

MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S

THE QUESTION ABOUT TECHNIC -

A TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

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A TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

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The machine threatens all that has been gained, as long  
as it dares to exist in spirit, instead of in obedience.  
So that the more beautiful lingering of the glorious hand  
no longer shine,  
it cuts the stone more steeply for more resolute building.

It never stays behind, so that we might just once outrun it  
and it belong to itself in the silent factory, oiling.  
It is life, - it means to know best,  
which with the same resolve orders and produces and destroys.

But to us Being--there is still enchanted; in a hundred  
places it is still the origin. A playing of pure  
powers, which no one touches who does not kneel and marvel.

Words still proceed gently before the unsayable . . .  
And music, ever new, out of the most tremulous stones,  
builds in unusable space her deified house.

Rainer Maria Rilke  
Sonnets to Orpheus, II, 10

Alles Erworben bedroht die Maschine, solange  
sie sich erdreistet, im Geist, statt im Gehorchen, zu sein.  
Daß nicht der herrlichen Hand schöneres Zögern mehr prange,  
zu dem entschlossenern Bau schneidet sie steifer den Stein.

Nirgends bleibt sie zurück, daß wir ihr ein Mal entröhnen  
und sie in stiller Fabrik ölend sich selber gehört.  
Sie ist das Leben, - sie meint es am besten zu können,  
die mit dem gleichen Entschluß ordnet und schafft und zerstört.

Aber noch ist uns das Dasein verzaubert; an hundert  
Stellen ist es noch Ursprung. Ein Spielen von reinen  
Kräften, die keiner berührt, der nicht kniet und bewundert.

Worte gehen noch zart am Unsäglichen aus . . .  
Und die Musik, immer neu aus den bebendsten Steinen,  
baut im unbrauchbaren Raum ihr vergöttlichtes Haus.

Rainer Maria Rilke  
Sonneten An Orpheus, II, 10

## P r e f a c e

It might be asked as to whether or not the translator has a muse. The question must seem at first to be an impossibility: the translator is only a technician, a correlator of existing thoughts and words, or even worse:

Such is our pride, our folly and our fate,  
That only those who cannot write, translate.

Yet in an undertaking such as the one at hand, the translation of the words of a man which are so profoundly difficult in his own language, one must have a trust in even the impossible.

Muse or no muse, I hereby renounce full credit for the translation which follows and acknowledge my great debt to the students of Religion 775 of 1970 and 1972 whose questionings were responsible for innumerable revisions both of particular passages and words and of the general tone and understanding of the entire lecture. And of course to George Grant, who conceived of this translation, inspired it, and without whose invaluable understandings and criticisms this undertaking would have been but half what it is at present.

Edwin M. Alexander  
Hamilton, Ontario  
January, 1973

## I n t r o d u c t i o n

It may be appropriate at the outset to say just a few words concerning the appropriateness of the study of Heidegger in a department of religion. Isn't it the domain of departments of philosophy to study philosophers? One answer to this question might be found in the fact that Heidegger is rather overlooked in departments of philosophy, especially in English-speaking countries. My own best answer would be that through the study of Heidegger, among others, there is an enormous amount to be learned about the spiritual quality and demension of this age. The best answer of all, however, is given by Heidegger himself:

Because metaphysics represents beings as beings, it is, two-in-one, the truth of beings in their universality and in the highest being. According to its nature, it is at the same time ontology in the narrower sense and theology. This ontotheological nature of philosophy proper (πρώτη φιλοσοφία) is, no doubt due to the way in which the *ὄν* opens up in it, namely as *ὄν*. Thus the theological character of ontology is not merely due to the fact that Greek metaphysics was later taken up and transformed by the ecclesiastic theology of Christianity. Rather it is due to the manner in which beings as beings have from the very beginning disconcealed themselves. It was this unconcealedness of beings that provided the possibility for Christian theology to take possession of Greek philosophy - whether for better or for worse may be decided by the theologians, on the basis of their experience of what is Christian; only they should keep in mind what is written in the First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians: "οὐχὶ ἐμώρασεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου; Has not God let the wisdom of this world become foolishness?" (I Cor. 1:20) The σοφία τοῦ κόσμου [wisdom of this world], however, is that which according to 1:22, the Ἕλληνας ζητοῦσιν, the Greeks seek. Aristotle even calls the πρώτη φιλοσοφία (philosophy proper) quite specifically ζητουμένη - what is sought.

Will Christian theology make up its mind one day to take seriously the word of the apostle and thus also the conception of philosophy as foolishness? 1

L'Express magazine described Heidegger as the man "qui fut sans doute le premier à élever la technique au rang d'une question philosophique essentielle. On le considère souvent comme l'un des penseurs de l'ère planétaire, caractérisée par le règne mondial de la technique'." 2 The lecture which has been translated here thoroughly justifies this claim, so much so that even today, twenty-two years after its first delivery it would be extremely difficult to point to another who has reached the comprehension and completeness of thinking given here. High praise, however, will prove of no use to us in that task.

The lecture translated here has appeared in print in two editions. The one is the collection Vorträge und Aufsätze (Lectures and Essays) and the other in its own binding along with "Die Kehre". According to the preface of the latter publication, the author held four lectures at the Club in Bremen under the title "Einblick in das was ist" ("Glimpse into that which is"), on the first of December, 1949, which were repeated without alteration at Bühlerhöhe on March 25th and 26th, 1950. The titles were: Das Ding; Das Gestell; Die Gefahr; and Die Kehre. The first lecture was given in more advanced form on June 6th, 1950 in the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts and was

published in Vorträge und Aufsätze, 1954, p. 163ff. The third lecture is as yet unpublished. The second lecture was delivered, also in revised form, at the above mentioned academy's series "The arts in the technical age" under the title "Die Frage nach der Technik" on November 18th, 1955, and is namely the lecture at hand.

Very roughly speaking, the lecture may be divided into two halves, the first dealing with the essence of technic,<sup>3</sup> beginning with a brief description of the method to be used in the lecture, namely "questioning" about technic, in order to "thereby prepare a free relationship to it", and proceeding with a discussion of the ancient (Greek) conception of the essence of technic, a discussion in that light of modern technic, and concluding with the latter's definition in the word "Ge-stell". The second half, which cannot be described in any so simple a manner, is what might be called a discussion of how we can relate to the essence of modern technic. The first "half", which presents the greatest obstacles to translation, is the most self-explanatory. The second "half", about which I will have almost nothing to say in the way of translation, can only be fully grasped in the light of Heidegger's essay "The Origin of the Work of Art" which first appeared at about the same time as this lecture (1950) and was first published in Holzwege. There is a decent translation of this essay by Albert Hofstadter in Philosophies of Art and Beauty, p. 649ff (Modern Library,



1964).

It has almost become a tradition for translators of Heidegger to preface their endeavors with some explanation of the difficulties involved both in interpretation and in translation. I shall not break that tradition, but nevertheless shall try to steer clear of any pre-interpretation which is sometimes quite evident to me in other translations. Of course, as Heidegger himself maintains, any translation is also simultaneously an interpretation, and where I am aware of my own interpretations or where the more blatant interpretations are necessary I shall try to point them out. I must point out that when L'Express magazine asked Heidegger about the various translations of his writings which had appeared in America, he replied that he was aware of them, but that he could not recognize any of them. With this in mind, and also with the realization that this translation does not make any radical attempt to overcome the difficulties inherent in the other translations (as I shall point out), we shall proceed. It might also be worth considering at this juncture the crucial fact that Aquinas learned the Greeks solely through Latin translations.

In his introduction to his translation of What Is Called Thinking, J. Glenn Gray says the following:

To offer a translation of a Heideggerian work requires a measure of courage, perhaps better named rashness. The reasons are clearly stated in the present volume. A translation is necessarily an interpretation, according to him, and also every genuine

thinking is ambituous in its very nature. "Multiplicity of meanings is the element in which thought must move in order to be strict thought", he tells his students. Or again, to move within language is like moving "on the billowing waters of an ocean." Heidegger revels in the ambiguity of the German language and in the multiple meanings of the words he chooses. He thinks poetically, all the more the older he becomes. Translators can never be sure in a given case which of these meanings Heidegger wishes to predominate. One can, of course, use two or more English words for a single German term, and this we have frequently done.

It gradually becomes clear to a translator, however, that Heidegger rarely abandons the idiomatic sense of a German word, no matter how technical or terminological its overtones. He has great respect for the common idiom, though none at all for the commonness of thoughtless usage. Most of his words retain as much as possible of their root meanings in their Greek, Latin, or Old German origins. Hence, we have tried to stick to Anglo-Saxon equivalents where we could, and to keep uppermost the simple, non-technical sense of what he is trying to say. This way it is easier for the philosophically sophisticated reader to supply the contemporary technical connotations of these words, and for the layman in philosophy not to miss the essential message of this book. 4

What is really being said here?

Dryden first described the three types of translating as metaphor, or word for word and line for line translation; paraphrase, where the attempt is to preserve strictly the sense, when necessary at the expense of being literal; and imitation, wherein the work is essentially rewritten, with the attempt to undergo independently the identical "creative" process in the target language without being hampered by any idiosyncrasies of style, tone, or vocabulary of the source language. 5

Like all previous translators of Heidegger, Dr. Gray feels

that paraphrase is the only workable method. At least this is what he seems to be advocating in the first paragraph quoted above. Do we not, however, sense a weakness for metaphrase in the second? Is this an indication that even a paraphrase translation of Heidegger cannot be realistically expected? Must we turn to that most disrespectful and treacherous method of imitation to avoid, in the crunch, asking certain readers to "supply" certain meanings and connotations? If Heidegger intends with a certain word a double-entendre, can it just be left standing that the more knowledgeable reader can "supply" the second meaning, and then be so bold as to say that the less knowledgeable reader will still not "miss the essential message of this book"? These remarks are in no way intended as a criticism of Dr. Gray's translation which is quite fine and is at least no worse than any other, but his advice is not only an oversimplification, it does not offer its intended solution, but rather, on the contrary, merely point out the almost profound futility of a paraphrase translation of Heidegger. More hard-headed and sensible are the words of MacQuarrie and Robinson in their preface to their translation of Being and Time:

As long as an author is using words in their ordinary ways, the translator should not have much trouble in showing what he is trying to say. But Heidegger is constantly using words in ways which are by no means ordinary, and a great part of his merit lies in the freshness and penetration which his very innovations reflect. He tends to discard much of the traditional philosophical terminology, substituting an elaborate vocabulary of his own.

He occasionally coins new expressions from older roots, and he takes full advantage of the ease with which the German language lends itself to the formation of new compounds. He also uses familiar expressions in new ways. Adverbs, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions are made to do service as nouns; words which have undergone a long history of semantical change are used afresh in their older senses; specialized modern idioms are generalized far beyond the limits within which they would ordinarily be applicable. Puns are by no means uncommon and frequently a key-word may be used in several senses, successively or even simultaneously. He is especially fond of ringing the changes on words with a common stem or a common prefix. He tends on the whole to avoid personal constructions, and often uses abstract nouns ('Dasein', 'Zeitlichkeit', 'Sorge', 'In-der-Welt-sein', and so forth) as subjects of sentences where a personal subject would ordinarily be found. Like Aristotle or Wittgenstein, he likes to talk about his words, and seldom makes an innovation without explaining it; but sometimes he will have used a word in a special sense many times before he gets around to the explanation; and he may often use it in the ordinary senses as well. In such cases the reader is surely entitled to know what word Heidegger is actually talking about, as well as what he says about it; and he is also entitled to know when and how he actually uses it. (pp. 13-14)

Some of these problems are simply insoluble, at least by the method of paraphrase, as we shall see in the translation at hand. Of course, the use of imitation, on the other hand, is anathema to the field of philosophy and has never been successfully attempted. In literature, Jean Anouilh's Antigone and James Joyce's Ulysses are not really the sort of imitation that I have in mind when I speak of imitation; but if not this sort, then what?

I shall leave the foregoing as an introduction to the

more pressing task to come, which is namely to expose the difficulties in translating this lecture and to explain wherever possible how I have tried to overcome them and as well where I may have been forced into making an interpretation. However, first, in order to lead into this, a word about Heidegger's "method" would be appropriate.

Heidegger, as is well known, is a phenomenologist, having been the most brilliant student of Edmund Husserl, the man who coined the word phenomenology for its modern usage. Many scholars claim to know what phenomenology is, despite the fact that they are quite often of rather different opinion about it, and I won't further confuse the issue by adding my own opinion. Suffice it to say that if there really is such an animal as phenomenology, it is to be discovered in the writings and lectures of Martin Heidegger, in the way in which he deals with his various subjects.

In the first "half" of this lecture, as was mentioned, we find a discussion of both ancient and modern technic. Strangely enough, the reader will find no dates of significant inventions, no stories of great discoveries, no mention of Galileo and the Pope, and no mention of the Copernican Revolution. Instead there is merely a questioning about the "essence" of technic. Why this course of questioning is necessary when we begin to react finally to "the technological age" is explained in a passage in another book of his:

Most thought-provoking is that we are still not thinking - not even yet, although the state of the world is becoming constantly more thought-provoking. True, this course of events seems to demand rather that man should act, without delay, instead of making speeches at conferences and international conventions and never getting beyond proposing ideas on what ought to be, and how it ought to be done. What is lacking, then, is action, not thought.

And yet - it could be that prevailing man has for centuries now acted too much and thought too little . . . . .

On the other hand, in our era man has always thought in some way; in fact, man has thought the profoundest thoughts, and entrusted them to memory. By thinking in that way he did and does remain related to what must be thought. And yet man is not capable of really thinking as long as that which must be thought about, withdraws.

If we, as we are here and now, will not be taken in by empty talk, we must retort that everything said so far is an unbroken chain of hollow assertions, and state besides that what has been presented here has nothing to do with scientific knowledge. 6

Phenomenology, as it is applied here and in this lecture, if we try to put it in a grossly simplified way, demands that we discover the relationship between meaning (or "intentionality") and language. This always involves and understanding of "essence". When Heidegger asks about technic, he is asking about not only its present manifestation, but as well its origin, its history, and how we can relate to it in itself, and not just as an object which as such would be as all other objects, namely, beyond us. . In his essay "On the Origin of the Work of Art", Heidegger says:

We thus see ourselves brought back from the widest domain [namely, that of art], in which everything is a thing (thing=res=ens=an entity) including even the highest and ultimate things, to the narrow sphere of mere things. (p. 653)

In order to get beyond this formula thing=res=ens=an entity, it will be necessary, and in this lies the heart of Heidegger's phenomenology, to go beyond the modern conception of entity, namely that of the relativity or "instrumentality" of one entity to another to "the truth of beings [or entities] in their universality and in the highest being". With this task or path of questioning before us, we may better understand how Heidegger comes to understand technic as the Being or highest universal of the modern age which as such is also not merely the highest category, but is essentially the destiny of this age.

With regard to the awkwardness and 'inelegance' of expression in the analyses to come, we may remark that it is one thing to give a report in which we tell about entities, but another in which we tell about entities in their Being.<sup>7</sup>

The lecture begins with a description of the method to be used: "In the following we are questioning about technic." What is important to keep in mind here is that for Heidegger questioning is not at all the same thing that it was for Descartes or even for Husserl, for whom questioning was simply a method of tearing down a body of doctrine in order to build up a new one. Rather, for Heidegger, questioning is the most important way of thinking. "Questioning follows a

path . . . . The path is a path of thinking. All paths of thought lead more or less perceptibly on an unusual way through language." We may say, therefore, that the method to be employed is didactic, in its most positive, original sense (διδάσκω ). That this is not merely a method which is used to convince the reader of certain ideas which the lecturer has pre-conceived is given final testimony in paragraph 117:

Therefore questioningly we testify to the critical need that we do not experience that which is essential of technic before blatant technic, that we no longer preserve that which is essential of art before blatant aesthetics. However, the more questioningly we consider the essence, so much more mysterious does the essence of art become.

And of course, there is the memorable statement which closes the lecture: "For questioning is the piety of thinking."

What is being questioned about is not merely technic, but rather the essence of technic. The word Heidegger uses for essence is 'Wesen' which is etymologically related to the English verb 'was' ("to be", past tense). Though we can only translate this with the Latin word "essence", just as in English, the verbal form, 'wesen', in older German used to be used in all tenses and moods and was not just considered as an irregularity of the verb 'sein' (to be). The English 'to be', though, finds its earliest expression of which we have knowledge in the Sanskrit 'bhū' which most often is best translated by 'to become'. 'Wesen', 'was', and so forth, on the other hand, as I have pointed out in



footnote 27, are akin to the Sanskrit 'vis' which connotes continuing or enduring existence. We can perhaps imagine how these two originally separate verbs came to be used in the way that they are, and I refer the reader to an excellent discussion of this in Heidegger's book What Is a Thing. This more original sense of essence, which is called forward by Heidegger towards the end of the lecture, is not being used at the outset of the lecture, but rather the more common sense which Heidegger uses elsewhere, namely what and how a thing is in itself.

Heidegger opens the questioning with the statement "Technic is not the same as the essence of technic," and "... the essence of technic is not at all something technical." We shall see that by paragraph 58 that even the traditional doctrine of essence discussed at the outset is inadequate when applied to technic. The first problem that this doctrine brings up is that it underlies the "anthropological and instrumental determination of technic". 'Determination' is used to translate the German word 'Bestimmung', by which may as well be meant 'definition', but as the topic is a philosophical one, the philosophical term 'determination' seems more appropriate here. The word 'Bestimmung' is used by Heidegger not only in this sense, but also to call to mind that definitions have to do with that which comes to language, as 'Bestimmung' is based on the root 'stimmen', which means 'to voice'.

Under the instrumental and anthropological determination

of technic comes first the question of how to master it. However, "the willing-to-master (of technic) becomes ever so more urgent the more technic threatens to escape from the mastery of man." In What Is Called Thinking, Heidegger explains more fully what he means by these statements, which in their context may seem to be so shocking that a mistranslation might be suspected. He says:

If εἶναι, Being of beings, did not prevail - in the sense of the being here and thus objectivity of the inventory of objects - not only would the airplane engines fail to function, they would not exist. If the Being of beings, as the being here of what is present, were not manifest, the electric energy of the atom could never have made its appearance, could never have put man to work in its own way - work in every respect determined by technology.

It may thus be of some importance whether we hear what the decisive rubric of Western-European thinking, εἶναι, says - or whether we fail to hear it.

It probably depends on this Either/Or whether or not we will get beyond our talk about technology and finally arrive at a relation to its essential nature. For we must first of all respond to the nature of technology, and only afterward ask whether and how man might become its master. And that question may turn out to be nonsensical, because the essence of technology stems from the presence of what is present, that is, from the Being of beings - something of which man never is the master, of which he can at best be the servant. §

Paragraph §, wherein Heidegger begins a discussion of how the determination of technic as anthropological and instrumental is inadequate, is extremely terse, although much of what is said there becomes clearer as the lecture proceeds. The opening question almost seems to be baiting the audience.

If the essence of technic is not the instrumental, then there certainly would be no question of its mere mastery. The sentence "That which is correct always establishes in that which is before it something which is applicable" refers to the medieval doctrine "veritas est adaequatio rei et intellectus" which is given a most clear exposition by Heidegger in his essay "On the Essence of Truth".<sup>9</sup> We may understand more of words such as "thinking" and "questioning" as Heidegger uses them, and see that the conception of truth as relativity will have to be replaced if we are to consider seriously the origins of modern technic, when we consider the following statement:

In the West, thought about thinking (as opposed to thinking itself) has flourished as "logic". Logic has gathered special knowledge concerning a special kind of thinking. This knowledge concerning logic has been made scientifically fruitful only quite recently in a special science that calls itself "logistics". It is the most specialized of all specialized sciences. In many places, above all in the Anglo-Saxon countries, logistics is today considered the only possible form of strict philosophy, because its result and procedures yield an assured profit for the construction of the technological universe. In America and elsewhere, logistics as the only proper philosophy of the future is thus beginning today to seize power over the spirit. Now that logistics is in some suitable way joining forces with modern psychology and psychoanalysis, and with sociology, the power-structure of future philosophy is reaching perfection. 10

That there is no need to consider the willing-to-master of technic becomes later on in the lecture the source of much "optimism", though the question of optimism and pessimism

is one that Heidegger himself regards as misguided. However, we do not come to this before Heidegger proceeds to show that the instrumental determination of technic stems from a Greek determination of technic and causality. This causality has become today so inadequate that it can in no way be said to determine the essence of modern technic, or to put it in a different way:

Our age is not a technological age because it is the age of the machine; it is an age of the machine because it is the technological age. 11

In paragraph 12, Heidegger mentions that the Latin word causa is a translation of the Greek word  $\alpha\lambda\tau\tau\iota\omicron\nu$ . Causa, however, is not the same thing. The German word 'fallen', which I have translated here as 'occur', when it is used in grammar (i.e., 'ein Fall'), is to be translated as 'case', which is also related to causa. But if we say that the sense of 'case' in grammar is to show the interrelated intentionality of a particular word within the total meaning of a sentence, this is not necessarily to dispute Heidegger's claim concerning the direction of use that took place when  $\alpha\lambda\tau\tau\iota\omicron\nu$  was translated into Latin. Indeed, conventional linguistics today does not speak of intentionality, but can actually be said to be speaking of instrumentality in the sense that Heidegger uses, namely in the sense of results and effectuality. It is even not too bold to suggest that modern linguistics overlooks in a serious way the original intentionally aspects of the 'case'.

But what is most puzzling in this paragraph, rather, is not that causa has to do with "effectation" and "the attaining of results", but rather Heidegger's own translation of αἴτιον. The Greek dictionary gives both the usual Latin translations that one would expect relating to causality, and also says that it means "that which bears the responsibility for another." First of all, it should be noted that Heidegger gives no evidence in specific as to why he thinks that causa is a mistranslation of αἴτιον for every case or in his particular example from Aristotle. Furthermore, the word he uses in German for αἴτιον, 'verschulden', may be a questionable translation. There is no indication that the German word 'Schuld' was ever used in the sense of 'responsibility', except in the sense of 'debt' or 'guilt', whereas (albeit that I am no authority in Greek) αἴτιον signifies responsibility, but not in the sense of guilt or debt. However, be that as it may, and who is really qualified to judge, there is another difficulty regarding the discussion of what the word αἴτιον signifies.

In paragraphs 13 and 14 there are the two following statements: "Aber das Opfergerät bleibt nicht nur an das Silber verschuldet" and "Schuld an ihm [am Opfergerät] bleibt jedoch vor allem ein Drittes." "But the sacrificial implement is indebted not only to the silver." "However, there remains above all a third thing indebted to it [the sacrificial implement]." Which does he mean? That the four causes are indebted

to the sacrificial implement, or , as we would rather suspect, the reverse? This problem which I have thought to have decisively solved on numerous occasions still haunts me: so much so that even after consulting with numerous dictionaries and German speaking friends I still doubt my translation. The only solution that I may propose at this juncture is that the sacrificial implement and its four causes are "mutually indebted to each other." This interpretation is strongly suggested by his use of the phrase "mitschuld an" which can mean either merely being accessory to, or complicity in. If we take this second possible meaning here not as that which is just an accomplice, but rather as that which shares the debt or responsibility for the "preparation and presentation" of the sacrificial implement, I believe that we come close to what Heidegger is driving at in his translation of  $\alpha\tilde{\iota}\tau\iota\omicron\nu$ .

Paragraph 16 presents a statement upon which I am totally incompetent to venture an opinion. I can only, as I did in footnote 8, refer to the passage in Aristotle to which Heidegger is presumably referring, which I shall give here in full:

We have next to consider the question of 'the factors that make a thing what it is' (aitia): what they are and how they are to be classified. For knowledge is the object of our studies, and we can hardly be said really to know a thing until we have grasped the 'why' of it - i.e., until we have grasped 'the factors that are most directly responsible for it' (prote aitia). Clearly, then, this must be our aim also with regard to the phenomena of becoming and perishing and all forms of physical change, so that having grasped the underlying principles we may employ them in the explanation of particular phenomena.

(1. Material factor) In one sense, then, 'the reason for anything' (aitia) means the material out of which an object is generated and which is immanent in the generated object: e.g. the bronze of a statue, the silver of a bowl, and also the genera to which such materials belong.

(2. Formal factor) Next, it may mean the form (eidos) or pattern (paradeigma), i.e. what the thing is defined as being essentially, and also the genus to which this essence belongs. Thus the ratio 2:1 is a formal condition of the musical octave. Generally speaking, number and factors that make up the definition of a thing are what constitute its formal condition.

(3. Propelling factor) A third meaning is the immediate source of change or of cessation from change. In this sense a man who gives advice acts as 'determining agency' (aitia) (on him who receives it), a father on his offspring, and generally speaking whatever produces or changes anything on the product or the thing changed.

(4. Telic factor) Finally the reason for anything may mean the end (telos) or purpose for the sake of which a thing is done: e.g. health may be a determining factor in going for a walk. "Why is he taking a walk?" we ask. "In order to be healthy"; having said this we think we have given a sufficient explanation. Under this category must also be put all the intermediate steps which the agent must take as means to the end - e.g. taking off weight, loosening of the bowels, also drugs and surgical instruments, as means to health. All these are for the sake of an end, although they differ in that some are actions to be performed while others are instruments to be used.

Note: the above is the Wheelwright translation. Since I believe that number three above is the one in contention I shall also give the Random House translation thereof:

Again (3) the primary source of the change or coming to rest; e.g. the man who gave advice is a cause, the father is the cause of the child, and generally what makes of what is made and what causes change of what is changed. (p. 241)

There appears to be a significant difference between these two passages and Heidegger's contention, and we must assume to a certain extent that Heidegger is offering a significantly different translation. Those familiar with Heidegger know that he is both ready and quite able to give new translations of Greek words which have been regarded for a long time by us in their familiar translations as primitive or as platitudes of scholasticism which may be conveniently overlooked in the light of modern science and philosophy. This complacency on our part and Heidegger's attempt to make us think through more essentially what is meant by modern technic are precisely what make the following paragraphs so difficult.

Indebtedness has the principle feature of this letting-go [Anlassens] into coming-forth. In the sense of this letting-go, indebtedness is occasioning. From the view of that which the Greeks experience in indebtedness, in αἰτία, we now give the word "occasion" a further sense so that this word names the essence of causality as thought in Greek. The current and narrower significance of the word "occasion", on the contrary, says only so much as impact [Anstoß] and release [Auslösung] and means a sort of co-efficient in the totality of causality.

What he is saying here is interesting and should be noted. Heidegger first translates the word αἰτίον with 'verschulden'. Then he says that "that which the Greeks experience in indebtedness" is going to be called "Veranlassung", or occasioning, which as such names the essence of causality as thought in Greek.

What this means, Heidegger does not say exactly here,



but carries this thought over into paragraph 21 where he makes the following interesting translation:

Every occasioning for that which ever from out of that which is not present goes over and proceeds into that which is present is  $\rho\omicron\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , pro-duction.

Here to show more graphically what I was discussing before, concerning Heidegger's translations from Greek, I shall give Jowett's translation of the same passage:

All creation or passage of non-being into being is poetry or making, and the processes of all art are creative.

Why does Heidegger find it necessary to return to the Greek conception of technic, other than to point out that the modern determination of technic as instrumental was valid for the Greeks, but is inadequate today. The answer to this, which in large part becomes apparent later on in the lecture, is that Heidegger thinks of technic as a destiny of the West, and that to question it as such necessarily involves the questioning of its origins in order to discover its essence. However, it should not be assumed either here or later on that Heidegger in the last analysis considers Plato or Aristotle this very origin.

Plato himself has kept his origins in mind and memory far more essentially than did the Platonism that came after him. The masters always have an indelible and therefore deeper knowledge of their roots than their disciples can ever achieve.

But to this day, Platonism is struck with naked terror if it is expected to consider what lies behind this philosophy of Plato, which it in-

terprets and posits as the only binding philosophy. If we do consider it, we can do it only in this way: we say that early thinking is not yet as advanced as Plato's. To present Parmenides as a pre-Socratic is even more foolish than to call Kant a pre-Hegelian.<sup>12</sup>

By paragraph 31 the simple relationship between *ποίησις*, *φύσις*, and *τέχνη* have been shown to define the "essential domain of technic" in Greek thinking. However, because they do not take into account the "variable relationship between technic and physics", which is merely "correct", they do not apply to modern technic. Modern technic is also an unconcealing (for a further explanation of *αλήθεια* - cf. Heidegger's essay "On the Essence of Truth" in Existence and Being, trans. Werner Brock, Regnery), but not in the sense of *ποίησις*, pro-duction. This brings us to what is perhaps the most difficult translation of the entire lecture.

Ancient technic was a pro-duction, a bringing-forth of that which is concealed in nature, for example the shape slumbering in the wood.<sup>13</sup> Modern technic is not a pro-duction, it is rather a pro-vocation. And although these two words, pro-duction and pro-vocation are fairly easily translatable equivalents of the German (that is, not exactly, but I think that they preserve the sense quite well), the full distinction between them can only be gleaned from the context of the lecture which follows. And the worst part of this is that pro-vocation is explained with the use of a pun so involved that there exists no equivalent in the English language which will

go even more than a small part of this path, although this type of punning is familiar to English.

To give an example, suppose we are looking for the essence of motion. Perhaps the simplest expression of this with which we will have to deal will be "running", a word which is applied to the motion of a great many things, from rivers to machines. When we turn to examine the various sorts of "running" we find: running over, running off, running through, running into, running out, running down, running on, and running up. In these various sorts of running can be recognized the most diverse meanings, such as overflowing, fleeing, perusing, meeting, depleting, depreciating, continuing, accumulating, to mention just a few. It can be seen that even without offering a "scientific" explanation, these various terms and uses of "running" go a long way in exhausting the topic of motion, certainly when we consider the intentional aspects of meaning.

Such a "method", though in a vastly more profound sense than my example, is being used by Heidegger when he shows what he means by pro-vocation. The root 'stellen' in German, upon which Heidegger bases his analysis, to begin with, has no simple equivalent in English and may mean variously to stand, to put, or, philosophically, to posit. Moreover, as a root, 'stellen' plays a great part in current jargon about technic, which none of the above roots in English does in any consistent way. And to make matters worse, the root also has

certain philosophical usages and meanings which Heidegger in no way shies away from.

If I were to translate these passages as if they were meant to be purely technical utterances, therefore, the entire argument would be lost. For example, the sentence (in paragraph 35) "Die im Kohlenrevier geförderte Kohle wird nicht gestellt, damit sie nur überhaupt und irgendwo vorhanden sei" which I have translated as "The coal demanded in the coal region is not set in order so that it may be only generally and anywhere at hand", if taken out of context should be translated as "The coal demanded in the coal region is not produced in order that it may be only generally and any where at hand." When Heidegger uses the word 'gestellt' instead of 'hergestellt', which would be more proper, he is indicating that he means 'produced', but only in the sense of pro-voked. Also, we have already seen that he uses the word 'pro-duce' for ancient technic (as I have had to translate it), and, unfortunately, in English, we can only produce coal from the coal region. My translation for almost all of these various usages of the root 'stellen', namely 'set-in-order', is obviously a poor substitute and worse, an interpretation. What must be gotten across somehow is the philosophical and scientific relationship in German between 'stellen' and 'vorstellen' (see footnote 3 of the lecture) and how Heidegger is comparing this with the more common uses. Philosophically speaking,

the verb 'stellen' by itself almost equates our English word 'to posit', as when physicists and mathematicians speak of positing models of the universe. "Vorstellen", on the other hand, can only be translated in the same philosophical vein by a phrase such as "objective thinking", or "representational thinking", or so forth. That the ideas of positing and objective thinking are intimately related cannot be seen directly in English as it can be in German. How apropos, of course, that the same root 'stellen' is also used in talk about technical affairs in German. How I have tried to solve this problem is also explained in various footnotes, notably where this problem becomes compounded with the word 'Bestand' (footnote 16 of the lecture). I trust, moreover that I have given enough in the translation for the reader to understand the discussion.

With the exception of how this analysis culminates in the word 'Ge-stell', which I think I have adequately explained in footnote 21 of the lecture, the rest of the lecture presents no serious difficulties of translation, at least none that require further explanation in this introduction. With this I conclude this introduction, with the further somewhat inconclusive note that much of this introduction was written as a lengthy footnote on the lecture, and much, on the other hand, was left out of this introduction, as it appears in footnotes to the lecture, so that the reader may find it helpful in reading the text to refer back to this introduction.

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- 1 Heidegger, M., "The Way Back into the Ground of Metaphysics", p. 218.
- 2 L'Express, "Entretien Avec Heidegger", 20-26 Oct., 1969, p.147.
- 3 For my explanation of the spelling and use of this word, see footnote 1 of the lecture.
- 4 pp. xxvi-xxvii.
- 5 Galantiere, L, Introduction to The World of Translation, P.E.N., New York, 1971, pp. x-xi.
- 6 Heidegger, M., What Is Called Thinking, pp. 4-7.
- 7 Heidegger, M., Being and Time, pp. H.38-39.
- 8 Heidegger, M., What Is Called Thinking, pp. 234-235.
- 9 Heidegger, M., "On the Essence of Truth", p. 295.
- 10 Heidegger, M., What Is Called Thinking, pp. 21-22.
- 11 Ibid, p. 24.
- 12 Ibid, p. 184.
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# THE QUESTION ABOUT TECHNIC<sup>1</sup>

- 1) In the following we are questioning about technic. Questioning follows a path. Hence it is advisable to pay attention above all to the path and not be hung up on isolated sentences and phrases. The path is a path of thinking. All paths of thought lead more or less perceptibly on an unusual way through language. We are questioning about technic and may thereby prepare a free relationship to it. The relationship is free if it opens up our Dasein<sup>2</sup> to the essence of technic. If we do relate to this essence, then we shall be able to experience the technical within its boundary.
- 2) Technic is not the same as the essence of technic. If we are looking for the essence of the tree, then we must become aware that that which pervades every tree qua tree is not itself a tree which may be encountered among the rest of the trees.
- 3) So therefore as well the essence of technic is not at all something technical. For that reason we shall never learn our relationship to the essence of technic as long as we only represent<sup>3</sup> the technical and pursue it, resign ourselves to it or evade it.<sup>4</sup> Everywhere we remain unfreely chained to technic, whether we passionately affirm or



deny it. Nevertheless, at worst we are delivered over to technic whenever we observe it as something neutral; for this representation which is so especially espoused today makes us completely blind to the essence of technic.

4) The essence of something, according to ancient doctrine, stands for what something is. We ask about technic when we ask what it is. Everyone knows the two expressions which answer our question. The one says: technic is a means for goals. The other says: technic is an activity of man. Both determinations of technic belong together. For to set goals, to create and use the means for these, is a human activity. To that what technic is belong the constructing and using of tool, appliance, and machine, belong this which is constructed and used itself, belong the necessities and goals which it serves. The whole of these implements is technic. It itself is an implement, as in Latin: an instrumentum.<sup>5</sup>

5) The practical representation of technic according to which it is a means and a human activity can therefore be called the instrumental and anthropological determination of technic.

6) Who would deny that this determination is correct? It directs<sup>6</sup> itself openly towards that which is before one's eyes when one speaks of technic. The instrumental determination of technic is even so uncannily correct that it still applies as well to modern technic of which it is otherwise quite correctly asserted, as opposed to older manual technic, that it is something completely different and therefore

something new. Even the power plant with its turbines and generators is a means completed by men for a goal established by men. The missile, the high frequency machine, too, are means to goals. Naturally a radar station is simpler than a weathervane. Naturally the construction of a high frequency machine needs the interplay of different operations of technical industrial production. Naturally a sawmill in a lost valley of the Black Forest is a primitive means in comparison to a hydro-electric plant in the Rhine.

7) It remains correct: modern technic is also a means to goals. Hence the instrumental representation of technic determines every effort to bring man into the correct relation to technic. All depends upon having technic at hand as a means in the conforming way. Man wants to take technic resolutely in hand.<sup>7</sup> Man wants to master it. The willing-to-master becomes ever so more urgent the more technic threatens to escape from the mastery of man.

8) Suppose now, however, that technic is no mere means, then how does it stand with the willing to master it? Yet we said that the instrumental determination of technic is correct. Certainly. That which is correct always establishes in that which is before it something which is relevant.<sup>8</sup> The establishment, however, in order to be correct, needs in no way to disclose that which is before it in its essence. Only there where such disclosure occurs does the true happen. For that reason that which is merely correct is not yet the true. Only the true brings us in a free re-

lationship to that which concerns us from out of its essence. The correct instrumental determination of technic accordingly does not yet show us its essence. In order that we get to this or at least near to it, we must seek the true through that which is correct. We must ask: what is the instrumental itself? Where do such things as a means and a goal belong? A means is such a thing through which something is effected and is thus achieved. Whatever results in some effect is called the cause. However, not only that by means of which another thing is effected is a cause, the goal as well, by which the sort of means is determined, stands as a cause. Wherever goals are pursued, means employed, wherever the instrumental prevails, there rules causality.

9) For centuries philosophy has taught that there are four causes: 1) the *causa materialis*, the material, the stuff out of which, for example, a silver vessel is constructed; 2) the *causa formalis*, the form, the Gestalt into which the material goes; 3) the *causa finalis*, the goal, for example, the ritual offering [Opferdienst] through which the necessary vessel is determined according to form and material; 4) the *causa efficiens* which effects the effect, the actual finished vessel, the silversmith. What technic is, represented as means, discloses itself when we lead the instrumental back to fourfold causality.

10) However, what if causality for its part in that which is is has been shrouded in darkness? Indeed this has been done

from heaven as a truth clear as crystal. Meanwhile it may be the time to ask: why are there just four causes? In relation to the four above mentioned causes which is properly "the cause"? Whence does the causal character of the four causes determine itself so unifiedly that they belong together?

11) As long as we never let ourselves in on these questions, causality, and with it the instrumental and with this the practical determination of technic remain dark and groundless.

12) For a long time we have been used to representing the cause as the effectual [Bewirkende]. To effect is therefore called: the attaining of results, effects. The *causa efficiens*, one of the four causes, in a prevailing way determines all causality. This has gone so far that the *causa finalis*, finality, is generally not counted as causality. *Causa*, *casus*, belong to the verb *cadere*, to occur [fallen] and means that which has effect, that something happens in this way or that as a result. The doctrine of the four causes goes back to Aristotle. In the domain of Greek thinking and for Greek thinking itself, however, everything which the succeeding ages sought from the Greeks under the representation and the term "causality" had simply nothing to do with effecting and effectation [Wirken und Bewirken]. What we call cause, what the Romans call *causa*, the Greeks call  $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\upsilon\sigma$  that to which another is indebted.<sup>9</sup> The four causes are the ways of indebtedness which belong together by themselves. An example can elucidate this.

- 13) Silver is that out of which the silver vessel is constructed. As this material ( ὕλη ) is also indebted to [mitschuld an] the vessel. The vessel is indebted to, that is, derived from that of which it consists. But the ritual implement is indebted not only to the silver. As vessel that which is indebted to the silver appears in the appearance of a vessel and not in that of a clasp or ring. The ritual implement is thus simultaneously indebted to the appearance ( εἶδος ) of vesselness. The silver wherein the appearance as vessel is let in, the appearance wherein silverishness appears, are both in their own ways also indebted to the ritual implement.
- 14) However, there remains above all a third thing indebted to it. It is that which in advance defines the borders of the vessel in the domain of consecration and ritual administration. Through this they are defined as ritual implements. That which defines the thing ends it. With this end the thing does not stop, but rather from out of this it begins as that which it will be after production. That which ends, completes in this sense is called in Greek τέλος, which is all too frequently translated by "objective" and "goal" and thus misconstrued. The τέλος is indebted to that which as material and appearance are mutually indebted to the ritual implement.
- 15) Finally a fourth thing is also indebted to the presentation and preparation of the finished ritual implement: the silversmith; but in no way that he effectually effects the finished ritual vessel as the effect of a machine, not

as causa efficiens.

- 16) The doctrine of Aristotle recognizes neither the cause named by this term nor does it use a corresponding Greek name.<sup>10</sup>
- 17) The silversmith reflects and gathers together the three above mentioned ways of indebtedness. To reflect [ueberlegen] is called in Greek λέγειν, λόγος. It rests on ἀποφαίνεσθαι, to bring to light [zum Vorschein bringen]. The silversmith is accessory as that from out of which the production and self-sufficiency of the ritual vessel take and retain their first departure. The three ways of indebtedness previously mentioned are indebted to the reflection of the silversmith, that they and how they come to light and into play for the production of the ritual vessel.
- 18) In the ritual vessel being presented and prepared four ways of indebtedness thus dominate. They are distinguished from each other and yet belong together. What unites them in advance? Whence does the unity of the four causes originate? What does this indebtedness mean when thought in Greek?
- 19) We of today are too easily inclined either to understand indebtedness morally as financial delinquency or to indicate it rather as a kind of effectation. In both cases we block our own path to the original sense of that which was later called causality. As long as this path does not open itself, we also do not perceive what the instrumental which depends on the causal actually is.
- 20) In order to protect ourselves from the above mentioned

misconstrual of indebtedness, let us indicate its four ways according to which they are indebted. According to the example, they are indebted to the presentation and preparation of the silver vessel as a sacrificial implement. Presentation and preparation (ὑποκεισθαι) signify the presenting of something present. The four ways of indebtedness bring something to light. They let it come forth in presence. They let it be free to come forth in such a way and let it go, namely in its completed coming-forth. Indebtedness has the principle feature of this letting-go into coming-forth. In the sense of this letting-go [Anlassens], indebtedness is occasioning.<sup>11</sup> From the view of that which the Greeks experience in indebtedness, in αἰτία, we now give the word "occasion" a further sense so that this word names the essence of causality as thought in Greek. The current and narrower significance of the word "occasion" on the contrary says only so much as impact [Anstoß] and release [Ausloesung] and means a sort of co-efficient in the totality of causality.

- 21)       Wherein, now, however, does the co-ordinated play of the four ways of occasioning play? They let that which is not yet present come into presence. Accordingly they are pervaded unifiedly by a bringing (or "duction")<sup>12</sup> which brings the present to light. What this bringing (or "duction") is Plato tells us in a sentence from the Symposium (205b):

ἡ γάρ τοι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος εἰς τὸ ὄν ἰδόντι ὁπωσὺν  
αἰτία πᾶσα ἐστὶ ποιησις.

Every occasioning for that which ever from  
out of that which is not present goes over and pro-

ceeds into that which is present is *ποίησις*,  
pro-duction. 13

- 22) Everything depends upon our thinking pro-duction in its entire breadth and simultaneously in the Greek sense. A pro-duction, *ποίησις* is not only manu-facture, not only artistic-poetic bringing to appearance and picture. *Φύσις* as well, that which arises from out of itself, is a pro-duction, is *ποίησις*. *Φύσις* is even *ποίησις* in the highest sense. For *φύσει* presence has the breaking-forth of pro-duction, for example, the breaking-forth of flowers in blooming, in themselves (*ἐν ἑαυτῷ*). On the contrary, that which is pro-duced manually and artistically, for example, the silver vessel, does not have the breaking-forth of pro-duction in itself, but rather in another (*ἐν ἄλλῳ*), in the artisan and artist.
- 23) The ways of occasioning, the four causes, thus play within pro-duction. Through this, that which is grown in nature as well as the product of the trades and arts comes to light.
- 24) Yet how does pro-duction occur, is it in nature, is it in artistry and in art? What is the pro-duction in which the fourfold way of occasioning plays? Occasioning corresponds to the presence of that which at any given time comes to light in pro-duction. Pro-duction brings out of concealedness into unconcealedness. Pro-duction occurs only insofar as that which is concealed comes into that which is unconcealed. This coming resides and swings in that which we call unconcealing. The Greeks have the word *ἀλήθεια* for that. The Romans translate it through "veritas". We say



"truth" and understand it usually as correct representation.

- 25) Where have we gone wrong? We ask about technic and have now arrived at ἀλήθεια, at unconcealing. What does the essence of technic have to do with unconcealing? Answer: everything. For in unconcealing is grounded every production. But production gathers in itself the four ways of occasioning - causality - and pervades them. In their domain belong goal and means, belongs the instrumental. This stands as the principle feature of technic. If we ask step by step what technic represented as means actually is, then we arrive at unconcealing. In it resides the possibility of all productive construction.
- 26) Technic, therefore, is not merely a means. Technic is a way of unconcealing. If we pay attention to it, then an entirely different domain for the essence of technic opens itself to us. It is the domain of unconcealing, that is, of truth.
- 27) This outlook alienates us. As well it should, it should as long as possible and so pressingly that we finally take the plain question seriously as well, what does the name "technic" say. The word originates in the Greek language. Τεχνικόν means such which belongs to τέχνη. Regarding the signification of this word, we must be attentive in two ways. First, τέχνη is not only the name for manual activity and ability, but rather as well for high art and the fine arts. Τέχνη be-

longs to pro-duction, to ποίησις; it is something poetical.

- 28) The other way which is worth considering regarding the word τέχνη is even more important. The word τέχνη goes together with the word ἐπιστήμη from early times until the time of Plato. Both words are names for knowledge [Erkennen] in the broadest sense. They mean thorough-going knowledge [Sichauskennen] of something, the self-understanding [Sichverstehen] of something. Knowledge gives disclosure [Aufschluß]. As disclosing it is an unconcealing. Aristotle in a remarkable observation (Nic. Eth. VI, c.3 and 4) distinguishes ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη and indeed in regard to what and how they unconceal. Τέχνη is a way of ἀληθεύειν. It unconceals such a thing which does not pro-duce itself and is not yet so predisposed, which for that reason can appear and occur at once this way or that. Whoever builds a house or a ship or works a sacrificial vessel, unconceals that which is to be pro-duced according to the four ways of occasioning. This unconcealing gathers together in advance the appearance and the material of ship and house to the completely envisioned finished thing and determines thereforth the sort of construction. Therefore that which is decisive of τέχνη lies in no way in making and handling, not in employment of means, but rather in the above mentioned unconcealing. As this, but not as construction [Verfertigen], τέχνη is a pro-duction.

- 29) So this indication of what the word τέχνη says and how the Greeks determine that which has been named leads us into the same set of problems which came to us as we pursued the

question of what the instrumental is as such in truth.

- 30)           Technic is a way of unconcealing. Technic exists in the domain where unconcealing and unconcealedness, where ἀληθεια, where truth occurs.
- 31)           As opposed to this determination of the essential domain of technic, one can object that it holds good as such for Greek thinking and applies favorably to manual technic, but it does not apply to the modern technic of power machines. And just this, this alone is the disturbing thing which moves us to question about "technic". It is said that modern technic is incomparably different in opposition to all earlier ones, because it depends upon modern exact natural science. Meanwhile, it has been more significantly recognized that the reverse as well holds good: modern physics is directed experimentally by technical apparatuses and by the progress of the construction of apparatuses. The foundation of this variable relationship between technic and physics is correct. But it remains a mere historiological<sup>14</sup> foundation of facts and says nothing of that wherein this variable relationship is grounded. The decisive question still remains: what is the essence of modern technic that it can fall back upon using exact natural sciences?
- 32)           What is modern technic? It is also an unconcealing. Only when we let our sight rest on this principle feature does that which is new about modern technic show itself to us.
- 33)           The unconcealing which pervades modern technic, however, does not now unfold itself in a pro-duction in the sense of

The unconcealing which rules in modern technic is a pro-vocation<sup>15</sup> which makes the demand of nature to yield energy which as such can be pro-voked and stored. Doesn't this hold good for the old windmill? No. Its sails turn in the wind, it is given into the hands of the blowing of the wind. The windmill, however, does not reveal the energy of the windstream in order to store it up.

34) A tract of land, on the contrary, is demanded of in the industry [Fürderung] of coal and ore. Earth now reveals itself as coal region, the ground as ore mining camp. The field which the farmer formerly cultivated [bestellt] appears differently whereby cultivation was still called: to tend and to look after. Agricultural activity does not provoke the soil. In the sowing of grain it gives the seed into the hands of the powers of growth and guards its thriving. Meanwhile as well, the cultivation of the field is undertaken in the wake of another kind of cultivation which sets nature in order.<sup>16</sup> It sets it in order in the sense of pro-vocation. Agriculture is now the motorized industry of nourishment. The air is now given the job of supplying nitrogen, the ground ore, the ore, for example, uranium, and this in turn atomic energy which can be released for destruction or peaceful use.

35) This setting-in-order [Stellen] which pro-vokes natural energies is an advancement in a double sense. It promotes because it reveals and sets forth [herausstellt]. This promotion remains, however, geared in advance [darauf abgestellt] to promoting others, that is, to press forward in the greatest

possible use by the least expenditure. The coal demanded in the coal region is not reproduced so that it may be only generally and anywhere at hand. It stores, that is, it is set in place [zur Stelle] for the setting in order of the sun's warmth stored in it. The sun's warmth is pro-voked for heat which is given the job of yielding steam whose pressure drives the works through which a factory remains in operation.

36) The hydro-electric plant is set [gestellt] in the Rhine. It is dependent [es stellt ihn auf] upon its water pressure, upon which the turbines are dependent to turn themselves, which turning drives that machine whose working produces the flow of electricity for which the overland central and its arteries are set up [be-stellt] for the conveyance of the flow. In the domain of these interdependent results of the setting in order of electric energy, the Rhine also appears as something which is set in order. The hydro-electric plant is not built in the Rhine as is the old wooden bridge which for centuries bound one bank with the other. It is much more so that the river is built into the power plant. What it is now as river is namely yielder of water pressure, out of the essence of the power plant. However, in order to calculate, also only remotely, that enormity which rules here, let us notice for a moment the antithesis which is expressed in the two titles: "the Rhine" dammed up in the power works, and "The Rhine" expressed in the art work of Hoelderlin's hymn of the same name. But the Rhine still remains, one might reply, the river of the countryside. May be, but how? Not otherwise

than as the cultivatable object of sightseeing through a travel bureau, which has cultivated a vacation industry by it.

37) The unconcealing which pervades modern technic has the character of setting-in-order in the sense of pro-vocation. This happens through the unlocking of the energy concealed in nature, the transforming of that which is unlocked, the storing of that which is transformed, the distribution of that which is stored, and the redistribution of that which has been distributed. Unlocking, transforming, storing, distributing, and redistributing are ways of unconcealing. However, this unconcealing does not run out so simply. It also does not expire into the undetermined. Unconcealing only unconceals its own variously geared courses by directing them. This guiding itself is for its part everywhere assured. Direction and assurance become the very main features of that unconcealing which pro-vokes.

38) What kind of unconcealedness is peculiar to that which is realized through pro-vocative setting-in-order? Everywhere it is expected to stand immediately on location<sup>17</sup> and indeed to stand in order to be set in order for a further setting in order. That which is thus set in order has its own location. We call it a "reserve" or a "resource".<sup>18</sup> These words say more here and something more essential than merely "pro-vision" [Vorrat]. These words are becoming stock phrases. They characterize nothing less than the way in which everything exists which is struck by the unconcealing which pro-vokes. Whatever is set in order in this sense

of being a resource no longer stands opposite to us as an object.<sup>19</sup>

39) But a commercial airliner which stands on the runway is still an object. Certainly. We can represent the machine in this way. But then it conceals itself in what and how it is. It stands unconcealed on the runway as in reserve only insofar as it is given the job of assuring the possibility of transport. For this it must itself be capable of being set in order, that is, ready to start, in its entire construction, in each of its components [Bestandteile]. (Here would be the place to explicate Hegel's determination of the machine as a self-reliant tool. Seen from the point of view of the tool of manual work, his characterization is correct. However, at the same time, the machine is not thought of out of the essence of technic in which it belongs. Seen from the point of view of being a resource, the machine is generally not self-reliant; for it has its commission only out of the setting in order of that which capable of being set in order.)

40) That wherever we attempt to show modern technic as unconcealing which pro-vokes, the words "to set in order", "employment", "resource" and so forth press on us and pile up in a dry, uniform, and therefore tiresome way, has its ground in that which comes into language.

41) Who completes the setting in order which pro-vokes through which that which is called the actual is unconcealed as resource? Man, obviously. To what extent is he capable of such unconcealing? Man can represent, form, and operate this

or that in this way or that. Yet unconcealedness, wherein at any time the actual shows itself or withdraws, is not at man's disposal. That since Plato the actual shows itself in the light of ideas is not Plato's doing. The thinker only answered to that which spoke to him.

- 42) Only insofar as man for his own part has been pro-voked to pro-voke natural energy can this unconcealing which sets in order happen. If man is pro-voked, set in order to this, does man then not also belong in reserve more originally than nature? The current talk of human resources speaks for this.<sup>18</sup> The forester who surveys the cut timber in the forest and in appearance like his grandfather goes down the same forest path in the same way is today employed [bestellt] by the forest products industry, whether he knows it or not. He is set in order in the capability of being set in order of cellulose, which for its part is demanded of by the need for paper which is handed over [zugestellt] to the newspapers and illustrated magazines. These, however, determine [stellen ... daraufhin] the public opinion to devour that which is printed in order to become cultivatable by the cultivated and fashionable opinion. Yet exactly because man is demanded of more originally than natural energy, namely in cultivation and setting in order, he never becomes merely a resource. Because man operates technic, he takes part in cultivation and setting-in-order as a way of unconcealing. Yet unconcealedness itself within which setting-in-order unfolds itself is never something made by man, as little as is the domain which man al-



ready goes through whenever he relates himself as subject to an object.

- 43) Where and how does unconcealing happen, if it is no mere activity of man? We do not need to look far. It is only necessary to perceive without prejudice what has already laid claim to man and this so decisively that he can be man at any time only as the one who has been thus addressed.<sup>19</sup> Always wherever man opens his eyes and ears, unlocks his heart, gives himself freely in contemplation and aspiration, building and working, asking and thinking, he finds himself everywhere already brought into the unconcealed. That unconcealedness has already occurred, so often as it calls man forth in that way of unconcealing which is allocated to him. Whenever man in his way discloses within unconcealedness that which is present, then he relates only to the exhortation of unconcealedness, only there, where he answers it.<sup>20</sup> Therefore whenever man seeking, observing, sets up nature as a region of his representation, then he is already required of by a way of unconcealing which demands of him to approach nature as an object of research, until the object as well disappears in the objectlessness of being a resource.

- 44) So therefore modern technic as that unconcealing which sets in order is no mere human activity. Therefore we must also take that pro-vocation which sets up [stellt] man to set in order the actual as resource as it shows itself. That pro-vocation gathers man into setting-in-order. This gathering concentrates man on setting the actual in order as re-

source.

- 45) What the mountain originally unfolded as mountainous characteristics and permeated in its folded togetherness is that which gathers, which we call the mountain range.
- 46) We call that original gathering from out of which ways unfold themselves according to which our moods are inclined in this way or that the temperament.
- 47) We now call that pro-voking claim which gathers man to it to set in order self-unconcealing as resource - Ge-stell.<sup>21</sup>
- 48) We dare to use this word in a sense which was previously completely unusual.
- 49) According to the usual significance, the word Ge-stell means an apparatus, for example, a bookcase. A skeleton is also called a Ge-stell. An so terrible as this appears to be the usage of the word "Ge-stell" now disposed to us, not to speak of the arbitrariness with which words of current language are mishandled. Can one push this peculiarity even further? Certainly not. Yet this peculiarity is an old usage of thinking. And indeed, thinkers used to do this exactly where it was worth thinking the highest. We who are born so late are no longer in position to calculate what it means that Plato ventured to use the word εἶδος for that which exists in each and every thing. For εἶδος signifies in everyday language the appearance [Ansicht] which a visible thing displays to our sensual eyes. Plato, however, disposes to this word that which is entirely unusual, to name just that which is not and never perceptible to the

sensual eye. But yet this is in no way all that is unusual. For ἰδέα names not only the non-sensual of the sensual visible. Appearance, ἰδέα is called and is as well that which constitutes the essence in the audible, tasteable, touchable, in everything which is accessible in any way. As opposed to what Plato disposed of in language and thinking in this and in other cases, the usage of the word "Ge-stell" now ventured as the name for the essence of modern technic is practically harmless. Meanwhile the linguistic usage now required remains a disposition and misunderstandable.

50) Ge-stell is called that which gathers that setting-in-order which sets man in order, that pro-vokes to unconceal the actual in the way of setting in order as resource. Ge-stell is called the way of unconcealing which rules in the essence of modern technic and is itself nothing technical. To the technical on the contrary belongs everything which we know as leverage and drive and equipment and whose component [Bestandstueck] is called the assembly line. The latter occurs, however, together with the above mentioned components in the region of technical work, which always corresponds only to the demanding of Ge-stell, but never constitutes or even effects this itself.

51) The word "setting" [stellen] in Ge-stell means not only pro-vocation, it should simultaneously preserve the suggestion of another "setting", out of which it originates, namely setting-forth and pro-duction [Her- und Dar-stellen] which in the sense of ποιησις lets that which is present come forth

in unconcealedness. This pro-duction which brings forth, for example, the setting up [aufstellen] of a statue in the region of the temple, and the setting-in-order which provokes now under consideration, are indeed basically distinguished and yet remain essentially related. Both are ways of unconcealing, of ἀλγήθεια. In Ge-stell unconcealedness occurs, according to which the work of modern technic unconceals the actual as resource. It is therefore neither only a human activity nor even a mere means within such activity. The solely instrumental, the solely anthropological determination of technic is invalid in principle; it does not let itself be fulfilled through a metaphysical or religious explanation which is only commanded behind it.

- 52) Of all things it remains true that man of the technical age is pro-voked in an especially conspicuous way into unconcealing. This concerns nature immediately as the main store of the reserving of energy. Accordingly, the disciplin of man to setting-in-order first shows itself in the growth of modern exact natural science. Its sort of representation sets up [stellt ... nach] nature as calculable contingency of powers. Modern physics is not experimental physics because it applies apparatuses for the questioning of nature, but rather the reverse: because physics, and already indeed as pure theory, sets up [stellt ... darauf hin] nature to expose [darzustellen] itself as a contingency of powers which are calculable in advance, for this reason is the experiment set in order, namely for the questioning whether and how such

a nature which is thus set up announces itself.

53) But mathematical natural science arose almost two centuries before modern technic. How should it be already set up by modern technic in the service of modern technic: the facts speak for the antithesis. Modern technic went into motion only when it could be supported by exact natural science. Historiologically reckoned this is correct. Considered historically, it does not jive with the true.

54) The modern physical theory of nature is the pioneer not first of technic but rather of the essence of modern technic. Because the pro-voking gathering into unconcealing which sets in order rules already in physics. But it does not yet come to light expressly in it. Modern physics is the herald, still unknown in its derivation, of Ge-stell. The essence of modern technic has also concealed itself even where power machines have already been invented, the technic of electronics has been set on course, and atomic technic has been set in motion.

55) All that is essential, not only of modern technic, has held itself concealed everywhere for the longest time. In regard to its ruling, it remains as well that which precedes everything: the earliest. The Greek thinkers already knew this when they said: That which is earlier in regard to the ruling dawn will become known to us men only later. The original dawn shows itself to man only at last. Therefore there is an effort in the domain of thinking to think through that which is originally thought more originally,

not the contentious will to renew that which is past, but rather the temperate readiness to be amazed at the coming of the dawn.

56) For the historiological reckoning of time the beginning of modern natural science lies in the 17th Century. On the contrary, the technic of power machines developed itself only in the second half of the 18th Century. Yet, that which is later for historiological ascertainment, modern technic, in regard to the essence ruling in it, is the historically earlier.

57) If modern physics must be resigned in increasing measure that its domain of representation remain undescriptive [unanschaulich], then this renunciation is not dictated by any research commission. It is demanded by the ruling of Ge-stell which demands the setting in order of nature as resource. Hence physics in all retreat from representations which were only a short time ago the measure and only related to objects can never renounce one thing: that nature announces itself in some calculably establishable way and remains employable as a system of information. This system then determines itself out of a causality which has been altered once more. It does not show either the character of induction which produces nor the kind of causa efficiens or even the causa formalis. Presumably causality shrinks together in a demanded announcing of assuring resources at the same time or one after another. To this relates the process of

increasing self-renunciation, which Heisenberg's lecture depicts in an impressive way. (W. Heisenberg, Das Naturbild in der heutigen Physik, in: Die Kuenste im technischen Zeitalter, Munich, 1954, p 43ff.)

58) Because the essence of modern technic depends on Ge-stell, it must therefore set exact natural science in order, through this arises the deceptive appearance as if modern technic is natural science put to use. This appearance can assert itself for so long that neither the essential derivation of modern science nor even the essence of modern technic can be sufficiently questioned.

59) We are questioning about technic in order to bring our relationship to its essence to light. The essence of modern technic shows itself in that which we call Ge-stell. Yet this indication is still in no way the answer to the question about technic, if answering is called: to correspond, namely to the essence of that which is questioned.

60) Where do we see ourselves brought if we consider one step further what Ge-stell is as such itself? It is nothing technical, nothing machine-like. It is the way according to which the actual unconceals itself as resource. Again we ask: does this unconcealing occur somewhere beyond all human activity? No. But it also does not occur only in man and not as giving the standard through him.

61) Ge-stell is that which gathers that setting in order which sets man in order to unconceal the actual in the way

of setting in order as resource. As the one that is thus pro-voked, man stands in the essential domain of Ge-stell. He can not at all only subsequently take up a relationship to it. Hence comes the question how we shall reach a relationship to the essence of technic which in the form of Ge-stell is at all times too late. But never too late comes the question whether we expressly experience ourselves as those whose doing and occasioning is everywhere pro-voked by Ge-stell, now publicly, now hidden. Above all, the question never comes too late whether and how we expressly let ourselves in on that which Ge-stell is itself.

62) The essence of modern technic brings man on the path of that unconcealing through which the actual becomes everywhere more or less perceptibly in reserve. To bring on a path - this is called in our [the German] language: to destine.<sup>22</sup> That gathering destining which first brings man on the path of unconcealing we call destiny [Geschick]. From out of this the essence of all history [Geschichte] determines itself. It is neither only the object of historiology nor the completion of human activity. Human activity becomes historical only as something destined. And only destiny in objectifying representing makes the historical accessible for historiology, that is a science accessible as object and from out of this makes possible the only workable equation of the historical with the historiological.

63) As pro-voking to setting in order, Ge-stell destines in a way of unconcealing. Ge-stell is a destining of destiny



as every way of unconcealing is. Destiny in the above mentioned sense is also pro-duction,  $\pi\acute{o}\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ .

- 64) Unconcealedness of that-which-is always treads a path of unconcealing. The destiny of unconcealing always pervades men. But it is never the fate of necessity. For man only becomes free just in so far as he belongs in the realm of destiny and thus becomes a listener, but not one who is merely obedient.<sup>23</sup>
- 65) The essence of freedom is originally not ordered to the willing or even to the causality of human will.
- 66) Freedom rules that which is free in the sense of that which is enlightened, that is, the unconcealed. The occurrence of unconcealing, that is, of truth, is that for which freedom stands in the nearest and innermost relationship. All unconcealing belongs in a concealing [Bergen und Verbergen]. That which is liberating, that which is mysterious, however, is concealed and is ever concealing. All concealing comes out of that which is free, goes into that which is free, and brings into that which is free. The freedom of that which is free consists neither in the lack of restraint of arbitrariness nor in the binding through mere laws. Freedom is the enlightening unconcealing in whose light the veil wafts which veils that which is essential of all truth and lets the veil appear as that which veils. Freedom is the domain of destiny which at anytime brings an unconcealing on its path.
- 67) The essence of modern technic depends on Ge-stell. This belongs in the destiny of unconcealing. These sentences

say something other than the often reported discourse that technic is the fate [Schicksal] of our age, whereby fate means: that which is inevitable of an unalterable process.

68) Whenever we consider the essence of technic, however, then we experience Ge-stell as a destiny of unconcealing. Thus we dwell already in the freedom of destiny, which in no way blocks us in a hollow necessity to operate technic blindly, or, which remains the same thing, to resist it helplessly and condemn it as the work of the devil. On the contrary: whenever we open ourselves expressly to the essence of technic, we find ourselves taken hopelessly into a liberating claim.<sup>24</sup>

69) The essence of technic depends on Ge-stell. Its ruling belongs in destiny. Because this at any time brings men on a path of unconcealing, man treads, thusly underway, everforth on the brink of the possibility of pursuing and operating only that which is unconcealed in setting-in-order and taking all measurements from out of that. Through this the other possibility closes itself that man sooner and more so and always more originally lets himself in on the essence of the unconcealed and its unconcealedness, in order to experience the necessary belonging to unconcealing as his essence.

70) Brought between these possibilities man is endangered from out of his destiny. The destiny of unconcealing is as such in each of its ways, and hence necessarily, danger

[Gefahr]

- 71) In whatever way the destiny of unconcealing may ever rule, unconcealedness in which everything that is shows itself from time to time conceals the danger that man mistakes that which is unconcealed and misconstrues it. Thus, where everything that is present exposes itself in the light of the cause and effect contingency, for the representation of all that is holy and elevated, even God can lose the mysteriousness of his distance. God in the light of causality can sink to a cause, to the causa efficiens. He then becomes even within theology the God of the philosophers, those, namely, who determine the unconcealed and concealed according to the causality of making, without ever considering by this the essential derivation of this causality.
- 72) In the same way, unconcealedness, according to which nature exposes itself as a calculable contingency of effectuation of powers, can indeed permit correct establishments, but it is just through these results that the dangers remain that in all that is correct the true withdraws.
- 73) The destiny of unconcealing is in itself not just any, but the danger.
- 74) However, if destiny rules in the way of Ge-stell, then it is the highest danger. It gives evidence to us in two regards. As soon as the unconcealed approaches man no longer as an object, but rather exclusively as resource and man within the objectless is not only the one who sets the resource in order-man goes to the most extreme brink of falling off,

namely where he himself should be taken only as a resource. Meanwhile, the man who is thus threatened struts about in the form of the lord of the earth. Through this the appearance spreads that everything which is encountered subsists only in so far as it is a product of man. This appearance brings on a final deceptive appearance. According to it, it appears that man encounters everywhere only himself. Heisenberg with complete justification has indicated that the man of today must expose the actual in this way (op. cit. p. 60ff.). Meanwhile today man in truth no longer encounters himself, that is, his essence. Man stands so decisively in consequence of the pro-vocation of Ge-stell that he does not perceive this as a claim, that he overlooks himself as the one laid claim to, and thereby fails to hear every way in how far from out of his essence he exists in the domain of a claiming and hence never can encounter only himself.

75) Yet Ge-stell endangers man not only in his relationship to himself and to everything which is. As destiny it expels into the unconcealing whose sort is setting-in-order. Where this rules, it drives out every other possibility of unconcealing. Above all, Ge-stell conceals that unconcealing which in the sense of  $\pi\omicron\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  lets that which is present come to appearance. In comparison to this, pro-vocative setting in order presses towards this oppositely ordered relation to that which is. Where Ge-stell rules, direction and assurance of resource mould all unconcealing. They even let their own principle feature no longer come to light,

namely, this unconcealing as such.

- 76) Thus pro-vocative Ge-stell conceals not only a previous way of unconcealing, that of pro-duction, but it conceals unconcealings as such and with it that wherein unconcealedness, that is, truth, occurs.
- 77) Ge-stell displaces the appearing and ruling of truth.
- 78) The destiny which destines to setting in order is therefore the most extreme danger. That which is dangerous is not technic. There is nothing demonic about technic, despite the mystery of its essence. The essence of technic as a destiny of unconcealing is the danger. The altered significance of the word "Ge-stell" has perhaps already become more trusted by us, if we think of Ge-stell in the sense of destiny [Geschick] and danger.
- 79) The threatening of man does not only come from the various death-dealing machines and apparatuses of technic. The actual threatening has already attacked man in his essence. The domination of Ge-stell threatens with the possibility that man could be denied to return to a more original unconcealing and thus to experience the claim of a more original truth.
- 80) So wherever Ge-stell rules, then there is in the highest sense danger.  
However, wherever danger is,  
That which saves also grows. 25
- 81) Let us consider the words of Hoelderlin carefully. What is "to save" called? Usually we mean that it signifies only: to catch that which is threatened by downfall in order to secure it in its previous subsistence. But "to

save" says more. "To save" is: to obtain essence, in order thus to bring the essence to its own actual appearance. If the essence of technic, Ge-stell, is the most extreme danger, and if at the same time Hoelderlin's words say that which is true, then the dominion of Ge-stell cannot create in order only to misplace all enlightening of every unconcealing, all appearing of truth. Then even more so the essence of technic must conceal in itself the growth of that which saves. Could not then a sufficient look into that which Ge-stell is as a destiny of unconcealing bring to appearance that which saves in its ascendance?

82) To what extent does that which saves grow where danger is? Wherever something grows it takes root there, it prospers there. Both happen concealedly and quietly and in their own time. According to the words of the poet, however, where danger is, we may not expect to seize that which saves directly and without preparation. Hence we must now consider in advance to what extent in that which is the most extreme danger, to what extent in the ruling of Ge-stell, that which saves is most deeply rooted and from there prospers. In order to consider such a thing it is necessary to look into danger with clearer vision through one last step of our path. Accordingly we must ask once more about technic. For according to what has been said that which saves is rooted in and prospers in its essence.

83) However, how should we view that which saves in the essence of technic as long as we do not consider in which

sense of "essence" Ge-stell is actually the essence of technic?

84) Previously we understood the word "essence" in its common significance. In the academic language of philosophy, "essence" is called that what something is, in Latin: quid. Quidditas, whatness gives the answer to the question about essence. What belongs, for example, to all kinds of trees, the oak, beech, birch, pine, is the same treeness. Within this as the common genus, the "universal", fall all of the actual and possible trees. Now is the essence of technic, Ge-stell, the common genus for everything that is technical? If this is so, then, for example, the steam turbine, the radio transmitter, the cyclotron would each be a Ge-stell. But the word "ge-stell" does not now mean a tool or some kind of apparatus. It means even less the general concept of such resources. Machines and apparatuses are ever so little cases and kinds of Ge-stell as is the man at the control board and the engineer in the construction office. All of this, as part of the reserve, as resource, as the one who sets in order, is component to Ge-stell in its own way, but this is never the essence of technic in the sense of genus. Ge-stell is a destined way of unconcealing, namely that which pro-vokes. Such a destined way is also unconcealing which pro-duces, ποιησις. But these ways are not species which fall in co-ordination under the concept of unconcealing. Unconcealing is that destiny which is apportioned ever and abruptly and inexplicably to all

provocative and pro-ductive thinking and is assigned to man. Pro-vocative unconcealing has its destined future in production. But simultaneously Ge-stell misplaces  $\rho\omicron\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  historically.

85) Therefore Ge-stell as a destiny of unconcealing is indeed the essence of technic, but never essence in the sense of genus and essentia. If we pay attention to this, then we are struck by something astonishing: it is technic which demands of us to think in another sense that which is usually understood by "essence". But in what sense?

86) Even whenever we say "domestic affairs"<sup>26</sup> we do not mean that which is common of a genus, but rather the way how a household rules, is unfolded, and deteriorates. It is the way in which it exists. J.P. Hebel in a poem "Apparition on Kanderer Street" uses the old word "wich".<sup>27</sup> In English it at one time indicated the village, in so far as the life of the community gathered together there and the existence-as-village of the village remained involved, that is, resided or existed. This originates first in the verb "to be", though in Modern English is only to be traced in the forms "was", "were", etc. "To be" [wesen] understood verbally is the same as "to reside continually" [wahren]; not only according to significance, but also to the phonetic word formation [in German]. Even Socrates and Plato think of the essence of something as that which is in the sense of that which continues [Wahrende]. Yet they think of that which continues as that which endures [Fortwahrende]



(ἀεὶ ὄν). But that which endures they find in that which holds its ground as that which remains in everything which comes forth [vorkommt]. They discover this which remains again in appearance (εἶδος, ἰδέα), for example, in the idea "house".

- 87) Each thing which is of that genus shows itself. The individual and possible houses, on the contrary, are changing and transient variations of the "idea" and for that reason belong to that which is unenduring.
- 88) But now in no way can it be established that which continues depends singly and only on that which Plato thinks of as ἰδέα, Aristotle thinks of as τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι (that which each thing already was individually), metaphysics thinks of in the most diverse interpretations as essentia.
- 89) All that is continues. But is that which continues only that which endures? Does the essence of technic continue in the sense of the endurance of an idea, which hovers over all that is technical, so from out of this arises the appearance that the name " technic " means a mythical abstraction? How technic exists lets itself appear out of that enduring wherein Ge-stell occurs as a destiny of unconcealing. Goethe (in The Elective Affinities, Part II, chapter 10, in the Novelle, "The Wonderful Neighbor Children") once uses instead of "fortwaehren" [endure] the mysterious word "fortgewaehren" [endure incessantly, by warranty]. His ear hears the two words in an

unexpressed harmony. But if we consider now more ponderously than before what actually continues and perhaps alone continues, then we may say: only that which has been made to endure incessantly continues. That which originally continues from the dawn is that which warrants endurance.

90) Ge-stell as that which is essential of technic is that which continues. Does this ever rule in the sense of that which warrants endurance? The very question appears to be a notorious misconception. For according to all that has been said Ge-stell is still a destiny which gathers into pro-vocative unconcealing. Pro-vocation is everything but a warranting of endurance. So it appears, as long as we do not notice that pro-vocation in the setting in order of the actual as resource still remains as well a destining which brings man on a path of unconcealing. That which is essential about technic as this destiny lets man in on such a thing which he can neither invent nor make from out of himself; for there is no such thing as a man who from out of himself alone is only man.

91) Yet if this destiny, Ge-stell, is the most extreme danger, not only for the essence of man but rather for all unconcealing as such, may this destining still be called a warranting of endurance? Indeed, and completely so, if that which saves should grow in this destiny. Every destiny of an unconcealing occurs from out of warranting of endurance and as such. For this carries to man only that share of

unconcealing which the occurrence of unconcealing needs. The occurrence of truth is given over to man as the one thus needed. That which warrants endurance which destines into unconcealing in this way or that is as such that which saves. For this lets man look into and commune with the highest worth of his essence. It consists in watching over unconcealedness and with it, even before, the concealedness of all essence on this earth. It is just in Ge-stell which threatens to tear man into setting-in-order as the only presumed way of unconcealing and thus pushes man into the danger of the surrender of this free essence, it is just in this most extreme danger that the innermost, indestructible membership of man in that which warrants endurance comes to light, granted, that we for our part begin to take notice of the essence of technic.

92) So what we least suspect, that which is essential of technic conceals the possible ascendance of that which saves in itself.

93) Hence everything depends upon our consideration of and mindful watching over the ascendance. How does this happen? Before all else that we perceive that which is essential in the essence of technic, instead of only staring at the technical. As long as we represent technic as instrument, then we remain suspended in the willing-to-master it. We drive right past the essence of technic.

94) Meanwhile, if we ask how the instrumental exists as a kind of causality, then we experience that which is essential as the destiny of an unconcealing.

- 95) If we consider at last that that which is essential of essence occurs in that which warrants endurance, which needs man in the sharing of unconcealing, then it is shown that:
- 96) The essence of technic is equivocal in an elevated sense. Such equivocation points towards the mystery of all unconcealing, that is, of truth.
- 97) Ge-stell pro-vokes into the raging of setting-in-order, which displaces every view into the occurrence of unconcealing and thus endangers the relationship to the essence of truth from the ground up.
- 98) On the other hand, Ge-stell for its part occurs in that which warrants endurance, which lets man continue, as of yet unexperienced, but perhaps to be experienced in the future, in being that which is needed for the verification of the essence of truth. Thus appears the ascendance of that which saves.
- 99) That which is unavoidable of setting-in-order, and that which is suppressed of that which saves march past each other as the course of two stars in the process of the heavens. Yet this their marching-past is that which is concealed of the proximity.
- 100) If we look into the equivocal essence of technic, then we perceive the constellation, the heavenly process of mystery.
- 101) The question about technic is the question about the constellation, in which occur unconcealing and concealing, in which occurs that-which-is of truth.
- 102) However, what help is it to us to look into the constel-

lation of truth? We look into danger and perceive the growth of that which saves.

- 103) Through this we are not yet saved. But we are urged to have hope in the growing light of that which saves. How can this happen? Here and now and in the least that we tend that which saves in its growth. This includes that we at all times keep the most extreme danger in view.
- 104) That which is essential of technic threatens unconcealing, threatens with the possibility that all unconcealing go up into setting-in-order and everything expose itself only in the unconcealedness of being in reserve. Human activity can never directly encounter this danger. Human endeavor can never alone ban danger. However, human consciousness [Besinnung] can consider that all that which saves must be of higher, but at the same time related essence as that which is endangered.
- 105) Could then perhaps a more originally endured unconcealing bring that which saves to light in the midst of danger which in the technical age sooner conceals than reveals itself?
- 106) Once not only technic bore the name τέχνη. Once τέχνη was also called that unconcealing which produces truth in the radiance of that which appears.
- 107) Once τέχνη was also called the production of the true into the beautiful. Τέχνη was also called the ποίησις of the fine arts.
- 108) At the beginning of the destiny of the West, the arts

ascended in Greece to the highest heights of the unconcealing warranted it. It brought the presence of the gods, brought the dialogue of divine and human destiny to light. And art was only called τέχνη. It was a single, many-sided unconcealing. It was pious, ἁγιόμορος, that is, compliant to the rule and preservation [Verwahren] of truth [Wahrheit].

- 109) The arts did not originate from the artistic. Works of art were not enjoyed aesthetically. Art was not a sector of cultural productivity.
- 110) What was art? Perhaps only for a short but high period? Why did it bear the plain name of τέχνη. Because it was an unconcealing which produces and hence belonged in ποίησις. That unconcealing which pervades all of the art of the beautiful, poesie, the poetical, contains this name as its own.
- 111) The same poet from whom we heard the words:  
However, wherever danger is,  
That which saves also grows.  
says to us:  
... man lives poetically on this earth. 28
- 112) The poetical brings the true into the radiance of that which Plato in the "Phaedro" calls τὸ ἐκφανέστατον, that which shines forth most purely. The poetical pervades every art, every unconcealing of that which is essential into the beautiful.
- 113) Should the fine arts be called into poetical unconcealing? Should unconcealing claim it more originally in order for its part to tend expressly the growth of that which saves, to

newly awaken and establish view and trust into that which warrants endurance?

- 114) Whether art is warranted to this highest possibility of its essence in the midst of the most extreme danger no one can know. However, we can be astonished. About what? About the other possibility that the raging of technic set itself up everywhere until one day through everything technical the essence of technic exists in the occurrence of truth.
- 115) Because the essence of technic is nothing technical, hence the essential consciousness of technic and decisive coming-to-grips must happen within a domain which on the one hand is related to the essence of technic and on the other, however, is essentially different from it.
- 116) Such a domain is art. Of course only then when artistic consciousness does not for its part close itself to the constellation of truth, about which we are questioning.
- 117) Therefore questioningly we testify to the critical need that we do not experience that which is essential of technic before blatant technic, that we no longer preserve that which is essential of art before blatant aesthetics. However, the more questioningly we consider the essence, so much more mysterious does the essence of art become.
- 118) The closer we come to danger, so much clearer do the paths to that which saves begin to shine, so much more questioning do we become. For questioning is the piety of thinking.

## F o o t n o t e s .

- 1 'Technik'. The substantive that I have used to translate this, technic, can mean either 'technique' or 'technics', but it must be understood here to mean neither, but rather that which is usually referred to in English as 'technology'. The reason for this proposed spelling and usage is one of necessity: for what Heidegger is referring to is the literal meaning of 'Technik', that is, the technical, the things of techne; just as economics means the things of the household, physics means the things of nature, and so forth, as opposed to the meaning of technology which is 'speeches about techne', or the "science" of techne. Thus the common usage of technics or technique in English is too narrow in meaning, and the usage of technology would be incorrect here.
- 2 'Dasein', which has no common equivalent in English, may be literally translated as "being-there". In German philosophy, Dasein may signify the existence of any thing, but is used by Heidegger to mean the kind of existence which belongs exclusively to man, that is, his possibility of standing in the openness of Being. Cf. Being and Time Introduction I, for Heidegger's own account.
- 3 'vorstellen'. Literally: to place before, as an object. It signifies for Heidegger the way in which "objective" or "scientific" thinking occurs. See Being and Time, p. H217.
- 4 "Wir erfahren darum niemals unsere Beziehung zum Wesen der Technik, solange wir nur das Technische vorstellen und betreiben, uns damit abfinden oder ihm ausweichen." It seems to me, although the sentence may seem a bit ambiguous, that Heidegger is describing the three most common positions



which men take in the modern age. The first includes those scientists and politicians and business who praise technic and would have more of it. The second indicates those men who are aware of the immensity and inhumanity of technic but would resign themselves and ourselves to it because of lack of alternative (Marshall McLuhan?), and the third points to those who know what the second group knows but thinks that a return to an earlier age of society and mode of living is not only possible but desirable.

- 5 The German 'Einrichtung' (implement) can mean variously an implement or an arrangement, and the verb 'einrichten' to equip or to set up. Similarly the Latin 'instrumentum' can mean an implement or, collectively, "stock", whereas the verb 'instruo' can mean to erect or to arrange.
- 6 'Wer wollte leugnen, daß sie richtig sei? Sie richtet sich offenkundig ....' 'Richtig' means that which is proper or correct, and 'richten' means to arrange or to lay straight. The Latin roots of the English correct and direct, cor-rigo and di-rigo, have almost identical meanings, and so I have hyphenated them to point to this usage.
- 7 'Man will, wie es heißt, die Technik "geistig in die Hand bekommen".'
- 8 'Das Richtige stellt an dem, was vorliegt, jedesmal irgend etwas Zutreffendes fest.' My interpretation of this difficult sentence is based on Heidegger's essay "On the Essence of Truth". If I were to utter the meaning of this sentence in my own way, I would say: Our use of the word

"correct" imports to any and all objects which we might have before us the character or quality of relativity, that is, to all other actual or possible objects, for example, in terms of dimension, number, or substance.

- 9 '... das, was ein anderes verschuldet.' The verb 'incur' and the noun 'incurrance' would perhaps fit Heidegger's meaning better here, as they indicate the sort of mutual dependence indicated by 'verschulden', but are too hopelessly cumbersome. The sense needed here is that of 'that which bears the responsibility for another', although this could have been said in German and was not.
- 10 Aristotle, Natural Science, II, iii.
- 11 'Ver-an-lassen'. The prefix 'ver-' expresses usually a simple perfecting as in 'verdienen' (to earn) and so forth. The prefix 'an-' usually indicates 'on' or 'at'. The verb 'lassen' means to let or leave or allow, but also has a stronger sense to it than in English, as in the verb 'anlassen', to start. The sense of 'Ver-an-lassen', though normally to be translated as to cause or to induce, has been used here by Heidegger in the sense of "making to come 'on'," that is, "into presence."
- 12 'Demnach sind sie einheitlich durchwaltet von einem Bringen ...' In the succeeding passage from the Symposium, Heidegger translates poiesis as 'Her-vor'bringen', which is normally translated as 'production.' I have tried to show the same relationship between 'Her-vor-bringen' and 'Bringen' (literally, 'bringing-forth' and 'bringing') which exists in the word production by using the non-word "duction" in parentheses.

- 13 'Jede Veranlassung für das was immer aus dem Nicht-Anwesenden über- und vorgeht in das Anwesen, is Her-vor-bringen."
- 14 'historische'. Heidegger distinguishes between 'Geschichte' and 'Historie' and I have followed the established practice of translating the former as 'history' and the latter as 'historiology'. The former, as will become clearer later on in this lecture, is history understood in the sense of "destiny", and the latter signifies the scientific study of history as an object, or as one might say, as a series of externally related events. See Being and Time, pp. H19-20.
- 15 'herausfordern'. I have used both 'demand', and 'provoke' variously to translate this, as neither one seemed to fit best in all cases. 'Fordern' may usually be translated as 'to demand', whereas 'herausfordern' bears the stronger sense of 'to provoke', or literally, 'to demand forth'. I have hyphenated 'pro-voke' to preserve in English the Latin sense of 'to call forth'. The French translation of this essay uses the word 'arraisonner' which has the sense of "to summon something or someone forth to give reason for itself."
- 16 'bestellen'. In this lecture, Heidegger's thinking on technic develops around the verb root 'stellen', which occurs quite frequently in German in conversation about technical matters, and wherever this root occurs I have indicated it in brackets. 'Bestellen' may be translated either by 'to cultivate' or 'to employ', or more figuratively by 'to set in order' or 'to summon or give an order'.
- 17 '... auf der Stelle zur Stelle zu stehen.'

- 18 'Bestand'. I have used both 'resource' and 'reserve' variously, where one or the other was more appropriate. Although the linguistic relationship is impossible to show in English, the reader should be aware that 'Bestand' is being used here by Heidegger as a substantive form of 'bestellen'.
- 19 'Gegenstand'. Literally: that which stands opposite, i.e., an ob-ject. See footnote 3.
- 20 'Die umlaufende Rede vom Menschenmaterial, vom Krankenmaterial einer Klinik spricht dafür.'
- 21 '... was den Menschen immer schon in Anspruch genommen hat, und dies so entschieden, daß er nur als der so Angesprochene jeweils Mensch sein kann.'
- 22 '... dann entspricht er nur dem Zuspruch der Unverborgenheit, selbst dort, wo er ihm widerspricht.'
- 23 The two preceding paragraphs (45 and 46) indicate what is perhaps the most primary function of the German prefix 'Ge-' in the formation of substantives, a function which Heidegger calls 'gathering'. Unfortunately, this function is impossible to render into English, though the sense is somewhat similar to the Latin prefix 'con-'. Mountains, in the first of these three paragraphs, as a plural is 'Berge' and mountains (or mountain range) as a collective is 'Gebirg'. Moods, in the second, is 'Mute' ('Wir nennen jenes ursprünglich Versammelnde, daraus sich die Weisen entfalten, nach denen uns so und so zumute is, das Gemüt), whereas the collective 'temperment' is called 'Gemüt'.

Heidegger then takes the word 'Gestell', which as he says in the succeeding paragraphs, commonly signifies no more than a structure or an organization and uses it as that which gathers together or unifies all of the other preceding root usages of 'stellen' (bestellen, vorstellen, Bestand, etc.). I take the risk of leaving the word in German, but, as the reader will see for himself, neither the words structure nor organization, nor any neologism such as 'structurization', nor a rather interpretive word such as 'standardization' will adequately stand up to the discussion which follows. Furthermore, the most literal translation of 'composit' ('Ge-' = 'com-', 'stell' = 'posit') is not only rather awkward, but is much further removed in common usage in English of 'to posit' than Ge-stell is from 'bestellen.'

- 24 'schicken'. Literally: to send. It is used here by Heidegger in connection with 'Geschick', that which has been sent, or destiny. The word 'Geschichte', as one might be otherwise led to believe, does not come from the same root.
- 25 'Denn der Mensch wird gerade erst frei, insofern er in den Bereich des Geschickes gehört und so ein Hörender wird, nicht aber ein Höriger.' The same linguistic usage is only remotely possible in English, as the word obedience comes from the Latin 'ob-oediens', which is from 'audire', to listen.
- 26 'Im Gegenteil: wenn wir uns dem Wesen der Technik eigens öffnen, finden wir uns unverhofft in einer befreienden Anspruch genommen.'

- 27 "Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst  
Das Rettende auch."
- 28 'Hauswesen'. Literally: the essence or the what and how  
of the house.
- 29 'Weserei'. The common root, which is quite obvious in  
German, between 'wesen' and 'Weserei', is only to be en-  
countered in a similar way in the town names such as Ips-  
wich, Sandwich, and so forth. Both the English and the  
German may be traced back to the Sanskrit root 'vis',  
which bears such meanings as 'to enter in', 'to settle  
down', 'to pervade', 'to appear', 'to befall', 'to occur',  
'to exist', 'to fall into any condition', and so forth,  
and as a substantive, 'a community' or a 'house' (in the  
sense of family), or a 'settlement'. As the reader may  
surmise, I have taken some liberties in translating this  
paragraph (although perhaps not enough).
- 30 '... dichterish wohnet der Mensch auf dieser Erde.'