole of their living world: logic, ethics and aesthetics. If we look at the forests in

Upper Lapland in this light, we enable the multitude of meanings and values connected with the forests come forth. The valuing of the forest, trees, reindeer and other inhabitants of the forests in themselves becomes an option: the "picture", or more like experience, becomes more diverse and rises to oppose the unifying picture of the technological mode of revealing.

The natural sciences can provide a description of nature, of the forests in Upper Lapland as well, but this description can only partially reach its object. The technological approach aims at reducing the observer, the subject and the complex processes he/she is involved in, to the minimum. The presumption is that in this process, the sciences are getting closer and closer to the truth, eliminating all bias and subjectivity. According to Heidegger the process has been turned upside down: that especially human process of perceiving meaning in the surrounding world is concealed and lost, leaving us with a homogenous reality that has no real meaning or value. By *human process* I mean here the particular nature of *Dasein*, our being-in-the-world, dwelling in a certain time and space, a historical reality. The forest turns to a collection of trees, which are seen as raw material for the paper industry. Lichen is seen as the ingredient for reindeer meat. If this is where we have come in Upper Lapland, it would not make much more difference to bring the lichen in bags from Siberia, and herd the reindeer into paddocks. To begin the process of "seeing the forest from its trees" so to say, these things – forests, trees, reindeer and lichen for instance – need to be looked at as things that have the power to gather the fourfold (see Ch.2); that commerce with them opens up their world, which humans are inseparably connected with. This is not a matter of profit, consuming, manipulating or harnessing into use. The lichen in these particular forests is a part of a way of living, a complex system of meanings and local values. The trees in these forests are also more than possible material for paper. The forests themselves therefore are much more than what their ecological or biological definition can provide.

5.3. Technological nature vs. Focal nature (general vs. particular)

Has the focal value of reindeer herding been reduced to a technological practice, an intensive livelihood? The answer lies in the experience of the herder(s). Whether the practice is considered a livelihood, or a way of life is a crucial aspect in this question. Is

the practice still an inseparable part of the family's life, or has it become a mere means for earning a living? The same thing can be asked of the experience of nature: has it become a hobby; has the relationship people have with their surroundings become something they can *choose to occasionally take up, if they feel like it*? Certainly this is true for (most of) the tourist, but is it so for the local? When nature is perceived and experienced as having focal value, it means, this experience cannot be turned on and off at will; it needs to be continuous. Focal practices arise from the simple, meaningful things we find in our everyday life.

As I noted in chapter 4, the concern for the global environment in the western world is genuine, since environmental problems are undeniable. We may be able to speak of a nature that is common for all, we may even imagine this abstract concept, but in practice it is very difficult to define exhaustively what or how this common nature is. Furthermore, it is more likely that in practice we find a collection of *local natures* that may have close to nothing in common with each other. It can be said that there is a struggle between the abstract, global, common nature and the local, particular natures. The western faith in the natural sciences to provide a *neutral* description or *truth* about this common nature is very strong. As I have argued earlier, this truth about nature is only a partial truth and one among others; also, it does not provide us with guidelines for action. Nor does it comment on the behalf or the destruction of the other understandings of nature that are silenced in its wake. Local understandings of nature on the other hand, can be more holistic; they do not aim at systematically excluding values, beliefs or "superstitions", as the natural sciences claim to do. On the contrary, local natures can include an overall understanding of "the natural order of things" and work as guidelines, manifesting the ethical, aesthetical and logical aspects of that particular cultural way of life. This can happen when nature is given the "space" to reveal itself, resisting the will to order it into any form of a resource.

The possibility of building a new paradigm, a new ontological condition; finding a pluralistic philosophy of nature in and from Upper Lapland, would require generations of people, the focal participation, experiences and practices of many. It would have to go across the spheres of economy, ecology, social sciences and individual experiences or mental states. The new paradigm would require a new attitude, something similar to religious determination and decisiveness. For a new paradigm to rise, it would involve the acceptance of new things, allowing room for modernisation; saying 'yes' to certain aspect of it without accepting the whole package,

so to say. But it would also require releasement of the technological paradigm; saying 'no' to the way of life that sees everything as to be ordered for further ordering. Releasement from the hegemony of the technological era, releasement towards those everyday things, so that they could gather the fourfold: reveal their place and our place as a part of their world (and vice versa). This means also that a constant openness for alternatives cannot be denied. *Hybrids* of the 'old' and the 'new' are a part of this process. Keeping in mind the positive side to the technological mode yet at the same time resisting its devastation. Vital in this process is giving value and a voice in the public (even national) decision-making, to local natures, different worlds of experiences and things.

5.4. Natures in Upper Lapland

What is nature understood as wilderness? What is nature as *erämaa* and *korpi*? We cannot attempt to capture the essence, i.e. define explicitly, what wilderness is, for if we try, it will lose particularly the point of its 'wildness'. It will be my attempt to circle around this theme, so that I draw a picture, without touching the matter itself directly.

First of all we need to embrace the idea that we are not outside nature, opposing it, and that we never have been. (e.g. Haila 2003, p. 194) If one adopts the idea Heidegger launched in his day, the world will begin to get a different kind of appearance. The possibility of stepping outside one's dwelling, being-in-the-world, is seen as the absurdity it is. The usefulness of modern sciences is not doubted here, nor is the necessity of alarm that the knowledge of global environmental problems raises. But the blind faith in a solution to all the environmental problems that would come from knowing all the 'facts' of nature is. By stripping nature of its wildness, of its mystery, we have not achieved total happiness, freedom from the shackles of superstition nor total control. Instead people are experiencing feelings of emptiness, unhappiness, and ever increasing uncertainty. The lack of 'gods' in our modern western world is apparent. It seems that the structure of our world is not whole, it has been shattered, and this is where the feelings of anxiety rise.

Nevertheless, the history of colonialism is merciless: a culture cannot adopt western technology without adopting the western understanding of humans and nature at the same time. Embracing the western natural sciences, their worldview, philosophy

or technology entails a western way of living. What once was a Finnish way of life (or at least a premodern way of life in the geographical area now referred to as Finland) was slowly standardized, partially by force, partially by temptation, to the western modern way of life. (Vadén 2004b, pp. 49-50) Relics of the old may be present in the lives of Finnish people. The cottage-culture is one example, the interest in hiking, hunting, fishing and gathering berries and mushrooms are others.

To understand the different natures in Upper Lapland I will use this example presented by Vadén (2004b). We can imagine three circles that are inside each other: the *wild forest* (Fin. *korpi*), the *yard* and the *house*. The wild forest *is*; it does not have to worry itself with the laws of humans nor laws of nature. It simply is. Living in the wild forest requires knowledge and thorough understanding of the way things are connected, it requires understanding that goes beyond mere calculative knowledge of populations or appearances; it requires *feeling*. The wild forest can be cleared and a yard can be established with constant maintaining, management and control. Looking from the yard the wild forest now appears as *wilderness* (Fin. *erämaa*). Finally a house can stand on the yard. In the house life is stabilised, things know their place, everything is convenient and comfortable.

It is uncertain whether there still are wild forests in Upper Lapland in the sense described above. There certainly is wilderness, and a lot of arguing over how these areas would best be used. The forestry business stands feet firmly on the yard and looks at the magnificent, yet tragically few, remaining wilderness areas from inside the house seeing barely anything but tree trunks. They perceive more areas for establishing productive yards. The tourist business is sitting inside as well, looking at the wilderness and seeing the multiple possibilities it represents as *experiences*, if only they could capture the essence of these experiences of wilderness and sell it for thousands and thousands of travellers looking for it. They just need to save some areas suitable for this purpose and the traditional reindeer herders; they need to be kept around for the sake of authenticity. The extreme nature conservationists see the wilderness as precious and unique and want to keep it where it is and control human use of it. They are slightly concerned about the reindeer and their herders, hoping they would not grow too much in numbers to cause any significant changes to the wilderness itself or the large predators roaming in it. The voices of the reindeer herders themselves and the voices of many locals are echoing from the yard to their ears but they cannot quite make out what

the voices are trying to say; they seem to be speaking a language that is either inaudible or incomprehensible to them.

The different natures in Upper Lapland are not in speaking terms. They have been silenced under the discourse of economics, ecology and user-rights. This has not happened over night, the change has crept upon the locals in Upper Lapland so slowly that it has been able to occur unnoticed. Yet they still exist and have an impact on the lives of the locals, the different parties and their opinions in the forest dispute. And it is the humble opinion of this writer that they ought to be heard.

6.   EPILOGUE

This is where we have come. The forest dispute in Upper Lapland works as an example of a wider phenomenon that is taking place even in the most remote places of the world today. It turns out that Heidegger can indeed shed some light on a very practical conflict in the contemporary world. The spreading of the technological paradigm is present and manifests in the relationships and attitudes towards nature. Heidegger was concerned with this shift that has taken place in the metaphysical structure of the modern western world. The technological mode of revealing enables us to develop a relationship with nature that we can turn to when/if we feel like it. Nature has become something that is present to us as a resource through our livelihoods or through our hobbies, if at all. This study has looked at this change in Upper Lapland and contrasted the technological mode with focal things and practices found in the local ways of living. The lingering focal values and practices in Upper Lapland may be just fleeting memories in the near total dominion of the technological mode of being, but they still stand as reminders of other ways and other options. Refusing the technological way of life is not the same as romanticising the past, it is simply the acknowledging of other possible values and ways of living.

On a broader level, if we want to look for solutions to the environmental problems, conflicts rising from the use of limited natural resources, environmental issues on the local and global level overall and remain inside this technological paradigm we have (this is not to say that doing this as well would not be of utmost importance) we will be, at the same time, closing out and concealing the danger; we will be working from inside the enframing. It will be a technological search for a technological answer and it will leave the essence of technology hidden to us. Whilst working from (inside) the technological framework we must remain open to the 'fact' that it is a form of revealing, and take a step toward the uncertainty and contingency of all human existence. When we reach the time that this kind of openness is labelled as madness, irrationality, folly and it is disregarded in public conversations, we will be drowning under the surge of the technological framework. Now, why exactly should this not be allowed to happen? Why should we not embrace the enframing in all its correctness as the truth and live contentedly and in good faith that the environmental

problems and the problems rising from the competition over limited resources will be solved? Why is it so dangerous that the western technological mode of being becomes the only way of being? Even if the scientific world was not inseparably tangled up with the political and economical world, another danger is that in the face of problems we will no longer know any other way except the way of calculative, technological thinking. Seems like a minor detail, but is it really? Some believe faith in the natural sciences is the solution, that there will once and for all be no more opposing voices, that we will have the neutral truth we can always rely on. But this turns out to be an illusion: the fact-machine science cannot provide us with moral guidelines; it is the classical 'no ought from is', even if we could finally agree on the 'is' –part. The scientific world is a part of the human world, with its power struggles and hierarchies over what is *truly important*. Furthermore, this is not the only problem. The most pressing danger in technological thinking is that we do not realise that is just one way of thinking. In this process of forgetting, we ourselves will become caged, and as Heidegger puts it: man himself will become standing-reserve. We will drown the voices of other knowledge systems, perhaps ones that are perfectly functional and practical, in the process. This means that we will force technological fixes on situations and cultures that do not need them. It will be (in some ways it already is) a downward spiral from a pluralistic, genuinely manifold world with its complex nets of values and peoples to a monistic, unified world. We can argue about whether or not this is a downward spiral, an unwished course of development, but I take the stand here on the side of pluralism. Without focal values, cultural 'gods', humans are in danger of being lost in the emptiness of consumerism.

We all have to believe in something in order to give our actions, our living a reason. Whether it be something divine or not, whether we give it intrinsic value or just instrumental value, there has to be something. In the light of this research pluralism is a value worth fighting for. Another value is humility in the being of *Da-sein*, our being-in-the-world, dwelling and openness for the revealing of Being. This means, admitting the limits to our knowledge, as well as accepting the limits to our own being.

A form of grieving can be seen in our time. The welfare of the 'developed' nations is not so visible in the statistics of unemployment, mental illnesses, alcoholism, suicides and other phenomena that speak of alienation and marginalisation. There is a grieving, an anxiety from a cause we cannot quite put our finger on. But instead of

questioning our being, our existence, we go in search of banal (*mere*) experiences in which we are drowning out those feelings of emptiness and anxiety.

The enframing has taken over the forms of decision-making and research in most parts of the western world. But there are possibilities of resistance, seeds, still living, also in Finnish Lapland. It may be something indefinable in the so-called Lappish way of life. It probably has something to do with living "so close to nature". Trying to define it already makes it sound like something perhaps primitive, mystical or naive, as if that in itself was a bad (wrong) thing. Whether there is or not, perhaps it is still worth examining in a critical way the metaphysical structure of our modern science, even if *this* thesis is still far from reaching any kind of other alternative options or definite directions the western world could take. This thesis is rather an opening, a notice and a call for thinking of the attitudes, of the change that is happening. Instead of always defining we should work on our understanding to leave room for other ways of being and living, when it is necessary. With beginning by recognising something in its own brilliance, a possible compromise even in Upper Lapland can begin to be built.

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