

The Turning

The essence¹ of Enframing is that setting-upon gathered into itself which entraps the truth of its own coming to presence with oblivion.² This entrapping disguises itself, in that it develops

1. Throughout this essay the noun *Wesen* will sometimes be given its traditional translation "essence," but more often it will be translated with "coming to presence." For Heidegger the essence of anything is its "enduring as presence." As such, it is the manner in which anything in its enduring comports itself effectually as what it is, i.e., the manner in which it "holds sway" through time (see QT 30; 3, n. 1). Thus in this essay the *Wesen* of that enframing summons—"Enframing," *das Ge-stell*—which governs the modern age is the "challenging setting-upon" (*Stellen*) that sets everything in place as supply, ruling in modern technology (cf. QT 15, n. 14; 19, n. 17); the *Wesen* of modern technology is Enframing itself; the *Wesen* of Being is the manner in which Being endures, at any given time, as the Being of whatever is (cf. p. 38); the *Wesen* of man is that dwelling in openness, accomplished through language and thinking, wherein Being can be and is preserved and set free into presence (cf. pp. 39–42 and "Time and Being" in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh [New York: Harper & Row, 1972], p. 12).

2. *Vergessenheit* (oblivion) is not to be confused with the propensity to forget things or with a lapse of memory. In this essay, as for Heidegger generally, *Vergessenheit* is to be understood in the positive sense of the Greek *lēthē*. It is that concealedness which is the source and foundation of all unconcealedness or truth (*alētheia*). There can be no unveiling unless there is concealment from whence it comes. The words of Heraclitus, *physis kryptesthai philei*—ordinarily translated "nature loves to hide"—would be rendered by Heidegger approximately as "concealedness is the very heart of coming into appearance" (from the transcript of the "Séminaire tenu au Thor en septembre 1969 par le Professeur Martin Heidegger," p. 21).

into the setting in order of everything that presences as standing-reserve, establishes itself in the standing-reserve, and rules as the standing-reserve.

Enframing comes to presence as the danger. But does the danger therewith announce itself *as* the danger? No. To be sure, men are at all times and in all places exceedingly oppressed by dangers and exigencies. But *the* danger, namely, Being itself endangering itself in the truth of its coming to presence, remains veiled and disguised. This disguising is what is most dangerous in the danger. In keeping with this disguising of the danger through the ordering belonging to Enframing, it seems time and time again as though technology were a means in the hands of man. But, in truth, it is the coming to presence of man that is now being ordered forth to lend a hand to the coming to presence of technology.

Does this mean that man, for better or worse, is helplessly delivered over to technology? No, it means the direct opposite; and not only that, but essentially it means something more than the opposite, because it means something different.

If Enframing is a destining of the coming to presence of Being itself, then we may venture to suppose that Enframing, as one among Being's modes of coming to presence, changes. For what gives destining its character as destining is that it takes place so as suitably to adapt itself to the ordaining that is ever one.³ To take place so as to adapt means to set out in order to adjust fittingly to the directing already made apparent—for which another destining, yet veiled, is waiting. That which has the character of destining moves, in itself, at any given time, toward a special moment that sends it into another destining, in which, however, it is not simply submerged and lost. We are still too

3. "Destining" translates *Geschick*, which ordinarily means skill, aptitude, fitness, as well as fate or destiny, and is here regularly rendered by "destining." The expressions "ordaining" and "takes place so as suitably to adapt itself" render words closely allied to *Geschick*. "Ordaining" translates *Schickung*, meaning providential decree, dispensation. "To take place so as suitably to adapt" translates the verb *sich schicken*, which means to come to pass or happen, to suit or be fit, to accommodate oneself, to agree with, to match or blend. In this essay, where Heidegger's central concern is with turning about, a changing of direction, the connotations of aptness, fitness, and self-adapting brought forward for *Geschick* in this passage should always be kept in mind for the word "destining." Cf. QT 24.

inexperienced and thoughtless to think the essence of the historical from out of destining and ordaining and taking place so as to adapt. We are still too easily inclined, out of habit, to conceive that which has the character of destining in terms of happening, and to represent the latter as an expiration, a passing away, of events that have been established historiographically. We locate history in the realm of happening, instead of thinking history in accordance with its essential origin from out of destining. But destining is essentially destining of Being, indeed in such a way that Being itself takes place so as to adapt itself, and ever comes to presence as a destining and, accordingly, changes in the manner of a destining. If a change in Being—i.e., now, in the coming to presence of Enframing—comes to pass, then this in no way means that technology, whose essence lies in Enframing, will be done away with.⁴ Technology will not be struck down; and it most certainly will not be destroyed.

If the essence, the coming to presence, of technology, Enframing as the danger within Being, is Being itself, then technology will never allow itself to be mastered, either positively or negatively, by a human doing founded merely on itself. Technology, whose essence is Being itself, will never allow itself to be overcome by men. That would mean, after all, that man was the master of Being.

Nevertheless, because Being, as the essence of technology, has adapted itself into Enframing, and because man's coming to presence belongs to the coming to presence of Being—inasmuch as Being's coming to presence needs the coming to presence of man, in order to remain *kept safe* as Being in keeping with its own coming to presence in the midst of whatever is, and thus

4. The phrase "comes to pass" renders the German verb *sich ereignet* (from *sich ereignen*, to happen or take place). The noun *Ereignis* usually means, correspondingly, event. Later in this essay (p. 45), Heidegger points to the fact that *Ereignis*, and with it necessarily *sich ereignen*, embodies the meanings of the two verbs *eigenen* (to be one's own, to suit, to belong to), and the archaic *eräugnen* (to bring before the eyes, to bring to sight). He says: *Ereignis ist eignende Eräugnis* ("Disclosing coming-to-pass is bringing-to-sight that brings into its own") (p. 45). Although the introduction of this fullness of meaning for *sich ereignen* and *Ereignis* has been reserved in the translation for the point at which Heidegger's definitive statement is made, that meaning clearly informs the argument of the essay throughout and should therefore be borne in mind.

as Being to endure as present—for this reason the coming to presence of technology cannot be led into the change of its destining without the cooperation of the coming to presence of man. Through this cooperation, however, technology will not be overcome [*überwunden*] by men. On the contrary, the coming to presence of technology will be surmounted [*verwunden*] in a way that restores it into its yet concealed truth. This restoring surmounting is similar to what happens when, in the human realm, one gets over grief or pain. But the surmounting of a destining of Being—here and now, the surmounting of Enframing—each time comes to pass out of the arrival of another destining, a destining that does not allow itself either to be logically and historiographically predicted or to be metaphysically construed as a sequence belonging to a process of history. For never does the historical—let alone happening itself as represented historiographically—determine destining; but rather happening, together with the representation of the constancy assigned to it, is already in each instance that which, belonging to a destining of Being, has the character of destining.

Man is indeed needed and used for the restorative surmounting of the essence of technology. But man is used here in his essence that *corresponds* to that surmounting. In keeping with this, man's essence must first open itself to the essence of technology. This opening is, in terms of that coming-to-pass which discloses, something quite different from the event of man's affirming technology and its means and promoting them. However, in order that man in his essence may become attentive to the essence of technology, and in order that there may be founded an essential relationship between technology and man in respect to their essence, modern man must first and above all find his way back into the full breadth of the space proper to his essence. That essential space of man's essential being receives the dimension that unites it to something beyond itself solely from out of the conjoining relation [*Ver-hältnis*] that is the way in which the safekeeping of Being itself is given to belong to the essence of man as the one who is needed and used by Being. Unless man first establishes himself beforehand in the space proper to his essence and there takes up his dwelling, he will not be capable of anything essential within the destining

now holding sway. In pondering this let us pay heed to a word of Meister Eckhart, as we think it in keeping with what is most fundamental to it. It reads: "Those who are not of a great essence, whatever work they perform, nothing comes of it"⁵ (*Reden der Unterscheidung*, No. 4).

It is toward the great essence of man that we are thinking, inasmuch as man's essence belongs to the essence of Being and is needed by Being to keep safe the coming to presence of Being into its truth.

Therefore, what is necessary above all is this: that beforehand we ponder the *essence* of Being as that which is worthy of thinking; that beforehand, in thinking this, we experience to what extent we are called upon first to trace a path for such experiencing and to prepare that path as a way into that which till now has been impassable.

All this we can do only if, *before* considering the question that is seemingly always the most immediate one and the only urgent one, What shall we do? we ponder this: *How must we think?* For thinking is genuine activity, genuine taking a hand, if to take a hand means to lend a hand to the essence, the coming to presence, of Being. This means: to prepare (build) for the coming to presence of Being that abode in the midst of whatever is⁶ into which Being brings itself and its essence to utterance in language. Language first gives to every purposeful deliberation its ways and its byways. Without language, there would be lacking to every doing every dimension in which it could bestir

5. *Die nitt von grossem wesen sind, was werk die wirken, da wirt nit us.*

6. *inmitten des Seienden.* "Whatever is" here translates *Seienden*, the present participle of the German verb *sein* (to be) used as a noun. The necessity in English of translating *Sein*, when it appears as a noun, with "Being" precludes the possibility of the use of the most obvious translation, "being," for *Seiendes*. A phrase such as the "Being of being" or "Being in the midst of being" would clearly present unacceptable difficulties. Heidegger does not intend *das Seiende* to refer primarily to any mere aggregate of entities or beings, let alone to a particular being. The word connotes for him, first of all, the intricately interrelated entirety of all that *is*, in whose "is" Being is made manifest. The verbal force of the participle is always significantly present. In these essays, the translation of *das Seiende* will vary according to the demands of particular contexts. The translations "what is," "whatever is," "that which is," "what is in being," "whatever is in being," and "that which is in being" will ordinarily be used.

itself and be effective. In view of this, language is never primarily the expression of thinking, feeling, and willing. Language is the primal dimension within which man's essence is first able to correspond at all to Being and its claim, and, in corresponding, to belong to Being. *This primal corresponding*, expressly carried out, is *thinking*. Through thinking, we first learn to dwell in the realm in which there comes to pass the restorative surmounting of the destining of Being, the surmounting of Enframing.

The coming to presence of Enframing is the danger. As the danger, Being turns about into the oblivion of its coming to presence, turns away from this coming to presence, and in that way simultaneously turns counter to the truth of its coming to presence. In the danger there holds sway this turning about not yet thought on. In the coming to presence of the danger there *conceals* itself, therefore, the possibility of a turning in which the oblivion belonging to the coming to presence of Being will so turn itself that, with *this* turning, the truth of the coming to presence of Being will expressly turn in—turn homeward—into whatever is.⁷

Yet probably *this* turning—the turning of the oblivion of Being into the safekeeping belonging to the coming to presence of Being—will finally come to pass only when the danger, which is in its concealed essence ever susceptible of turning, first comes expressly to light as the danger that it is. Perhaps we stand already in the shadow cast ahead by the advent of *this* turning. When and how it will come to pass after the manner of a destining no one knows. Nor is it necessary that we know. A knowl-

7. "Will turn in—turn homeward—" translates *einkehrt*. The verb *einkehren* means to turn in, to enter, to put up at an inn, to alight, to stay. The related noun *Einkehr*, translated in this essay as "in-turning," means putting up at an inn; an inn or lodging. *Einkehren* and *Einkehr* speak of a thorough being at home that yet partakes of the transiency belonging to the ongoing. Both words suggest the *Heimkehr* (homecoming) important in Heidegger's earlier Hölderlin essays. The allusion to a transient abiding made here in these words leads toward Heidegger's culminating portrayal of the turning within Being as a self-clearing, i.e., a self-opening-up, as which and into which Being's own self-lighting that is a self-manifesting *entering* brings itself to pass. Cf. pp. 44–45, where we find, in immediate conjunction with *Einkehr*, the introduction of the nouns *Einblick* (entering, flashing glance, insight) and *Einblitz* (in-flashing).

edge of this kind would even be most ruinous for man, because his essence is to be the one who waits, the one who attends upon the coming to presence of Being in that in thinking he guards it. Only when man, as the shepherd of Being, attends upon the truth of Being can he expect an arrival of a destining of Being and not sink to the level of a mere wanting to know.

But what happens there where the danger comes to pass as the danger and is thus for the first time unconcealedly danger?

That we may hear the answer to this question, let us give heed to the beckoning sign that is preserved in some words of Hölderlin. At the beginning of the later version of his Hymn "Patmos," the poet says:

*But where danger is, grows
The saving power also.**

If now we think these words still more essentially than the poet sang them, if we follow them in thought as far as they go, they say: Where the danger is as the danger, there the saving power is already thriving also. The latter does not appear incidentally. The saving power is not secondary to the danger. The selfsame danger is, when it is *as* the danger, the saving power. The danger is the saving power, inasmuch as it brings the saving power out of its—the danger's—concealed essence that is ever susceptible of turning. What does "to save" mean? It means to loose, to emancipate, to free, to spare and husband, to harbor protectingly, to take under one's care, to keep safe. Lessing still uses the word "saving" emphatically, in the sense of vindication, i.e., to put something back into what is proper and right, into the essential,⁸ and to keep it safe therein. That which genuinely saves is that which keeps safe, safekeeping.⁹

* Von Hellingrath, ed., IV, 227.

8. *in das Rechte, wesenhafte zurückstellen.*

9. The preceding three sentences make plain with peculiar force the meaning that Heidegger intends for the verb *wahren* (to keep safe) and the noun *Wahrnis* (safekeeping). His equating here of these two words with *das Rettende* (the saving-power) draws into them all the connotations of freeing and safeguarding that he has just established for the latter. *Wahren*, ordinarily understood as to watch over, to keep safe, to preserve—and with it *Wahrnis*—clearly carries, simultaneously, connotations of freeing, i.e., of allowing to be manifest. The same connotations are resident in all the

But where is the danger? What is the place for it? Inasmuch as the danger is Being itself, it is both nowhere and everywhere. It *has* no place as something other than itself. It is itself the placeless dwelling place of all presencing. The danger is the epoch of Being coming to presence as Enframing.¹⁰

When the danger *is* as the danger, then its coming to presence expressly comes to pass. But the danger is the entrapping that is the way in which Being itself, in the mode of Enframing, pursues with oblivion the safekeeping belonging to Being. In the entrapping, what comes to presence is this, that Being dismisses and puts away its truth into oblivion in such a way that Being denies its own coming to presence. When, accordingly, the danger is as the danger, then the entrapping that is the way Being itself entraps its truth with oblivion comes expressly to pass. When this *entrapping-with-oblivion* does come expressly to pass, then oblivion as such turns in and abides. Thus rescued through this abiding from falling away out of remembrance, it is no longer oblivion. With such in-turning, the oblivion relating to Being's safekeeping is no longer the oblivion of Being; but rather, turning in thus, it turns about into the safekeeping of Being. When the danger is as the danger, with the turning about of oblivion, the safekeeping of Being comes to pass; world comes to pass.* That world comes to pass as world, that the thing things, this is the distant advent of the coming to presence of Being itself.

The self-denying of the truth of Being, which entraps itself with oblivion, harbors the favor as yet ungranted, that this self-entrapping will turn about; that, in such turning, oblivion will turn and become the safekeeping belonging to the coming to

words built on *wahr*. They should be heard in *Wahrheit* (truth), which, in the discussion now in progress, is often used—sometimes all but interchangeably—with *Wahrnis*. For the common derivation of *wahren* and *Wahrheit*, and hence of other words built on the stem *wahr*, and for the fundamental meaning therein, cf. SR 164–165.

10. Heidegger never intends "epoch" simply in the sense of "era" or "age." "Epoch" always carries for him the meaning of the Greek *epoche*, i.e., withholding-to-self (*Ansichhalten*). Cf. "Time and Being," *On Time and Being*, p. 9. Here, then, the meaning is that the danger is the self-withholding of Being enduring as present in the mode of Enframing.

* Cf. "The Thing," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 165 ff.

presence of Being, instead of allowing that coming to presence to fall into disguise. In the coming to presence of the danger there comes to presence and dwells a favor, namely, the favor of the turning about of the oblivion of Being into the truth of Being. In the coming to presence of the danger, where it *is* as the danger, is the turning about into the safekeeping, is this safekeeping itself, is the saving power of Being.

When the turning comes to pass in the danger, this can happen only without mediation. For Being has no equal whatever. It is not brought about by anything else nor does it itself bring anything about. Being never at any time runs its course within a cause-effect coherence. Nothing that effects, as Being, precedes the mode in which it—Being itself—takes place so as to adapt itself; and no effect, as Being, follows after. Sheerly, out of its own essence of concealedness, Being brings itself to pass into its epoch. Therefore we must pay heed:

The turning of the danger comes to pass suddenly. In this turning, the clearing belonging to the essence of Being suddenly clears itself and lights up. This sudden self-lighting is the lightning-flash. It brings itself into its own brightness, which it itself both brings along and brings in. When, in the turning of the danger, the truth of Being flashes, the essence of Being clears and lights itself up. Then the truth of the essence, the coming to presence, of Being turns and enters in.

Toward where does in-turning bring itself to pass? Toward nowhere except into Being itself, which is as yet coming to presence out of the oblivion of its truth. But this same Being comes to presence as the coming to presence of technology. The coming to presence of technology is Enframing. In-turning, as the bringing to pass of the turning about of oblivion, turns in into that which now is the epoch of Being. That which genuinely is,¹¹ is in no way this or that particular being. What genuinely is, i.e., what expressly dwells and endures as present in the "is," is uniquely Being. Only Being "is," only in Being and as Being does that which the "is" names bring itself to pass; that which is, is Being from out of its essence.¹²

11. *Das was eigentlich ist.*

12. "That which is" here translates *das was ist*. In the discussion that begins at this point, Heidegger is clearly employing a usage that must force

"To flash [*blitzen*], in terms both of its derivation and of what it designates, is "to glance" [*blicken*]. In the flashing glance and as that glance, the essence, the coming to presence, of Being enters into its own emitting of light. Moving through the element of its own shining, the flashing glance retrieves that which it catches sight of and brings it back into the brightness of its own looking. And yet that glancing, in its giving of light, simultaneously keeps safe the concealed darkness of its origin as the unlighted. The in-turning [*Einkehr*] that is the lightning-flash of the truth of Being is the entering, flashing glance—insight [*Einblick*]. We have thought the truth of Being in the worlding of world as the mirror play of the fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and divinities.* When oblivion turns about, when world as the safekeeping of the coming to presence of Being turns in, then there comes to pass the in-flashing [*Einblitz*] of world into the injurious neglect of the thing.¹³ That neglect comes to pass in the mode of the rule of Enframing. In-flashing of world into Enframing is in-flashing of the truth of Being into truthless Being. In-flashing is the disclosing coming-to-pass within Being itself. Disclosing coming-to-pass [*Ereignis*] is bringing to sight that brings into its own [*eignende Eräugnis*].

any German reader to think afresh; by specifically distinguishing *das was ist* from any use of the present participle *Seiendes* for "this or that particular being," he can set forth a distinction apparent in the words themselves. For the English-speaking reader of this volume, however, a different and more difficult problem remains. Since *das Seiende* is very often translated in these essays with "what is," "whatever is," and "that which is," confusion could easily result in the present context. Only in the discussion now underway, in two related passages in QT (pp. 25, 27), and in one other instance (WN 97) will "that which is" translate forms of *das was ist*; *das Seiende* will be translated variously as "what is," "what is in being," and "that which is in being."

* Cf. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 165ff.

13. "Injurious neglect" translates *Verwahrlosung*. Doubtless we should hear in *Verwahrlosung*—a noun built on the verb *verwahren* (to keep, guard, secure, protect) with the negating prefix *los*—connotations that go beyond its ordinary meaning of neglect and injury caused by neglect, and that accord with those of manifesting that Heidegger finds resident in the stem *wahr* (cf. p. 42, n. 9). In this and in the following sentence in the text, the reader should be reminded of the character of Enframing as that "setting-upon that challenges forth" which sets everything in place as supply, which orders everything as standing-reserve and hence keeps nothing safe, i.e., leaves nothing free to be as it genuinely is.

Insight into that which is—this designation now names the disclosing that brings into its own that is the coming-to-pass of the turning within Being, of the turning of the denial of Being's coming to presence into the disclosing coming-to-pass of Being's safekeeping. Insight into that which is, is itself the disclosing that brings into its own, as which the truth of Being relates itself and stands in relation to truthless Being. Insight into that which is—this names the constellation in the essence of Being. This constellation is the dimension in which Being comes to presence as the danger.

From the first and almost to the last it has seemed as though "insight into that which is" means only a glance such as we men throw out from ourselves into what is. We ordinarily take "that which is" to be whatever is in being. For the "is" is asserted of what is in being. But now everything has turned about. Insight does not name any discerning examination [*Einsicht*] into what is in being that we conduct for ourselves; insight [*Einblick*] as in-flashing [*Einblitz*] is the disclosing coming-to-pass of the constellation of the turning within the coming to presence of Being itself, and that within the epoch of Enframing. That which is, is in no way that which is in being. For the "it is" and the "is" are accorded to what is in being only inasmuch as what is in being is appealed to in respect to its Being. In the "is," "Being" is uttered: that which "is," in the sense that it constitutes the Being of what is in being, is Being.¹⁴

The ordering belonging to Enframing sets itself above the thing, leaves it, as thing, unsafeguarded, truthless.¹⁵ In this way Enframing disguises the nearness of world that nears in the thing. Enframing disguises even this, its disguising, just as the forgetting of something forgets itself and is drawn away in the wake of forgetful oblivion. The coming-to-pass of oblivion not only lets fall from remembrance into concealment; but that falling itself falls simultaneously from remembrance into concealment, which itself also falls away in that falling.

14. On the relation between *das Sein* (Being) and *das Seiende* (what is) see "The Onto-theo-logical Constitution of Metaphysics," in *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), pp. 64, 132.

15. *ungewahrt, wahrlos*.

And yet—in all the disguising belonging to Enframing, the bright open-space of world lights up, the truth of Being flashes. At the instant, that is, when Enframing lights up, in its coming to presence, as the danger, i.e., as the saving-power. In Enframing, moreover, as a destining of the coming to presence of Being, there comes to presence a light from the flashing of Being. Enframing is, though veiled, still glance, and no blind destiny in the sense of a completely ordained fate.

Insight into that which is—thus do we name the sudden flash of the truth of Being into truthless Being.

When insight comes disclosingly to pass, then men are the ones who are struck in their essence by the flashing of Being. In insight, men are the ones who are caught sight of.

Only when man, in the disclosing coming-to-pass of the insight by which he himself is beheld, renounces human self-will and projects himself toward that insight, away from himself, does he correspond in his essence to the claim of that insight. In thus corresponding man is gathered into his own [*ge-eignet*],¹⁶ that he, within the safeguarded element of world, may, as the mortal, look out toward the divine.

Otherwise not; for the god also is—when he is—a being and stands as a being within Being and its coming to presence, which brings itself disclosingly to pass out of the worlding of world.¹⁷

16. The translation "gathered into his own" for *ge-eignet* takes cognizance of the prefix *ge-*, which Heidegger has separated from the verb *eignen* (to be one's own). Heidegger repeatedly stresses the force of *ge-* as meaning "gathering." Cf. e.g., QT 19. Here the suggestion of gathering points to man's belonging within the wholly mutual interrelating of the fourfold of sky and earth, divinities and mortals. The ensuing allusions to "the divine" and "the god" bespeak the same context of thought (cf. "The Thing," *Poetry, Language, Thought*, pp. 178 ff.). *Ge-eignet* speaks specifically of that bringing into its own which is the disclosing coming-to-pass (*Ereignis*) of the "insight into that which is" that is the in-flashing of Being into its own enduring as presence—the in-flashing that brings to pass, in Being's manifesting of itself to itself, the worlding of world and the thinging of the thing.

17. "The god" of whom Heidegger speaks is not the god of the meta-physical-theological tradition of Christendom. Heidegger characteristically thinks of a dimension of the divine that the divinities make manifest—as among the Greeks, or for the Hebrew prophets, or in the preaching of Jesus—and toward which they beckon man. He can speak of the modern age as "the time of the gods that have fled and of the god that is coming" ("Remembrance of the Poet," Tr. Douglas Scott, in *Existence and Being*,

Only when insight brings itself disclosingly to pass, only when the coming to presence of technology lights up as Enframing, do we discern how, in the ordering of the standing-reserve, the truth of Being remains denied as world. Only then do we notice that all mere willing and doing in the mode of ordering steadfastly persists in injurious neglect. In this same way all mere organizing of the world conceived and represented historiographically in terms of universality remains truthless and without foundation. All mere chasing after the future so as to work out a picture of it through calculation in order to extend what is present and half-thought into what, now veiled, is yet to come, itself still moves within the prevailing attitude belonging to technological, calculating representation. All attempts to reckon existing reality morphologically, psychologically, in terms of decline and loss, in terms of fate, catastrophe, and destruction, are merely technological behavior. That behavior operates through the device of the enumerating of symptoms whose standing-reserve can be increased to infinity and always varied anew. Such analyses of the "situation" do not notice that they are working only according to the meaning and manner of technological dissecting, and that they thus furnish to the technological consciousness the historiographical-technological presentation of happening commensurate with that consciousness. But no historiographical representation of history as happening ever brings us into the proper relation to destining, let alone into the essential origin of destining in the disclosing coming-to-pass of the truth of Being that brings everything into its own.

—All that is merely technological never arrives at the essence of technology. It cannot even once recognize its outer precincts.

Therefore, as we seek to give utterance to insight into that which is, we do not describe the situation of our time. It is the constellation of Being that is uttering itself to us.

But we do not yet hear, we whose hearing and seeing are perishing through radio and film under the rule of technology. The

introd. and analysis by Werner Brock [Chicago: Regnery, 1949], p. 288), and can anticipate a time when, through the fulfillment of the essence of that age, Being will make itself accessible to genuine questioning, and "ample space" will therewith be opened "for the decision as to whether Being will once again become capable of a god" (AWP 153).

constellation of Being is the denial of world, in the form of injurious neglect of the thing. Denial is not nothing; it is the highest mystery of Being within the rule of Enframing.

Whether the god lives or remains dead is not decided by the religiosity of men and even less by the theological aspirations of philosophy and natural science. Whether or not God is God comes disclosingly to pass from out of and within the constellation of Being.

So long as we do not, through thinking, experience what is, we can never belong to what will be.

Will insight into that which is bring itself disclosingly to pass?

Will we, as the ones caught sight of, be so brought home into the essential glance of Being that we will no longer elude it? Will we arrive thereby within the essence of the nearness that, in thinging the thing, brings world near? Will we dwell as those at home in nearness, so that we will belong primally within the fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and divinities?

Will insight into that which is bring itself disclosingly to pass? Will we correspond to that insight, through a looking that looks into the essence of technology and becomes aware of Being itself within it?

Will we see the lightning-flash of Being in the essence of technology? The flash that comes out of stillness, as stillness itself? Stillness stills. What does it still? It stills Being into the coming to presence of world.

May world in its worlding be the nearest of all nearing that nears, as it brings the truth of Being near to man's essence, and so gives man to belong to the disclosing bringing-to-pass that is a bringing into its own.

The Question Concerning Technology

∞ and Other Essays ∞

MARTIN HEIDEGGER

Translated and with an Introduction by
WILLIAM LOVITT

GARLAND PUBLISHING, INC.
New York & London
1977

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Designed by Eve Callahan

This edition published by arrangement with Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Heidegger, Martin, 1889-1976.

The question concerning technology, and other essays.

Translations of essays which originally appeared in *Die Technik und die Kehre, Holzwege, and Vorträge und Aufsätze*.

CONTENTS: The question concerning technology.—The turning.—The word of Nietzsche: "God is dead". [etc.]

1. Ontology—Addresses, essays, lectures. 2. Technology—Addresses, essays, lectures. I. Title.

B3279.H48Q47 1977 193 77-87181

ISBN 0-8240-2427-3

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Preface

The essays in this book were taken with Heidegger's permission from three different volumes of his works: *Die Technik und die Kehre* (Pfullingen: Günther Neske, 1962); *Holzwege* (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1952); and *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Günther Neske, 1954). "The Question Concerning Technology" is contained in both *Die Technik und die Kehre* and *Vorträge und Aufsätze*.

In *Die Technik und die Kehre* the following prefatory note appears regarding the two essays, "The Question Concerning Technology" ("Die Frage nach der Technik") and "The Turning" ("Die Kehre"):

Under the title "Insight into That Which Is," the author gave, on December 1, 1949, in the Club at Bremen, four lectures, which were repeated without alterations in the spring of 1950 (March 25 and 26) at Bühlerhöhe. The titles were "The Thing ["Das Ding"], "Enframing" ["Das Gestell"], "The Danger" ["Die Gefahr"], "The Turning" ["Die Kehre"].*

The first lecture was given in an expanded version on June 6, 1950, before the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts. (See *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 1954, pp. 163 ff.)†

* Throughout the translations in this volume parenthetical elements interpolated by me are shown in brackets, while those present in the author's original text are given in parentheses.

† "The Thing" has been published in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), pp. 165-186.

The second lecture was given on November 18, 1955, also in an expanded version, under the title "The Question Concerning Technology," in the series entitled "The Arts in the Technological Age." (See *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 1954, pp. 13 ff.). The present volume repeats this text unaltered.

The third lecture remains still unpublished.

The fourth lecture, "The Turning," is published here for the first time according to the first unaltered version.

At the end of *Holzwege* Heidegger makes the following observations concerning "The Word of Nietzsche: 'God Is Dead'" ("Nietzsches Wort 'Gott ist tot' ") and "The Age of the World Picture ("Die Zeit des Weltbildes"):

"The Word of Nietzsche: 'God Is Dead' ": The major portions were delivered repeatedly in 1943 for small groups. The content is based upon the Nietzsche lectures that were given between 1936 and 1940 during five semesters at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau. These set themselves the task of understanding Nietzsche's thinking as the consummation of Western metaphysics from out of Being.

"The Age of the World Picture": The lecture was given on June 9, 1938, under the title "The Establishing by Metaphysics of the Modern World Picture," as the last of a series that was arranged by the Society for Aesthetics, Natural Philosophy, and Medicine at Freiburg im Breisgau, and which had as its theme the establishing of the modern world picture. The appendixes were written at the same time but were not delivered.

Of all the essays in *Holzwege* Heidegger remarks:

In the intervening time these pieces have been repeatedly revised and, in some places, clarified. In each case the level of reflection and the structure have remained, and so also, together with these, has the changing use of language.

And at the end of *Vorträge und Aufsätze* Heidegger gives the following notes:

"The Question Concerning Technology" ["Die Frage nach der Technik"]: Lecture held on November 18, 1955, in the main auditorium of the Technische Hochschule, Munich, in the series "The Arts in the Technological Age," arranged by the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts under the leadership of President Emil Preetorius; published in volume III of the *Yearbook of the Academy* (ed. Clemens Graf Podewils), R. Oldenbourg, Munich, 1954, pp. 70 ff.

“Science and Reflection” [“Wissenschaft und Besinnung”]: Lecture, in its present version given in August, 1954, before a small group, in preparation for the above-mentioned conference in Munich.

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