



VYTAUTO DIDŽIOJO UNIVERSITETAS  
HUMANITARINIŲ MOKSLŲ FAKULTETAS  
FILOSOFIJOS KATEDRA

Justina Klingaitė

**BEING IN THE WORLD OF TECHNOLOGIES: HEIDEGGER'S ACCOUNT**

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**Vadovė** dr. Jurga Jonutytė \_\_\_\_\_  
(parašas) (data)

**Apginta** prof.dr. Ineta Dabašinskiė \_\_\_\_\_  
(Fakulteto dekanė) (parašas) (data)

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# Santrauka

## Buvimas technologijų pasaulyje: Heideggerio požiūris

Šiame magistro darbe nagrinėjama buvimo technologijų pasaulyje tema, remiantis M. Heideggerio filosofija. Pirmoji darbo dalis yra teorinė. Joje aptariamos būties, būties pasaulyje ir pasaulio pasauliškumo koncepcijos Heideggerio filosofijoje. „Būtyje ir laike“ Heideggeris būti supranta kaip faktišką štai-būties (Dasein) ir būtybių (esybių) buvimą pasaulyje, t. y. mes visuomet esame pasaulyje dar prieš tai suprasdami (kitaip sakant, mes esame įmesti į pasaulį). Be to, mes patys keliamo klausimą apie savo pačių būti, egzistenciją (kodėl yra kažkas, o ne niekas arba kodėl aš egzistuoju?) Anot Heideggerio, mes egzistuojame pasaulyje, kuriame dar yra begalė pasaulių (pasaulis pasauliškas). Vienas iš tų pasaulių – technologinis. Taigi, antroji darbo dalis pirmosios tąsa, tačiau iš praktinės pusės. Antroje dalyje aptariama būties technologijų pasaulyje tema, remiantis Heideggerio „Technologijų klausimu“. Heideggeris nurodo, kad technologijų esmė nėra technologiška. Jis įvardina, kad technologijų esmė veikia yra *Gestell*. Galiausiai, darbo pabaigoje keliamas klausimas, ką reiškia būti žmogumi technologijų pasaulyje? Ar galimas laisvas santykis su technologijomis?

## Summary

This thesis investigates being in the world of technologies on the basis of M. Heidegger's philosophy. My investigation relies mainly on Heidegger's magnum opus *Being and Time* in the first part of the work, and *Question Concerning Technologies*, in the second. As follows, first part of the paper is theoretical. It deals with the concepts of being and being-in-the-world. Heidegger says that we exist as Dasein (being-there) and Dasein relates to itself in its own being. Heidegger, nevertheless adds, that we are always thrown into the world. World itself makes up the worldhood – the relational whole or the network of worlds. Thus, the first part is an introduction to the second part which accordingly deals with the idea of being in the world of technologies. Heidegger claims that the essence of technologies is nothing technological. Rather, the essence of technology is Enframing (Gestell). Finally, I ask what does it mean to be human in a technological world? Can we gain a free relation to technologies?

## Introduction

The time to begin writing an article is when you have finished it to your satisfaction.  
By that time you begin to clearly and logically perceive what it is you really want to say.<sup>1</sup>

(Mark Twain)

We live in interesting times. A period where the majority of calamities happening around the world are received by us at the same time and place. We are fully aware that in some parts of the world wars are waged for land and oil, in some other parts – people are starving. The list of such events taking place all over the globe at this very moment can carry on indefinitely. The majority of them is made accessible to millions of people around the world through ever newer technologies.

The unmeasurable amount of information we deal with today makes us, in one way or another forget the Being. Due to the rapid growth of technologies in the so called modern and post-modern era we loose touch not only with our time, but with Being as well. Rather the virtual world, the 'virtual being' – Internet – preoccupies most of our day time. What still today makes us wonder, I wonder? Is there anything at all still remaining what catches our wonder or amazement? Are we going to end up as addicts of technologies (smart phones, smart computers, etc.)? Or perhaps, without having realized it, we are already slaves to newer and ever emerging technologies. Are we not facing a threat that these kind of technological devices will become smarter than human beings?

I would like to contemplate over these worldly issues more deeply and find out why technological progress caused such a rapid change in the world, and perhaps even suggest, what might help us to stop for a moment in this world, that runs so crazily fast.

Thus, by rephrasing the opening lines of *Being and Time*, I want to inquire, do we in our times have an answer to the question, *how* we live in the world of technologies? Not at all. What *is* to live in the world of technologies? Not at all. Moreover, do we know how technologies are changing our being in the world? Not at all. As follows, my aim in the following paper is to answer the questions mentioned above. To put it more concretely:

1. What is being according to Heidegger? How does Heidegger describe the concepts of being and world? In the first chapter of my master's thesis, I will attempt to explain Heidegger's notions of being, being-in-the-world and worldhood.

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<sup>1</sup> The quote is taken from Mark Twain's Notebook, 1902–1903. Page is unknown.

2. What it means to live in the world of technologies? How technologies are changing our being in the world? Do technologies change our being at all? What should our relationship be to everyday technologies? These are the questions of the second part.
3. Do we still have a way back home, to Being, this is the question of the last section. Or, did we forget Being for ages? What is our destiny? How do we remain human and preserve meaning in our lives in a technological age? How can we gain a free relation to technologies?

I will attempt to understand *what does it mean to be* and *what does it mean to be in the world of technologies*. The ideas of my work come from the early and later philosophy of Martin Heidegger. He wrote his magnum opus *Being and Time (Sein und Zeit)* in 1927, and since then it had a profound influence on Western philosophy and philosophers. Just to name a few: E. Levinas, J. P. Sartre, H. Arrendt, J. Derrida, M. Foucault, etc. In *Being and Time* Heidegger claimed that traditional ontology overlooked and dismissed the question about Being as too general, vague and obvious. Thus Heidegger's early thought was based on questioning the meaning of Being, that is, why there *is* something rather than nothing and what do we mean by the verb *to be*?

Later views of Heidegger mostly had to do with the history of being, the work of art, technology, the need to nurture poetical dwelling in the world. In his later writings Heidegger refused to write in highly conceptual language as he did in *Being and Time*. He started to write more on worldly issues. The work I investigate *The Question Concerning Technologies (Die Frage nach der Technik)* was published in 1954. Here Heidegger continues the question of being, but turns to the specific phenomenon of technology, trying to find out the essence of technology and how to remain a human being in the technological world.

Heidegger probably did not expect that technologies will develop so rapidly and that humans will start to concentrate more on the virtual being than being in the nearness of world. What would he say now? Now, when we look to the world through the lens of a phone camera or computer screen; or when we socialize much more in the social networks than in the real world; or when we sink into the world wide web more than into the world as such, the world itself; when wars are happening not only in the real but in the virtual also (consider public relations or information wars). I emphasized here only a few relevant contemporary examples about being in the technological world. What should our relationship be to these technological phenomena? Nevertheless, should we just stay as neutral observers? To be or not to be an atheist of technology?

To answer these questions, I observed the being in the everyday world, I researched and interpreted the relevant literature – these are my methods of investigation.

A. Sverdiolas, A. Šliogeris, D. Jonkus, T. Sodeika, R. Šerpetytė, and many other Lithuanian philosophers have already researched Heidegger's philosophy, but mostly they inquired some other aspects of his philosophy (i.e. language, phenomenology, hermeneutics, etc.). For this reason, I do not use much of their writings.

My thesis consists out of two parts which have five sections in sum. First part is a theoretical one and deals with the concept of Being-in-the-world, second part follows from the first one, and deals with Being-in-the-world-of-technologies. Last but not least, I am proposing some conclusions and will build up a positive relation to technologies.

# 1. Heidegger's account on Being in the World

## 1. 1. Heidegger's analysis of Being

Without even leaving, we are already no longer there.<sup>2</sup>  
(Nikolai Gogol)

When we speak about Being, whether we want it or not, our references usually go to Heidegger's magnum opus *Being and Time*<sup>3</sup>. In his treatise Heidegger wanted to revive the question of Being (the capital letter B is very important here) which, according to him, has been forgotten for a long time. From the Greek ontology onwards, the question of the meaning of Being was not only forgotten but trivialized as well. The question of Being was sometimes even neglected and conceived as not worthy of attention – mostly because 'Being' was so easily understood. We do not question what is 'being' and we usually take it for granted according to Heidegger: “it is said that 'Being' is the most universal and the emptiest of concepts. As such it resists every attempt at definition. Nor does this most universal and hence indefinable concept require any definition, for everyone uses it constantly and already understands what he means by it.”<sup>4</sup>

These kind of presuppositions and prejudices, according to Heidegger, do not let us go further and analyze Being on its own right. He adds that these “presuppositions and the prejudices which are constantly reimplanting and fostering the belief that an inquiry into Being is unnecessary. They are rooted in ancient ontology itself, and it will not be possible to interpret that ontology adequately until the question of Being has been clarified and answered and taken as a clue.”<sup>5</sup> To put it more concretely, Heidegger tells that there are three such presuppositions showing that questioning of Being is unnecessary:

1. First of all, it was thought that “'Being' is the 'most universal' concept: An understanding of Being is already included in conceiving anything which one apprehends in entities. In medieval ontology 'Being' is designated as a '*transcendens*'.”<sup>6</sup> What Heidegger wants to say here, is that, in medieval ontology, 'Being' was understood as a transcendence, something

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<sup>2</sup> Quote taken from Paul Virilio's 'Open Sky', p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> References to Heidegger's writings will be given using the following abbreviations: BT, '*Being and Time*', trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962); QCT, '*The Question Concerning Technology*' in the *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

<sup>4</sup> BT, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



totally unmeasurable and unclear. That is, 'Being' in medieval ontology belonged to the transcendence of God. So, in this sense, the meaning of 'Being' is not worth investigating. Heidegger dares to deny this claim, by saying, that “if it is said that 'Being' is the most universal concept, this cannot mean that it is the one which is clearest or that it needs no further discussion. It is rather the *darkest* of all.”<sup>7</sup>

2. Secondly, it has been also thought “that the concept of 'Being' is *indefinable*. This deduced from its supreme universality, and rightly so. 'Being' cannot indeed be conceived as an entity; nor can it acquire such a character as to have the term “entity” applied to it. “Being” cannot be derived from higher concepts by definition, nor can it be presented through lower ones.”<sup>8</sup> That is, 'Being' here is conceived as a primary quality of an entity and this also means that 'Being' cannot be explained, since it is just “is” somewhere there. This does not necessarily imply that 'Being' no longer offers a problem. Actually, we should investigate the question of Being even more. And, “we can infer only that 'Being' cannot have the character of an entity. The indefinability of Being does not eliminate the question of its meaning; it demands that we *look that question in the face*.”<sup>9</sup>
3. Thirdly, Heidegger notes, “it is held that 'Being' is of all concepts the one that is *self-evident*. Whenever one cognizes anything or makes an assertion, whenever one comports oneself towards entities, even towards oneself, some use is made of 'Being'; and this expression is held to be intelligible 'without further ado', just as everyone understands 'The sky *is* blue', 'I *am* merry', and the like.”<sup>10</sup> But this average understanding only demonstrates the misunderstanding. Thus, “the very fact that we already live in an understanding of Being and that the meaning of Being is still veiled in darkness proves that it is necessary in principle to *raise this question again*.”<sup>11</sup>

Because of these lasting presuppositions in the long run of Western philosophy, Heidegger shows here that the question of Being is indeed 'the darkest of all', that we should 'look that question in the face' and 'its is necessary in principle to raise this question again.’<sup>12</sup> So, by discussing these prejudices it should be clear, Heidegger reckons, that “not only that the question of Being *lacks an answer*, but that the question itself is obscure and without direction. So if it is to be revived, this means that we must first work out an adequate way of *fomulating* it.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 23, 24.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

In the second subsection of Introduction called *The Formal Structure of the Question of Being*, Heidegger formulates *the* fundamental question of the meaning of Being. Hence, the formulation of the question must be very 'transparent' in 'an appropriate way'. Heidegger wants "to explain briefly what belongs to any question whatsoever, so that from this standpoint the question of Being can be made visible as a *very special* one with its own distinctive character."<sup>14</sup>

So, the question of Being is going to be revived again and the character of this question is a very special and a distinctive one. Heidegger asserts, that this question, as a kind of seeking, is already guided beforehand, and that 'the meaning of Being is already available to us in some way', in a way, that 'we always conduct our activities in an understanding of Being.'<sup>15</sup> And it follows, that "out of this understanding arise both the explicit question of the meaning of Being and the tendency that leads us towards its conception."<sup>16</sup> Although, "we do not *know* what 'Being' means ... but even if we ask, 'What is "Being"?', we keep within an understanding of the 'is', though we are unable to fix conceptually what that 'is', signifies."<sup>17</sup> Moreover, we do not even know *how* this meaning can be grasped and fixed, but "this vague average understanding of Being is still a fact."<sup>18</sup> As a matter of fact, we understand Being already in our average daily lives, when we are handling all kind of activities, though we do not grasp what does it mean when we say that something *is*. So, according to Heidegger, this indicates some sort of average understanding.

Later on in the passage, Heidegger writes that this average understanding of 'Being' is simply an understanding of particular entities and their attributes. It does not mean however that we understand 'Being.' Accordingly, "in the question which we are to work out, what is asked about is Being – that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which entities are already understood, however we may discuss them in detail. The Being of entities 'is' not itself an entity."<sup>19</sup>

Being can only be shown in its own, a unique, way, because of its own special character. "Hence Being, as that which is asked about, must be exhibited in a way of its own, essentially different from the way in which entities are discovered. Accordingly, *what is to be found out by the asking* – the meaning of Being – also demands that it be conceived in a way of its own, essentially contrasting with the concepts in which entities acquire their determinate signification."<sup>20</sup>

On the other hand, "in so far as Being constitutes what is asked about, and "Being" means the Being of entities, then entities themselves turn out to be *what is interrogated*. ... When we come

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 25-26.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

to what is to be interrogated, the question of Being requires that the right way of access to entities shall have been obtained and secured in advance. But there are many things which we designate as 'being' [*“seiend”*], and we do so in various senses.”<sup>21</sup> It means that “everything we talk about, everything we have in view, everything towards which we comport ourselves in any way, is being; what we are is being, and so is how we are. Being lies in the fact that something *is*, and in its Being as it is; in Reality; in presence-at-hand; in subsistence; in validity; in Dasein; in the 'there is'.”<sup>22</sup> So, at this point, Heidegger finds it necessary, “to explain how Being is to be looked at, how its meaning is to be understood and conceptually grasped.”<sup>23</sup> More importantly, “*looking at something, understanding and conceiving it, choosing, access to it* – all these ways of behaving are constitutive for our inquiry, therefore *are modes of Being* for those particular entities *which we*, the inquirers, *are ourselves*.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, “to work out the question of *Being* adequately, we must make an entity – the inquirer – transparent in his own Being. The very asking of this question is an entity's mode of *Being*; and as such it gets its essential character from what is inquired about – namely, Being. This entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being, we shall denote by the term “*Dasein*”.”<sup>25</sup>

Dasein – as the inquirer is the one who is 'transparent in his own Being'. Heidegger wants to say that Dasein has a special access to the Being, because Dasein simply exists, *is* there in the world. And, existence, as simply being-there is always *prior*, because we are already in the world, as a relation, as belonging to Being. That is, Dasein is already caught up in, involved with, dedicated to other persons, things and worlds. Dasein is essentially concerned about dealings within the world, so, in this sense, Dasein's practical involvements and dedications are ontologically more basic. For Heidegger, Dasein thus is the being that *gives a very special access* to the question of the meaning of Being. Here, Heidegger's innovation is that “*one can determine the nature of entities in their Being without necessarily having the explicit concept of the meaning of Being at one's disposal*.”<sup>26</sup> If this kind of knowledge have not existed, Heidegger claims, there would not be ontological knowledge before. It is indeed hard to deny that 'factically there has been such knowledge.' Heidegger adds: “of course 'Being' has been presupposed in all ontology up till now, but *not as a concept at one's disposal* – not as the sort of thing we are seeking. ... This guiding

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 26-27. An ordinary German word literally meaning 'being-there', 'existing', 'being present'. Dasein should be understood as a being that *is* always already engaged in the world. Translators of Heidegger chose to leave the term Dasein untranslated, and so it is now commonly used among Heidegger's scholars.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

activity of taking a look at Being *arises from the average understanding of Being* in which we always operate and *which in the end belongs to the essential constitution of Dasein itself.*<sup>27</sup>

It is clear now that the 'average understanding of Being in which we always operate' constitutes Dasein's being-in-the-world. Finally, Heidegger shows that “in the question of the meaning of Being there is no 'circular reasoning' but rather a remarkable 'relatedness backward or forward' which what we are asking about (Being) bears to the inquiry itself as a mode of Being of an entity.”<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, “what is asked about has an essential pertinence to the inquiry itself, and this belongs to the ownmost meaning of the question of Being. This only means, however, that there is a way – perhaps even a very special one – in which entities with the character of Dasein are related to the question of Being.”<sup>29</sup>

In Heidegger's analysis, a priority of Dasein in understanding the question of meaning of Being, has announced itself. When it comes to thinking about ontology in the third and fourth chapters of *Being and Time*, Heidegger argues that traditional treatments of being have failed to distinguish two different kinds of questions we can ask:

- 1) the ontological question that asks about ways or modes of Being, and
- 2) the ontic question that asks about the facts or the properties of beings.

*Being and Time* rather focuses on three ontological modes and three kinds of beings, namely, Dasein (Being-there), the available (Zuhandenheit, or ready to hand), and the occurrent (Vorhandenheit, or present at hand). Dreyfus and Wrathall on “A Companion to Heidegger” gives a very evident example and explains the structure of ontic and ontological, say, “if one investigates an item of equipment, say a pen, ontologically, then one asks about the structures in virtue of which it is available or ready to hand. These include, for example, its belonging to a context of equipment and referring or pointing to other items of equipment. In an ontic inquiry, on the other hand, one asks about the properties or the physical relations and structures peculiar to some entity in the pen's case, for example, we might make the following ontic observations about it: it is black, full of blue ink, and lingering on top of my desk. Heidegger's critique of the tradition comes from the simple observation that the ontological mode of being cannot be reduced to what we discover in an ontic inquiry, no matter how exhaustively we describe the entity with its properties. This is because no listing of, for example, a pen's properties can tell me what it is to be available rather than occurrent.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 27-28. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Dreyfus, Wrathall. *A Companion to Heidegger* (Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 3

Thus, rather than ontic, “an ontological inquiry into human being, then, will not look at the properties possessed by humans, but rather at the structures which make it possible to *be* human. One of Heidegger's most innovative and important insights is that “*the essence of the human mode of existence is found in our always already existing in a world.*”<sup>31</sup> That is to say, Dasein, the human mode of existence, has this peculiar access to the Being and “*understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being.*”<sup>32</sup> Therefore *fundamental ontology*, from which alone all other ontologies can take their rise, must be sought in the *existential analytic of Dasein*.

To sum up this chapter, we can clearly see that Heidegger claims that traditional ontology has prejudicially overlooked the question of the meaning of being, 'dismissing it as overly general, undefinable, or obvious.'<sup>33</sup> Instead Heidegger proposes to understand Being itself, Being as such, as distinguished from any specific entities (beings) and their qualities. “'Being' cannot indeed be conceived as an entity.”<sup>34</sup> Being, Heidegger proposes, is “what determines beings as beings, that in terms of which beings are already understood.”<sup>35</sup> Heidegger is rather seeking to identify the criteria or conditions by which any specific entity can show up at all. And, Dasein is one of those beings, entities, who discloses the Being and the world. What then, exactly, is the world, where Dasein dwells?

In the following section chapter, along with Heidegger, I will attempt to analyze the phenomenon of the world.<sup>36</sup> It is interesting to note that Heidegger understands phenomenology quite differently than his tutor Edmund Husserl. As Dreyfus and Wrathall notes, “for Heidegger, phenomenology is an “attitude” or practice in “seeing” that takes its departure from lived experience. It aims at grasping the phenomena of lived involvement in the world, before our understanding of the world becomes determined and altered in “thematic” or reflective thought. ... Indeed, “a constant feature of Heidegger's work is the effort to bring thought before the phenomena of existence<sup>37</sup> – in this sense, his “method” is always that of phenomenology.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> BT, p. 28.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 20-22.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 24-25.

<sup>36</sup> Heidegger understands phenomenology quite differently than his master Edmund Husserl. For Heidegger, phenomenology is only possible as ontology. Heidegger re-interprets such philosophical categories as “subject”, “object”, “spirit”, “body”, “consciousness”, and many others with a new emphasis on “being”. Indeed Heidegger focuses on being and its various forms. Being is always prior, because I exist, things around me exist, people around me exist too. Being reveals itself in the form of separate essence, because 'Being can not be understood as an entity' – *Sein' ist nicht so etwas wie Seiendes. (Sein und Zeit, p. 4).*

<sup>37</sup> Or in other words, through the existential analytic of Dasein.

<sup>38</sup> Dreyfus, Wrathall. *A Companion to Heidegger*, p. 9.

## 1. 2. Heidegger's analysis of Being in the World

...We are going to be living in a reduced world. The capacity of interactivity is going to reduce the world, real space to nearly nothing. Therefore, in the near future, people will have a feeling of being enclosed in a small, confined environment. <...> In fact, there is already a speed pollution which reduces the world to nothing. Just as Foucault spoke of this feeling among the imprisoned, I believe that there will be for future generations a feeling of confinement in the world, of incarceration which will certainly be at the limit of tolerability, by virtue of the speed of information. If I were to give a last image, interactivity is to real space what radioactivity is the atmosphere.<sup>39</sup>

(Paul Virilio)

Since we find ourselves as Being-there, as Dasein, Heidegger argues that the philosophical tradition has overlooked the character of the world, and the nature of our human existence in the world. Notably, Heidegger writes of Dasein as Being-in-the-world (*In-der-welt-Sein*). Being-in-the-world is Heidegger's replacement for terms such as subject, object, consciousness, and world. For Heidegger, the dualism of things into subject/object, as we find in the Western tradition should be overcome. Dasein is not a subject, because "a subject in the traditional sense has mental states and experiences which can be what they are independently of the state of the surrounding world. For Heidegger, our way of being is found *not* in our thinking nature, but in our existing in a world. And our being is intimately and inextricably bound up with the world that we find ourselves in."<sup>40</sup>

Being-in the-world is essential characteristic of Dasein. As Heidegger explains, "Being-in is not a 'property' which Dasein sometimes has and sometimes does not have, and without which it could just be just as well as it could be with it. It is not the case that man 'is' and then has, by way of an extra, a relationship-of-Being towards the 'world' – a world with which he provides himself occasionally."<sup>41</sup>

In other words, Dasein is never an entity which is free from Being-in, but it nevertheless "sometimes has the inclination to take up a 'relationship' towards the world. *Taking up relationships towards the world is possible only because Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, is as it is.*"<sup>42</sup> In addition, this state of Being does not arise because some entity is outside of Dasein and meets up with it. As Heidegger puts it, "such an entity can 'meet up with' Dasein only in so far as it can, of its own accord, show itself within a world."<sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The Virilio Reader, ed. by James Der Dian (Blackwell Publishers, 1998), p. 21

<sup>40</sup> Dreyfus, Wrathall. A Companion to Heidegger, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> BT, p. 84.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

Dreyfus and Wrathall comments on this, that according to Heidegger, “in the same way that the tradition has misunderstood human being by focusing on subjectivity, it also failed to understand the nature of the world, because it tended to focus exclusively on entities within the world, and understood the world as merely being a collection of inherently meaningless entities. But attention to the way entities actually show up for us in our everyday dealings teaches us that worldly things cannot be reduced to merely physical entities with causal properties. Worldly things, in other words, have a different mode of being than the causally delineated entities that make up the universe and which are the concern of the natural sciences. To understand worldly entities – entities, in other words, that are inherently meaningfully constituted – requires a hermeneutic approach.”<sup>44</sup> The hermeneutic approach, for Heidegger, has mainly to do with human life and existence as such. Heidegger thinks that hermeneutics is not a matter of understanding linguistic communication. For Heidegger, hermeneutics is ontology; it is rather about the most fundamental conditions of man's (Dasein's) being in the world. However, natural sciences tends to forget these most fundamental, pre-scientific aspects of our being in the world. And, it makes Heidegger wonder and call to revive the question of meaning of Being through his new ontological hermeneutics. As it goes, hermeneutics is the hermeneutics of facticity, facticity of Dasein's being-in-the-world. Heidegger says that “the concept of 'facticity' implies that an entity 'within-the-world' has Being-in-the-world in such a way that it can understand itself as bound up in its 'destiny' with the Being of those entities which it encounters within its own world. ... Dasein itself has a 'Being-in-space' of its own; but this in turn is possible only on the basis of Being-in-the-world in general.”<sup>45</sup>

Since Being-in-the-world is an essential characteristic of Dasein and Dasein is a being of its own, Dasein exists spatially, meaning, there are some certain involvements in-the-world. Dasein, as a factual being existing in the world, involves in it in many ways, by “having to do with something, producing something, attending to something and looking after it, making use of something, giving something up and letting it go, undertaking, accomplishing, evincing, interrogating, considering, discussing, determining.”<sup>46</sup> And, all these above mentioned ways of Being-in-the-world, have *concern* [*fürsorge*] as their kind of Being. It essentially means that in our everyday lives we take concern for things. For example, I am writing my thesis because I am concerned about the human condition in the world. As Heidegger notes, the term 'concern' traditionally can mean 'to carry out something', 'to get it done', 'to straighten it out'. It can also mean to 'provide oneself with something'. More importantly, Heidegger uses the expression with still another characteristic, namely, when we say – “I am concerned for the success of the undertaking.”

<sup>44</sup> Dreyfus, Wrathall. A Companion to Heidegger, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> BT, p. 82.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

– here “‘concern’ means something like apprehensiveness.”<sup>47</sup> In contrast to these traditional ontical significations mentioned above (as a task to carry out something, to get something done, to write my thesis, etc.), Heidegger uses ‘concern’ as an ontological-existential term “to designate the Being of a possible way of Being-in-the-world. This term has been chosen not because Dasein happens to be proximally and to a large extent ‘practical’ and economic, but because the Being of Dasein itself is to be made visible as *care [sorge]*.”<sup>48</sup> The expression of care is to be taken as an ontological structural concept (it is a part of Heidegger’s project/task to reconstruct the history of ontology). Additionally, this expression “has nothing to do with ‘tribulation’, ‘melancholy’, or the ‘cares of life’, though ontically one can come across these in every Dasein. These-like their opposites, ‘gaiety’ and ‘freedom from care’ – are ontically possible only because Dasein, when understood *ontologically*, is care.”<sup>49</sup> Heidegger says, “because *Being-in-the-world belongs essentially to Dasein, its Being towards the world [Sein zur Welt] is essentially concern.*”<sup>50</sup> That is, “taking up relationships towards the world is possible only *because* Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, is as it is.”<sup>51</sup> Again, such an entity can ‘meet up with’ Dasein only if it can show itself within a world. Heidegger adds that ‘life’ as a state of Being can only be defined ontologically, because “ontically as well as ontologically, the priority *belongs to Being-in-the world as concern.*”<sup>52</sup>

Having said this, Heidegger comes to criticize the phenomenological way of ‘seeing the world’ by saying “when Being-in-the-world is exhibited phenomenologically, disguises and concealments are rejected because this phenomenon itself always gets ‘seen’ in a certain way in every Dasein. And it thus gets ‘seen’ *because* it makes up a basic state of Dasein, and in every case is already disclosed in Dasein’s understanding of Being, and or disclosed along with that Being itself.”<sup>53</sup> Heidegger explains, that so far “the phenomenon of Being-in has for the most part been represented exclusively by a single exemplar – knowing the world, ... because knowing has been given this priority, our understanding of its own most kind of Being gets led astray, and accordingly *Being-in-the-world must be exhibited even more precisely with regard to knowing the world*, and must itself be made visible as an existential ‘modality’ of Being-in.”<sup>54</sup> Essentially, our knowing comes from Being-in-the-world as Dasein. In this sense, Dasein’s being-in-the-world is indeed

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 83-84. NB! Heidegger makes important division between two terms: *concern* (fürsorge) and *care* (sorge). ‘Concern’ comes from the Latin ‘concernere’ and means ‘to be of importance’ or ‘to have reference to or connection with’ (business, affair). Concern has to do with expectations and projections of the one. While ‘care’ comes from old English ‘cearu’ and means ‘protection’, ‘to be mindful of’, ‘being in charge of something’. ‘Care’ has ethical coloring in its meaning, that is why the latter is chosen by Heidegger.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.



already knowing at fullest. Heidegger claims that phenomenology greatly missed this point. As follows, Heidegger adds, that there are some other features of knowing the world in this new way. Namely, that “*that knowing is grounded beforehand in a Being-already-alongside-the-world*, which is essentially constitutive for Dasein's Being, and this Being-already-alongside is not just for a fixed staring at something that is purely present-at-hand.”<sup>55</sup> More importantly, “Being-in-the-world, as concern, is *fascinated* by the world with which it is concerned, but when concern holds back from any kind of producing, manipulating, and the like, it puts itself into what is now the sole remaining mode of Being-in, the mode of just tarrying alongside.”<sup>56</sup> That is, this kind of holding back mode “lets us encounter entities within-the-world purely in *the way they look* (eidos) and looking at something in this way is some times a definite way of taking up a direction towards something – of setting our sights towards what is present-at-hand.”<sup>57</sup>

It is clear now that 'knowing is grounded beforehand in a Being-already-alongside-the-world' and 'Being-in-the-world, as concern, is *fascinated* by the world with which it is concerned'. Plus, when we *hold back* from any producing, manipulating and the like', it is when, in this so to speak unconcerned mode, we see Being-in at fullest, this mode 'lets us encounter entities within-the-world purely in *the way they look* (eidos).' Obviously “looking at something in this way is some times a definite way of taking up a direction towards something.”<sup>58</sup>

To capture the distinctive manner in which Dasein is in the world, Heidegger introduces the term *dwelling*<sup>59</sup>. Heidegger does not use the word 'doing' but turns to 'dwelling', because such a replacement allows him to explicate the *specific* manner in which Dasein *is* in the world. So, Dasein *dwells* in the world, and that's why all the other organisms live in their being (environment) which is not the same as the world or the universe. So now, what is the world such that Dasein (essentially) dwells in it? Looking at things in the way they look, as present-at-hand, “enters the mode of dwelling autonomously alongside entities within-the-world. And, in this kind of *dwelling* as a holding-oneself-back from any manipulation or utilization, the *perception* of the present-at-hand is consummated.”<sup>60</sup> Perception is fulfilled when one 'one addresses oneself to something as something

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p 85.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> In English, 'to dwell' means 'to reside', 'to inhabit', 'to live as a permanent resident', 'be-at-home'. The word *dwelling* derives from the Old Saxon *wuon* and the Gothic *wunian*. The Old Saxon term *wuon* means to remain in a place, while the Gothic term *wunian* means to remain in peace. For Heidegger, it is the latter that conveys the true meaning of dwelling. In 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (Bauen Wohnen Denken) written in 1951, Heidegger says that *wunian* means “to dwell, to be set at peace, means to remain at peace within the free, the preserve, the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its essence.” (BDT, p. 351)

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

and discusses it as such.' This, according to Heidegger, “amount to the *interpretation* in the broadest sense, and on the basis of such interpretation, perception becomes an act of *making determinate*.”<sup>61</sup>

Heidegger clearly drops down the possible manipulative type of being (i.e. 'doing') and claims for a *perceptive* autonomous being-alongside-being (dwelling). So, in this sense, our perception of being (presence-at-hand) becomes a definition. Heidegger denies that this kind of understanding is subject-object like: “this perceptive retention of an assertion about something is itself a way of Being-in-the-world; it is not to be Interpreted as a 'procedure' by which a subject provides itself with representations of something which remain stored up 'inside' as having been thus appropriated, and with regard to which the question of how they 'agree' with actuality can occasionally arise.”<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore, when Dasein (perceptively) grasps something, it is still “'outside' alongside entities which it encounters and which belong to a world already discovered.”<sup>63</sup> Neither Dasein abandons any inner sphere “when Dasein dwells alongside the entity to be known, and determines its character.”<sup>64</sup> More importantly, “even in this 'Being-outside' alongside the object, Dasein is still 'inside', if we understand this in the correct sense; that is to say, it is itself 'inside' as a Being-in-the-world which knows.”<sup>65</sup> In this way, Heidegger denies the phenomenological method of intentionality, by saying, that, “the perceiving of what is known is not a process of returning with one's booty to the 'cabinet' of consciousness after one has gone out and grasped it; even in perceiving, retaining, and preserving, the Dasein which knows *remains outside*, and it does so as *Dasein*.”<sup>66</sup> That is, “if I 'merely' know about some way in which the Being of entities is interconnected, if I 'only' represent them, if I 'do no more' than 'think' about them, *I am no less alongside the entities outside in the world than when I originally grasp them*.”<sup>67</sup> It may seem that Being is erased, when we are forgetting something, but it is just “a modification of the primordial Being-in; and this holds for every delusion and for every error.”<sup>68</sup>

Heidegger wants to say that since we are already in the world outside and we know it, it is not needed to return to be 'cabinet of consciousness' and represent the data gathered from one's experience. Rather, by looking care-fully at the world in the way Heidegger claims – namely dwelling – “Dasein achieves a new *status of Being [Seinsstand]* towards a world which has already

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 89-90.

been discovered in Dasein itself.”<sup>69</sup> If I represent entities, that is, if only think about them, “I am no less alongside the entities outside in the world than when I originally grasp them.”<sup>70</sup> Heidegger adds, that 'this new possibility of Being can develop itself autonomously' and even scientific knowledge can take over the guidance for Being-in-the-world. Meaning, that knowing comes from the world as such. Moreover, for the first time neither 'commercium' of the subject knowing a world is created, nor it arises from some way in which the world acts upon a subject. In words of Heidegger, “*knowing is a mode of Dasein founded upon Being-in-the world.*”<sup>71</sup>

According to Heidegger, our Being-in-the-world already presupposes knowing. We do not need the scientific knowledge and methods for that. Hence, since Being-in-the-world is a basic state of Dasein, it should be interpreted more concretely. Heidegger tackles this task in the chapter called *The Worldhood of the World*.

### 1. 3. Heidegger on the Worldhood of the World

As mortal disclosers of worlds in the plural, the only comprehensiveness we can hope to achieve is our openness to dwelling in many worlds and the capacity to move among them.<sup>72</sup>

(Hubert Dreyfus)

In the previous section I tried to show that Being-in-the-world is Heidegger's replacement for the traditional dualistic terms such as subject/object, consciousness/world. For Heidegger, the division of things into subject and object, as we tend to find it in the Western philosophical traditional, needs to be overcome. Heidegger denies Husserl's concept of intentionality, that consciousness is always a consciousness of something, by saying that there is no consciousness as such at all, which is cut off from an object. For Heidegger, it is rather an issue of a thought, understanding, or perception. Heidegger introduces ontological phenomenology. It means that our understanding (of our being-in-the-world) is already fundamental to all human existence. We always already find ourselves as being-in-the-world. But there can also be the negative characteristic of the term 'world', such as (1) world is *not* the totality of things (in the ontic sense); (2) neither it is the Being of that totality ('things of nature' in the ontological sense).<sup>73</sup> But, according to Heidegger, none of these approaches the 'phenomenon' of the world. So, how are we then

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>72</sup> Dreyfus, Hubert and Spinosa, Charles, “Highway Bridges and Feasts,” *Man and World*, p. 175.

<sup>73</sup> BT, p. 91-92.

encountering this 'phenomenon'? Heidegger points out that world in the sense of worldhood has a relation to Dasein and that in some sense 'world' and 'Dasein' are bound together, thus, worldhood is to be seen as an existential structure of Dasein: “worldhood' is an ontological concept, and stands for the structure of one of the constitutive items of Being-in-the-world. But we know Being in-the-world as a way in which Dasein's character is defined existentially. Thus worldhood itself is an existentiale.”<sup>74</sup>

Heidegger, then, clarifies how variously 'world'<sup>75</sup> can be discussed:

1. 'World' as an ontical concept: the totality of things present-at-hand.
2. 'World' as an ontical concept referring to the Being of the totality of entities. For example, 'world' of a mathematician, which signifies the region of all possible mathematical objects.
3. 'World' can also be understood in another ontical sense – this one is more important for Heidegger's intention – the connectedness of world and Dasein. Here, world has a pre-ontological existential meaning, similar to Husserl's lived world (*Lebenswelt*). Meaning, world 'in which' a factual Dasein 'lives'. There are many different possibilities for this “type” of the 'world': 'world' can mean the 'public' world of we and one's 'own' nearest (domestic) environment, surroundings (*Umwelt*)<sup>76</sup>. From this concept of world (Umwelt) Heidegger's analysis of the world is taking its departure.
4. Finally, 'world' designates the ontological existential concept of *worldhood*. Worldhood itself may have its own modes, but it still “embraces in itself the *a priori* character of worldhood in general.”<sup>77</sup>

From now on, the term 'wordly' means a kind of being of Dasein, and never a kind of being of entities, something that is objectively present-at-hand 'in' the world. He calls the latter entities as 'belonging to the world' or 'within-the-world'.

Heidegger goes on to argue that traditional ontology not only 'fails to see Being-in-the-world as a state of Dasein', but as well passes over and therefore does not notice phenomenon of the worldhood. One rather interprets “the world in terms of the Being of entities which are present-at-hand within-the-world', which are discovered nearly 'in terms of Nature'. 'Nature', as the categorial aggregate of those structures of Being which a definite entity encountered within-the-world may

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

<sup>75</sup> Heidegger notes that “when we are talking about the world in the first of these senses, we shall put it in single quotation marks.” (BT, p. 93)

<sup>76</sup> The word '*Umwelt*' is usually translated as 'environment'; literally the world 'around', the world which lies closest to us, our surrounding, nearness.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 93.

possess, can never make worldhood intelligible.”<sup>78</sup> This kind of a look towards the world, according to Heidegger, deprives the world from its meaning and the worldhood can never be understood. 'Nature' can only be understood in terms of world, because there is no nature as such conceived separately from the world. That is, 'nature' can be grasped “ontologically only or in terms of the concept of the world – that is to say, in terms of the analytic of Dasein.”<sup>79</sup> Since the method has been given, Heidegger suggests that the analysis should be done in every day life with the result that 'something like world must come into view'. As Heidegger puts it, “the theme of our analytic is to be Being-in-the-world, and accordingly *the very world itself*; and these *are to be considered within the horizon of average everydayness* – the kind of Being which is *closest* to Dasein. We must make a study of everyday Being-in-the-world”<sup>80</sup> The closest world of everyday Dasein, 'this existential character of average Being-in-the-world', leads us to the idea of worldhood as such. According to Heidegger, the world which is closest to us is the environment. So, we should be seeking the worldhood of the environment (environmentality) and interpreting the entities which we encounter as closest to us.

Heidegger goes on to explaining *environmentality* and *worldhood*. As we mentioned, what is closest to us in our average everydayness is our *environment (Umwelt)* – in which we are caught up in our concerns and activities. Heidegger describes this predominant way of our Being-in-the-world as 'dealings' (*Umgang*)<sup>81</sup> in the world and *with* entities within-the-world. In this sense, we are caught up, we are busy with in our dealings in the world. It forms the starting point for Heidegger's analysis, that is, he studies the sense of our dealing (*Umgang*) with entities within our environment (*Umwelt*) in order to reveal the Being of those entities encountered. By reminding that his method is ontological, Heidegger tells that, firstly, “entities do *not* manifest themselves as things (*res*); moreover, if investigation goes in this way it only reaches 'Thinghood' and 'Reality', and thus Being as this, the entities which we encounter in this type of pre-ontological concern are still hidden.”<sup>82</sup> Secondly, Heidegger notes that Greeks had an appropriate term for things – *pragmata* – “that which one has to do within one's concerned dealings [Besorgende Umgang], but still ontologically, the specifically 'pragmatic' character of the *pragmata* is just what the Greeks left in obscurity”, because they thought of these nearly as 'mere things'.<sup>83</sup> Heidegger call those entities which we come across

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> The word '*Umgang*' also can literally mean 'going about', 'going round'; for instance, when we say that 'someone is going about his business', we usually mean that someone has a concern about something. '*Umgang*' also has the meaning of spatiality. According to Heidegger Dasein always exists spatially – Dasein is placed in some certain place.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

in concern '*equipment*'. In our dealings within-the-world we come across many different kind of equipment, for example, for working, writing, etc. The question now becomes 'what is the Being of this equipment'? What kind of Being equipment possesses? The answer is fairly simple. "The clue of doing this lies in our first defining what makes an item of equipment for namely, its equipmentality."<sup>84</sup>

What is this 'equipmentality'? Heidegger tells us that first of all (i) "there 'is' no such thing as an equipment". A piece of equipment "always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is, it is always bounded to an *equipmental totality*. Thus, equipment is essentially (ii) '*something in order to...*' [etwas um-zu]; for instance, a canonical example of Heidegger – hammer is used in order to hammer a nail, this, in turn, in order to build a shed – in order to provide shelter, etc. And, "a totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability."<sup>85</sup> Thus this shows that (ii) equipment is involved in *references and assignments*, that is, it is always involved in certain contexts; for example, a pen is involved in the context of ink, paper, desk, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room.

We have to bear in mind that in our dealings with this *equipmental totality* our primary relation is one of *use* (that is, we are using equipment 'in order to...' to make something out of something, to use something for making something). And, according to Heidegger, this provides "the Being which equipment possesses, in which it manifests itself in its own right, that can be called *readiness-to-hand* [Zuhandenheit]."<sup>86</sup> It comprises all the things we deal with in the everyday world of our environment.

Heidegger notes that the special way (not a method) in which we deal with these things is *circumspection* (*Umsicht*).<sup>87</sup> Hence, when we deal with things, "we deal with them by using them and manipulating them, this activity is not a blind one; it has its own kind of sight, by which our manipulation is guided and from which it acquires its specific Thingly character."<sup>88</sup> And, accordingly, these "dealings with equipment subordinate themselves to the manifold assignments of the 'in-order-to'. And the sight with which they thus accommodate themselves is *circumspection*."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>87</sup> *Umsicht* stands for circumspection. Circumspection originates from the Latin *circumspectus* – 'to take notice of, 'to pay attention to'. Literally, it can also mean 'a special kind of sight': 'aware and concerned looking around', 'careful consideration of all possibilities, dangers'. Heidegger is taking an advantage that in German 'Umsicht' may mean both 'looking around' and 'in order to', so basically, when 'one is looking around what to do next in order to.' Heidegger generalizes this notion and at the same time calls for attention to the narrower sense of 'Umsicht' which occurs in our every-day living.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

Heidegger then goes on by analyzing the ways in which we deal with the things as ready-to-hand. As a matter of fact, in every-day life we are not busy with the 'tools themselves, but with the work we do'. So, Heidegger's analysis comes to the notion of work, that is, the result which is brought by the work we do: "that with which our every-day dealings ... dwell is not the tools themselves, on the contrary, that with which we concern ourselves primarily is the work-that which is to be produced at the time; and this is accordingly ready-to-hand too. The work bears with it that referential totality within which the equipment is encountered."<sup>90</sup>

So, the reflection on the meaning of 'work' fills out the notion of environment and the '*in order to...*'. For example, '*towards-which*' or '*what-for*' refers to the work to be produced, that is a shoe for wearing, a house for living, etc. This, in turn, (i) points further than the present work environment to the larger context of materials, this, then, has to do with the 'wider' environment of animals (needed for leather) and nature (needed for wood), etc. Additionally, (ii) the purpose of the work, the '*where of*' (the purpose of a shoe, of a house). It also points further than the present work environment, it points to the user or the users of the product and material (not only in a domestic world of the workshop, but in the public world too). Again, these expands and makes sense of the surrounding world.

All of the 'set' of relationships, referential totalities, go to make up the environment (Umwelt). And in this environment our relation to things is located, which Heidegger describes as our dealings with things in a circumspective way. Thus, the Being of entities (as they are 'in themselves') involved in this circumspective way is named readiness-to-hand. The problem now is how, how do we grasp these phenomenal structures? How do we become aware of these? How does the readiness-to-hand announce itself (shows itself from itself)? And, if this notion has to do with the world, how does the world announce itself? Heidegger tries to answer these questions in *Being and Time's* section 16 called *How the Worldly Character of the Environmental Announces itself in Entities Within-the-world*.

In the opening paragraphs he discusses the possibility of the 'world' lighting up within Dasein's pre-ontological understanding. And, if this understanding comes about, then it will be possible to hold this phenomenon 'at bay' and study it.<sup>91</sup> According to Heidegger, we need to study particular phenomenal structures in order to see what they 'light up'. Furthermore, this is to be done in a way that we will be able to 'hold on' to what is unrevealed in 'the things themselves'. Consequently, Heidegger comes to examine three structures – all circulating around equipment which becomes un-usuable. The very moment, when we become concerned about equipment's

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

unusability, even though, we were also concerned about its usability (readiness-to-hand) before is of most importance. Now, when something suddenly becomes broken in our work something announces itself. That is, when usability becomes unusable (i.e. unready to hand), we come to see these three ways (or modes) of *how* things announce themselves as themselves. These modes are:

1. Conspicuousness – something becomes damaged. Let's say my computer wire has broken and it just 'lies there'. Here according to Heidegger pure presence-at-hand [Vorhandenheit] announces itself.
2. Obtrusiveness – something damaged becomes noticeable. E.g. a part of a computer is missing which is necessary for it to function, that is, the wire is missing. Here presence-at-hand announces itself too.
3. Obstinance – some reluctance, hindrance – comes into our concern. A new concern 'stands in the way' and demands completion. E.g. without a computer wire I cannot write my thesis.

These modes of 'unhandiness' (conspicuousness, obtrusiveness, obstinance) reveals the structure of presence-at-hand. When our activity is 'broken' in each of these cases, our primary relationship to our concerns or dealings is disturbed. On a certain level in these kind of situations a conflict takes place – the thing which is before us takes the role of the 'mere thing' for a moment. But, still our concern always forces upon it the structure of handiness (Zuhandenheit), although with a short moments of presence-at-hand (Vorhandenheit). This only shows an interconnectedness of the two structures, that one cannot be without another. It also shows that our primary relationship with entities in the world is always rather readiness-to-hand.

When a thing becomes as present-at-hand, it stands apart from any useful set of equipment but soon loses this mode of being present-at-hand and becomes something, for instance, that which must be repaired or replaced. Thus, the world is something “'wherein' Dasein as an entity already *was*, and if in any manner it explicitly comes away from anything, *it can never do more than come back to the world.*”<sup>92</sup> That is, some-thing broken brings us back to the world, because we are concerned about that some-thing getting fixed. Essentially, “Being-in-the-world ... amounts to a non-thematic circumspective absorption in references or assignments constitutive for the readiness-to-hand of a totality of equipment. Any concern is already as it is, because of some familiarity with the world. In this familiarity Dasein can lose itself in what it encounters within-the world and be fascinated with it.”<sup>93</sup>

How can we understand this totality of the entities we find in the world? In the section 17 called *References and Signs*, Heidegger tells that “signs always indicate primarily 'wherein' one

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 106-107.



lives, where one's concern dwells, what sort of involvement there is with something.”<sup>94</sup> And, so “a sign is an item of equipment which explicitly raises a totality of equipment into our circumspection.”<sup>95</sup> For example, a road sign is involved in the equipmental totality of the car (it is parts, engine, tires, basically, what makes the whole car as a car), but a road sign also serves to 'light up' the whole world of transportation (the position of cars, the rules of the road, directions, gas stations, etc.) This (road) sign turns itself to the aroundness of the environment, and by doing so, it announces that environment. So, what signs 'show' us is a *referential totality – worldhood*. Heidegger asserts, that “a sign is something ontically ready-to-hand, for which functions both as this definite equipment and as something indicative of the ontological structure of readiness-to-hand, of referential totalities, and of worldhood.”<sup>96</sup>

When we speak about nature as readiness-to-hand as that is constituted by referential totalities we mean that an item of equipment is involved in these references. The Being of entities within our environment is readiness-to-hand, but what then is the Being of readiness-to-hand? Heidegger tells that it is *Involvement (Bewandtnis)*<sup>97</sup>. “*The Being which belongs to readiness-to-hand is Involvement.*”<sup>98</sup> So, neither equipment nor referential totalities are free floating – they are always involved in something, they are always in a relationship with something. But what is then relationship of reference and involvement? What 'involves' the being of equipment? To understand this better, let's take an example. It is clear that some item of equipment is involved with other equipment (in the referential totality of equipment), but according to Heidegger, it can also be involved in a series of involvement's (in a totality of involvements). Say, a hammer (in-order-to) is involved in making something fast, and that making something fast (towards-which) is involved in protecting the human being (Dasein) against bad weather (for-the-sake-of-which). This example shows that the 'towards-which' of the totality of involvement's gets to a point where we are no longer talking about equipment but of Dasein. That is, the series of involvements that follow from this example: using a hammer, we are hamerring, and making some protection from the bad weather – providing a shelter for Dasein. The Being of readiness-to-hand involving the totality of involvements becomes connected to the Being of Dasein. And as Heidegger claims, when we speak of the totality of involvements, we can also speak about it as the phenomenon of the world: “the

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>97</sup> A commentary on '*Bewandtnis*' from '*Being and Time*' (1962) translators, p. 115: The terms 'Bewenden' and 'Bewandtnis' are among the most difficult for the translator. Their root meaning has to do with the way something is already 'turning' when one lets it 'go its own way', 'run its course', follows 'bent' or 'tendency', or finish 'what it is about', 'what it is up to' or 'what it is involved in'. The reader must bear in mind that the kind of 'involvement' with which we are here concerned is always an involvement in some *activity*, which one is performing, not an involvement in circumstances in which one is 'caught' or 'entangled'.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

“wherein” of an act of understanding which assigns or refers itself, is that for which one lets entities be encountered in the kind of Being that belongs to involvements; and this “wherein” is the phenomenon of the world. And the structure of that to which Dasein assigns itself is what makes up the *worldhood* of the world.”<sup>99</sup>

Furthermore, Heidegger tells that Dasein 'lets something be involved', that is, Dasein 'frees' entities for an involvement, for an appearing in the world. This 'freeing' [Freigabe] has an ontological structure, that is, Dasein has an ability to 'allow' entities to be, to 'free them', to become ready-to-hand.

To Dasein's Being, an understanding of Being belongs. Any understanding has its Being in an act of understanding. If Being-in-the-world is a kind of Being which is essentially befitting to Dasein, then to understand Being-in-the-world belongs to the essential for content of its understanding of Being. The previous disclosure of that for which what we encounter within-the-world is subsequently freed,' amounts to nothing else than understanding the world-that world towards which Dasein as an entity always comports itself.<sup>100</sup>

This kind of allowing (or 'freeing') has its ground in Dasein's understanding. Only because there is Dasein, can there 'be' the Being. Since Dasein is a ground for the Being, in turn, with this, Dasein is a ground for the 'world' disclosure through the involvements in the world. Although, in our everyday dealings (concerns) we already encounter entities that have already been freed within an environment before us, and, thus we are absorbed within a totality of involvement's. We are not that much a ground of the world, but rather as *in the world*, as Dasein, as mortal disclosers of the world. What we have to bear in mind here is (i) the fact that Dasein does not spontaneously 'world' and still (ii) Dasein is the ground for the world (as a referential totality) and, how do these come together? Simply, just by saying (iii) that the world (as totality of involvement's) is that wherein Dasein understandingly comports ( or conducts) itself.

To sum up, we can see that (i) Dasein is grounded in-the world and at the same time (ii) is a ground of the world, and (the world is a totality constituted by the totality of involvements. But, nevertheless, the constitution of involvement's ('letting something be involved') is generated by Dasein (Dasein's very existence is constituting worldhood). So, (i) Dasein's very existence presupposes the world, that is, Dasein exists as being in-the-world, but yet, (ii) this existence constitutes the world. In existing Dasein is always already in the world and yet, in existing, unfolds worldhood. This is the dual relation of Dasein and World (*Welt*). Let me illustrate this forward-

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

backward relationship of Dasein and world by using an improved example from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

Heidegger points out that involvements are not similar structures. I am currently working with a computer (a *with-which*), in the practical context of my academic career (an *in-which*), in order to write this thesis paper (an *in-order-to*), which is aimed towards presenting Heidegger's philosophy (a *towards-which*), for the sake of my academic work, that is, for the sake of finishing my master's thesis and being an academic or a good student (a *for-the-sake-of-which*) in the future. The final involvement here, *the for-the-sake-of-which*, is crucial, because according to Heidegger all totalities of involvements have a link of this type at their base. This forges a connection between (i) the idea that each moment in Dasein's existence constitutes a branch-point at which it chooses a way to be, and (ii) the claim that Dasein's projects and possibilities are essentially bound up with the ways in which other entities may become intelligible. This is because every *for-the-sake-of-which* is the base structure of an equipment-defining totality of involvements *and* reflects a possible way for Dasein to be (a student, an academic, a carpenter, a parent, or whatever).<sup>101</sup>

Moreover, given that entities are understandable only within contexts of activity that, so to speak, arrive with Dasein, this helps to explain Heidegger's claim that, "in encounters with entities, the world is something with which Dasein is always already familiar with."<sup>102</sup> But, say, if my computer by some accident crashes, I become aware of it as an entity with which I was working in the practical context of my career, in order to write a master thesis aimed at presenting Heidegger's philosophy. And I become aware of the fact that my behavior is being organized for the sake of my being a good student or an academic in the future. So, disturbances have the effect of exposing totalities of involvements and, therefore, worlds.

These worlds or the network of the worlds come to comprise what Heidegger calls the *worldhood of the world*, where every-thing is in one or another way related. As Dreyfus and Spinoza reckons "our nature is to be world disclosers. That is, by means of our equipment and coordinated practices we human beings open coherent and distinct contexts or worlds in which we perceive, feel, act, and think."<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Taken and edited from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, an article on [Heidegger](#). This example clearly shows the structure of interrelatedness of things in the world.

<sup>102</sup> BT, p. 107.

<sup>103</sup> Dreyfus, Hubert and Charles Spinoza. 'Further Reflections on Heidegger, Technology and the Everyday', in Nikolas Kompridis, ed. *Philosophical Romanticism*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 265.

What worlds do we open up in our technological age? Has not the world become more virtual than ever and dehumanized us? In the following chapter, I will try to figure out what should be our relationship to technologies? How do technologies change our ways of being-in-the-world?

## 2. Being in the World of Technologies

### 2. 1. Heidegger and Question Concerning Technologies

I like my new telephone, my computer works just fine, my calculator is perfect, but Lord, I miss my mind!  
(Author unknown)

This is perhaps the most beautiful time in human history; it is really pregnant with all kinds of creative possibilities made possible by science and technology which now constitute the slave of man – if man is not enslaved by it.  
(Jonas Salk)<sup>104</sup>

We are living in the world when everything around us in one way or another is technologized, optimized, made to be efficient. We are surrounded by modern (higher or lower<sup>105</sup>) technologies which help to live an enhanced, optimized, ordered and easier life with maximal efficiency. Can we imagine our lives without Internet<sup>106</sup>, computer or mobile phone? Probably not. Not anymore. Are we not bounded by technologies<sup>107</sup> in the sense that we can not be without them? Probably, yes, we cannot. Does not our dependence on technologies signify the essential forgetfulness of being-in-the-world, lostness of being? Are we at all aware, conscious and reflective about this lostness? Probably not. We rather stay online, instead of staying outside. These are my questions in this chapter. I will attempt to discuss what our relationship with technologies can be, in the light of Heidegger's text *Question Concerning Technologies (Die Frage nach der Technik)*. How can we remain humans in the technological age?

Modern technologies reduce distances in space and time to the minimum, we can reach other

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<sup>104</sup> Jonas Salk was a medical researcher and author, the inventor of the Salk vaccine against poliomyelitis. The source of the quotation is unknown.

<sup>105</sup> Technologies capable of operating without user knowledge or consent are rated as *higher* – all kind of mechanisms, such like Internet, computers, etc.; technologies that only operate with user consent are rated *lower* – Internet, tools, crafts, etc. It is pretty interesting that Internet has to do with the both categories, higher and lower; it seems that it does not need user operating, Internet somehow operates passively in between it is own realm, but at the same time Internet requires an active user who needs to act upon and within it, that is, one who actively maintains and uses it.

<sup>106</sup> Interesting fact to think about – the Internet or World Wide Web of computer networks was launched nearly 50 years ago by the Pentagon (United States Department of Defense).

<sup>107</sup> The word “technology” derives from the Greek word τέχνη. Greek word *technē* is not tied up to any specific activity and means a special mastery, knowledge, intelligence and even a jockey. Therefore, this word was used from the craftsmen to higher art. In the classical Greek language it can be encountered such expressions as craftsman technology, medical technology, engineering technology, machinery technology, and even technology of love. Greek thinkers sought to define *technē* among other human knowledge and activities.

parts of the world in a few hours by planes, we can use the Internet connection to talk to our loved-ones wherever they are, we can even use the Global Positioning System (GPS)<sup>108</sup> to orient in an environment without any considerable involvement from our part. Because of this shrinking of distances, thanks to the growth of technologies – physical walls of countries have collapsed, the world has become one *global village*.<sup>109</sup> Although Marshall McLuhan's prophesy came true, Heidegger in 1971 wrote, that though the new technologies of communication shrink distances, yet, “the frantic abolition of all distance brings us no nearness. Short distance is not nearness. Nor is great distance remoteness. Place is reduced to spatial position and being is forgotten.”<sup>110</sup>

The enormous popularity and usage of computers and phones changed our lives in such an extent that we cannot imagine living our lives without these devices anymore. In some way we are pushed to use these technological devices, because it is our lifestyle now. Because of this we come to inevitably face negative side effects: the memory of a human beings deteriorates, a human body stagnates, the importance of being outside rather than online vanishes. Although, in our eyes technology makes mainly a positive outcome as it shrinks categories of space and time, and gives the credentials to our lives, but technology surely has a negative effect, whose *danger* is somewhat concealed and unrevealed.<sup>111</sup>

When reflecting the relevance of technology in modern era one needs to observe the ambiguous – dangerous and saving, positive and negative – nature of technology. Twenty-first century can be described as the age of technologies, and it can be identified as the most important discussion object of our times. Technologies are transforming our everyday world, values, attitudes, lifestyle, culture, so, our very reality. Therefore, we can say that modern technological devices have somewhat turned into beings which are 'alive' virtual beings, because they surrounds us everywhere we go (especially – computers and phones). On the other hand, technologies are not so important because of the quantitative changes and devices themselves, but for the *qualitative* changes in our lives. Especially if we consider Internet, we can see that it has an enormous impact on our way of living.<sup>112</sup>

It is our *ontological* situation that is changing rapidly as we are the ones who experience the

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<sup>108</sup> The Global Positioning System (GPS) is a space-based satellite navigation system that provides location and time information in all weather, anywhere on or near the Earth, where there is an unobstructed line of sight to four or more GPS satellites. Source: Wikipedia.

<sup>109</sup> Global Village is a term coined by Marshall McLuhan and popularized in his books *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964). McLuhan described how the globe has been contracted into a village by electric technology. Source: Wikipedia.

<sup>110</sup> Heidegger, M. *The Thing*, in 'Poetry, Language, Thought', trans. A. Hofstadter (New York: Harper&Row, 1971), p. 165.

<sup>111</sup> On this issue in the light of Heidegger later.

<sup>112</sup> I am not talking about technology from a bitter conservative attitude perspective. I do not proclaim refusing of technologies. Rather, I am trying to find is it possible to gain a free relation to technology. On this issue in the 5th section of my thesis.

raise and fall of technology, and we are the ones who use technology for our well-being. Generally speaking, we are *essentially* thrown into the world of technologies. Can we still remain free from being-in-the-world-of-technologies or not? If at all, probably it is inescapable. But do we really experience the true essence of technology? And what is the essence of technology at all? What is to live in the world of technologies? These are my concerns. Probably none can deny the importance of speaking on technologies, because we have to deal with them in our everyday lives. What should our relationship to technologies be then?

Heidegger is widely recognized as one of the founding figures in this more and more important philosophical ground on technologies. But the field has changed a great deal since, nevertheless, Heidegger seems to be very relevant in questioning the essence of [modern] technology. However Ian Thomson the author of “Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education”, notes that “Heidegger’s critique of technology is not primarily concerned with particular technological devices, but rather with *ontological technologization*, that is, with the disturbing and increasingly global phenomenon – manifest with particular clarity in exemplary technological devices like the autobahn and Internet, and so rightly called “technological” – by which entities are transformed into intrinsically meaningless resources standing by for optimization...”<sup>113</sup>

How, indeed, is our Being-in-the-world is changing because of technologies? What is the essence of technology and what does it conceal from us, according to Heidegger? I will mainly discuss Heidegger's account on modern technology.

Now that the path is at least a little bit clear, let's go to the main field of interest. What does Heidegger really mean by “the essence of technology”? What is Heidegger exactly having in mind with the essence of technology? It is quite interesting that in the first pages Heidegger says that “the essence of technology is by no means anything technological.”<sup>114</sup> It seems that Heidegger is not seeking a definition of technological devices and the way they work since it leaves us blind to the essence of technology. The question cannot also be answered only by defining solely the concept of 'technology', rather it reveals itself and is therefore reachable through as step by step process of reaching the roots of the phenomenon. According to Heidegger, “the essence of technology is by no means anything technological. Thus we shall never experience our relationship to the essence of technology so long as we merely represent and pursue the technological, put up with it, or evade it. *Everywhere we remain unfree and chained to technology, whether we passionately affirm or deny it. But we are delivered over to it in the worst possible way when we regard it as something neutral;*

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<sup>113</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education' (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 45. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>114</sup> Heidegger, Question Concerning Technologies (QCT), p. 4.

for this Conception of it, to which today we particularly like to pay homage, makes us utterly blind to the essence of technology.<sup>115</sup>

As noted, ontological (essential) chaining to technology comes before anything technological or any device whatsoever. This is what Heidegger has in mind. We are chained to technology in such a way that we can not properly observe it, that is, we remain blind to the essence of technology, especially, if we take it as something neutral. Going back to history might help us to find an answer to the question what is the essence of technology. And so, finding a possible answer leads to the ancient doctrines where the essence of technology was understood in two ways: (i) technology as a means to an end; and (ii) technology as a human activity. Heidegger notes that these two definitions of technology belong together in a sense that means and tools are made by man and used by man to produce some-thing. They belong to what technology is. Consequently, Heidegger states that “technology itself is a contrivance, or in Latin, an *instrumentum*.”<sup>116</sup>

Accordingly, the *instrumental* definition of technology is so correct that it even fits to modern technology, *but* in contrast to the old handwork technology, the modern technologies raises as something totally *different* and *new*. The being of the modern technologies is totally mysterious and unknown. For example, Internet can be certainly considered as a mean to an end, that is, one can reach other parts of the world in a few seconds, look for information, etc. Or one can use Internet as a tool for creating software which can ensure efficiency of some machine. Therefore the modern technology is also means to an end, but we should use them in the 'popper manner as means', because “everything depends on our manipulating technology in the proper manner as a means. We will, as we say, 'get' technology 'intelligently in hand'. We will master it. The will to mastery becomes all the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control.”<sup>117</sup>

Heidegger fears that technology might slip away from the human control. Because mastery of technology, on one hand belongs to the human being when he uses technology as a tool (a hammer to make a shelter for Dasein) but on the other hand, technology can slip from human control when 'independent' mechanisms are created. Again, the phenomenon of Internet is a very suitable example here. It seems that the user of Internet has 'full' control of it, but yet Internet in some way works independently and separately from the user. Internet provides us with many different possibilities (working, shopping, playing, etc.). Internet is altogether – there and not-there, existent and non-existent – some kind of 'virtual-being-in-the-world'. What does the Internet reveal, if anything? What kind of being-in-the-world it brings us? We can certainly speak about the Internet as the source of information, communication and socialization, but what lies beneath it? As a matter

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<sup>115</sup> QCT, p. 4. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.



of fact, this Internet-ic communication and socialization does not happen anymore in reality, but in some other realm beyond time and space. Although, Dalius Jonkus in his article *(Un)real Reality* notes, that “we live in a more complex world where reality is one of many existential realms which could not be understood without imagining.”<sup>118</sup> And, Internet is one of the realms which opens up a wide the space for imagining. But, in this sense Internet is totally ambivalent as it does not give a clear meaning of its essence. For sure we can describe Internet's working in technical-mechanical terms, but perhaps we can not explain what is the ontology of the Internet? What is this 'being on the Internet'? Does Internet have a separate being and separate ontology? Although it is clear and nonnegotiable that Internet is just an instrument to fulfill some further needs of man. But does it not 'threaten to slip from human control'? Because it is true that Internet along with other technologies has recently overtaken a large portion of our everyday activities. To name just a few examples: communication and socialization (facebook vs. face-to-face), information (news portals vs. news papers), knowledge (e-books vs. books; distant or online learning vs. present classroom learning), spatial orientation (compass, map vs. gps), meaningless passive virtual vegetation in front of the screen vs. actively skillful involvement in the surrounding life. It is our body essentially which loses the possibility to engage more actively in life because of Internet. Hubert Dreyfus in his book *On the Internet* pretty much sums it up:

Our body, including our emotions and moods play a crucial role in our being able to make sense of things so as to see what is relevant, our ability to let things matter to us and so to acquire skills, our sense of the reality of things, our trust in other people, and, our capacity for making the unconditional commitments that give a fixed meaning to our lives, and finally the capacity to cultivate the intercorporeality that makes possible meaningful focal events. It would be a serious mistake to think we could do without these embodied capacities – to rejoice that the World Wide Web offers us the chance to become more and more disembodied, detached, ubiquitous minds leaving our situated, vulnerable bodies behind. The increased disembodiment of information leads to difficult trade-offs.<sup>119</sup>

Dreyfus refers to the loss of meaning in our technical lives, namely, loss of engagement in the local events, loss of being bodily creatures. Basically, our addictive behavior towards technology kills intercorporeality. In certain sense, we become instruments to the technology.

However knowing that [modern] technology is unquestionably instrumental and it can move out of our control, in addition to being means to an end reasoning, it nevertheless does not unravel

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<sup>118</sup> Jonkus, Dalius. (Ne)tikra tikrovė, (VDU žurnalas „Sesija“, Nr. 1 „Vaizduotė“), p. 13.

<sup>119</sup> Dreyfus, Hubert. *On the Internet (Thinking in Action)*, 2nd edition (Routledge, 2009), p. 121.

the real essence of technology. What is left to ask is “what is the instrumental itself?”<sup>120</sup> Here Heidegger turns to the history of philosophy and says that “wherever ends are pursued and means are employed, wherever instrumentality reigns, there reigns causality.”<sup>121</sup> It means that instrumentality depends on four historically “approved” causes of means:

- (1) *the causa materialis* – the material, the matter out of which, for example, a *silver* ring is made.
- (2) *the causa formulis* – the form, the shape into which the material enters; it turns into the *ring*.
- (3) *the causa finalis* – the end, for instance, it can be the *wedding* ring.
- (4) *the causa efficiens*, which brings about the effect that is the finished (actual ring) in this regard, the silversmith.

So, basically, “what technology is, when represented as a means, discloses itself when we trace instrumentality back to fourfold causality”, but Heidegger wonders “why are there only four causes” and “what “cause” really mean?”<sup>122</sup> These questions about causality and instrumentality shall still remain groundless and obscure and they are not so important in the end, because it does not bring the answer to the main issue about the “essence of technology”. What we have to take into account here is that these four causes are interdependent on one another and responsible for bringing some-thing into appearance on its own way, from non-being into being, to shining-forth. These causes “let it come forth into presencing. They set it free to that place and so start it on its way, namely, into its complete arrival. The principal characteristic of being responsible is this starting something on its way into arrival.”<sup>123</sup>

Here, it is important to notice that Heidegger considers the ethical category *responsibility*. Man is deeply responsible for the act of (beings) arrival, and therefore causality, i.e. bringing something into Being, giving an occasion to appear in the world.<sup>124</sup> Hence, man is responsible for 'occasioning' (Ver-an-lassen), that is letting 'what is not yet present arrive into presencing.'<sup>125</sup> For example, the idea of silver ring in the head of silversmith is an occasion for the idea (-material-shape) of ring to appear into the actual, real silver ring. Silversmith is responsible and indebted for bringing-forth, because he gives an occasion for some-thing (through the sequence of four causes) to appear and at the same time he is indebted, because he has gotten the present of 'occasioning'. So, speaking in Heideggerian terms, “every occasion for whatever passes over and goes forward into

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<sup>120</sup> QCT, p. 6.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>124</sup> In *Being and Time* Heidegger was talking about Being-in-the-world as an involvement (Bewandnis). As we constitute the world and the world constitutes us, we should bear this ability of ours to be involved and to bring-forth from concealment into unconcealment as a very responsible and nonetheless care-ful.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

presencing from that which is not presencing is, is *bringing-forth* (*Her-vor-bringen*).<sup>126</sup>

Thinking of bringing-forth on its full range and in Greek sense as *poiēsis* is a question of vital importance. But not only hand-made products, not only poetic or artistic bringing into appearance should be considered as bringing-forth, *poiēsis*, but also *physis* shall be considered *poiēsis*, because it is 'poiēsis in the highest sense' in a way that it is 'the arising of something from out of itself.' For instance, a flower comes into blooming by itself and it is the *poiēsis* of nature in the highest sense. In contrast to the poetry of nature, what is brought forth by the craftsman or an artist, e.g., the silver ring, "has the interruption belonging to bringing-forth, not in itself, but in another way of the craftsman or artist."<sup>127</sup>

In other words, there are two ways of bringing-forth beings into Being: (i) a way of an artist or a craftsman (a human being) and (ii) a way of nature (nature announcing itself through itself). Although, the latter in some sense also comes through the human being who has an occasion to experience appearance, presencing. Namely, the human being is the one who announces *physis* appearing. Anyway, both of these ways for Heidegger is revealing and disclosing of Being. Heidegger goes further and asks how does this bringing-forth happen whether it is in nature or in handicraft or art? Namely, "occasioning has to do with the presencing (*Anwesen*) of that which at any given time comes to appearance in bringing-forth."<sup>128</sup> What bring-forth does is: "it brings out of concealment into unconcealment, bringing-forth propriates only insofar as something concealed comes into unconcealment."<sup>129</sup> And, this arrival from concealment into unconcealment "rests and moves freely within what we call revealing (*das Entbergen*)."<sup>130</sup> Heidegger explains, that "the Greeks have the word *aletheia* for revealing. The Romans translate this with *veritas*. We say "truth" and usually understand it as correctness of representation."<sup>131</sup>

From what was said it is clear that bringing-forth has to do with revealing, i.e. coming from concealment into unconcealment, from hiddenness to shining, from non-being into Being. The correctnesses of representation brings out the *aletheia* or unconcealedness.<sup>132</sup> Here the new realm of understanding the essence technology arrives. Technology now can be understood as the bringing-forth. But what the essence of technology has to do with revealing? Heidegger puts it simply: *everything*. Mainly, because "every bringing-forth is grounded in revealing. Bringing-forth, indeed,

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid., p. 10. *Her-vor-bringen* in ordinary German means 'to create', 'to produce', but literally it can also mean 'to give birth', 'to call forth', 'to send forth', 'to bring-forth'. Heidegger chooses the latter meanings.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 10-11.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Heidegger brings renewed attention to the concept of *aletheia*, by relating it to the notions of 'disclosure' and 'truth', or the way in which things appear as entities in the world. While literally in Greek the word *ἀ-λήθεια* means 'the state of not being hidden', 'the state of being evident' or 'factual', 'real'.

gathers within itself the four modes of occasioning – causality – and rules them throughout. Within its domain belong end and means as well as instrumentality. Instrumentality is considered to be the fundamental characteristic of technology. If we inquire step by step into what technology, represented as means, actually is, then we shall arrive at revealing. *The possibility of all productive manufacturing lies in revealing.*<sup>133</sup>

Technology can now be understood not just as mere means or as instrumentality, but as a way of revealing. Revealing is a possibility for something to arrive. Strangely enough, as Heidegger says, technology can also 'arrive at revealing'. But, where does this leads us to? Ian Thomson observes that “Heidegger suggests that we should understand the emergence of “technology” in terms of its (more than two millennia) history, as an eventual eclipse of *poiēsis*, bringing into being, by one of its species, *technē*, a making which imposes a pre-given form on matter, regardless of its intrinsic potentialities.”<sup>134</sup> It comes out that eventually 'poetical', non-instrumental, understanding of the Being has decreased in the emergence of technologies. Modern technology is device-based, machine-based technology and those apparatuses it entails fail to be poetic. And thus modern technologies are something incomparably different from all earlier technologies, because they are based on new sciences (of information, communications, engineering, etc.). But what truly is modern technology then? Heidegger says that it is revealing too, but with one crucial condition 'that which is new shows itself to us'. As Heidegger puts it, modern technology “is a revealing too, only when we allow our attention to rest on this fundamental characteristic does *that which is new in modern technology show itself to us.*”<sup>135</sup> But what is *new* in the modern technology? It is not *poiēsis* anymore. This revealing which is happening in our era is *challenging*. It is not bringing-forth – it is challenging-forth: “revealing that holds sway throughout modern technology does not unfold into a bringing-forth in the sense of *poiēsis* – the revealing that rules in modern technology is a *challenging* (*Herausfordern*)<sup>136</sup> – which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy which can be extracted and stored as such.”<sup>137</sup>

We see that modern technology is considered as challenging-forth-Being. Modern technologies do not bring-forth *aletheia* anymore. Comparing it to the windmill which gives energy in a donating way (as a gift of nature), modern revealing that rules throughout our world has totally another character than the ancient one.<sup>138</sup> What happens today is setting-upon, ordering, and

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education', p. 48.

<sup>135</sup> QCT, p. 14. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>136</sup> *Herausfordern* also means 'to provoke', 'to defy'. Heidegger plays with the double meaning of the word.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>138</sup> On the same page Heidegger comments on the windmill. According to Heidegger, windmill is not challenging-forth, although, “its sails do indeed turn in the wind; they are left entirely to the wind's blowing. But the windmill does not unlock energy from the air currents in order to store it.”

consequently challenging-forth. Heidegger elaborates that, “such challenging happens in that the energy concealed in nature is unlocked, what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is stored up is in turn distributed, and what is distributed is switched about ever anew. *Unlocking, transforming, storing, distributing, and switching about are ways of revealing.* But the revealing never simply comes to an end. Neither does it run off into the indeterminate. The revealing reveals to itself its own manifoldly interlocking paths, through regulating their course. This regulating itself is, for its part, everywhere secured. *Regulating and securing* even become the chief characteristics of the revealing that challenges.”<sup>139</sup>

Additionally, this challenging of Being is never ending. It takes every thing for granted: it unlocks, transforms, stores distributes, uses up until maximum. The withdrawal of the so called black gold, oil, is a very a good case to imagine what Heidegger is talking about. The oil is taken from the deepness of the earth, it is being unlocked, transformed to some other oil products, stored for transportation, distributed to buyers and secured for the future selling. Plus, oil platforms pollute the oceans and seas of our world. It is obvious that our world is challenged-forth in so many inconceivable ways. Nevertheless, it does not ever stop.

Heidegger called this ordering tendency towards the world *standing-reserve* (Bestand)<sup>140</sup>: “everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering. ... We call it the *standing-reserve* [Bestand].”<sup>141</sup> This name presumes all encompassing ordering, it also “designates nothing less than the way in which everything presences that is wrought upon by the challenging revealing. Whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as object.”<sup>142</sup> According to Heidegger, the subject-object distinction loses its relevance, in a sense that everything becomes only subject-like, i.e. it depends on man and his power over the world. Man turns the world to the subject of challenging. That is, man orders world in a way he wants, thus world becomes nothing more than a reserve of resources to be challenged: “who accomplishes the challenging setting-upon through which what we call the actual is revealed as standing-reserve? Obviously, man. To what extent is man capable of such a revealing? Man can indeed conceive, fashion, and carry through this or that in one way or another. But man does not have control over unconcealment itself, in which at any given time the actual shows itself or withdraws.”<sup>143</sup>

As Heidegger puts it, man does not have any power of unconcealment itself, because it does not merely depend on man's power. But for the fact that man drives technology forward, man is

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p. 16. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>140</sup> *Bestand* also means 'stock', 'holding', 'assets', but Heidegger uses 'standing-reserve' more often.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

more challenged than the resources of world. Thus, man 'takes part in ordering as a way of revealing.'<sup>144</sup> In this way, man becomes hugely responsible as he is the part of revealing. Although “the unconcealment itself, within which ordering unfolds, is never a human handiwork, any more than is the realm man traverses every time he as a subject relates to an object.”<sup>145</sup> George Steiner explains what Heidegger bears in mind very clearly:

True art, true knowledge, true technique are a “vocation”, a “calling forth” that imposes upon man his native “calling.” Since Roman engineering and seventeenth-century rationalism, Western technology has not been a vocation but a provocation an imperialism. Man challenges nature, he harnesses it, he compels his will on wind and water, on mountain and woodland. The results have been fantastic. Heidegger knows this: he is no Luddite<sup>146</sup> innocent or pastoralist dropout. What he is emphasizing is the price paid. Things, with their intimate, collaborative affinity with creation, have been demeaned into objects. <...> We have compelled nature to yield knowledge and energy, but we have given to nature, to that which is live and hidden within it, no patient hearing, no in-dwelling. Thus our technologies mask Being instead of bringing it to light.<sup>147</sup>

We can see that the modern technologies provoke an imperialize worl in an enormous extent. But where does this lead us to? Does this really 'mask Being'? Not only. Namely, “the modern technology, as a revealing that orders, is thus no merely human doing”<sup>148</sup>, it is “the challenging that sets upon man to order the actual as standing-reserve in accordance with the way it shows itself. That challenging gathers man into ordering. This gathering concentrates man upon ordering the actual as standing-reserve.”<sup>149</sup> Heidegger call this “challenging claim that gathers man with a view to ordering the self-revealing as standing-reserve”<sup>150</sup> – *Enframing* [Ge-stell]. Enframing means a challenge to reveal what is there actual “in the mode of ordering.” Altogether, “*enframing means the way of revealing that holds sway in the essence of modern technology and that is itself nothing technological.*”<sup>151</sup> From this it follows that the “essence of modern technology shows itself in what we call enframing.”<sup>152</sup> Enframing is indeed a mysterious concept to interpret and understand. According to Ian Thomson, “Heidegger employs the polysemic term 'Gestell' to name the onto-theological essence of technology because, by etymologically connoting a gathering

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> The one who is afraid of technologies, one who is against to the technological change, or in other words, technophobic.

<sup>147</sup> Steiner, George. *Martin Heidegger*. (Chicago University Press , 1991), p. 139.

<sup>148</sup> QCT, p. 18.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

together (“Ge-”) of the myriad forms of *stellen* (“to set, stand, regulate, secure, ready, establish,” and so on), it succinctly conveys his understanding of the way in which our present “mode of revealing” – a “setting-upon that challenges forth” – forces the “presencing” (*Anwesen*) of entities into its metaphysical “stamp or mold [*Pröfung*].”<sup>153</sup> So, Heidegger uses this word – enframing – to the certain human orientation towards the world that constitutes the essence of technology.

But where do we locate enframing? Heidegger says that 'enframing reveals itself as a standing-reserve': “*It is nothing technological, nothing on the order of a machine.* It is the way in which the actual *reveals itself as standing-reserve*. Again we ask: Does such revealing happen somewhere beyond all human doing? No. But neither does it happen exclusively in man, or definitively through man.”<sup>154</sup> But where does it truly happen when?

It becomes clear that technology is fundamentally enframing and it is 'nothing technological', nor it happens 'in man' or 'through man'. It is something more mysterious than we can think of. It happens in some other realm. Moreover, man can never take up a relationship to enframing, because we are all already thrown into the world of technologies. On the other hand, it depends on us, if our *activities* are challenged forth by enframing. It is on our behalf, if we let enframing come to presence. Heidegger elaborates on the essence of enframing more:

“enframing is the gathering together that belongs to that setting-upon which sets upon man and puts him in position to reveal the real, in the mode of ordering, as standing-reserve. As the one who is challenged forth in this way, man stands within the essential realm of enframing. *He can never take up a relationship to it only subsequently*. Thus the question as to how we are to arrive at a relationship to the essence of technology, asked in this way, always comes too late. But never too late comes the question as to whether we actually experience ourselves as the ones whose activities everywhere, public and private, are challenged forth by Enframing. Above all, never too late comes the question as to whether and how we actually admit ourselves into that wherein Enframing itself comes to presence.”<sup>155</sup>

Heidegger claims that it depends only on us, men, whether we will question technologies or not. It depends on our reflection, if we going to arrive at free relationship with technologies. And so, “the essence of modern technology starts man upon the way of that revealing through which the real everywhere, more or less distinctly, becomes standing-reserve. ... We shall call that sending-that-gathers which first starts man upon a way of revealing, destining [*Geschick*]<sup>156</sup>. ... Enframing, as a

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<sup>153</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education', p. 53.

<sup>154</sup> QCT, p. 23. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p. 24. Emphasis added by me.

<sup>156</sup> *Geschick* means 'destiny' or 'fate.' Again, Heidegger is relying on associations between terms. In German the terms 'destiny' [*geschick*] and fate [*shicksal*] have an etymological relation to the verb 'to send' [*schicken*]. So, we can come to the conclusion that that which is revealed through destiny is sent (by Being).

challenging-forth into ordering, sends into a way of revealing. *Enframing is an ordaining of destining, as is every way of revealing.*<sup>157</sup>

That is, we are the ones who are building up our history. And, it is our task to be more aware about technological thinking overcoming us. Enframing has to do with destining, with guiding some-thing to come into presence through ordering, and ordering becomes the revealing. “Always the destining of revealing holds complete sway over men. But that destining is never a fate that compels. *For man becomes truly free only insofar as he belongs to the realm of destining and so becomes one who listens, though not one who simply obeys.*”<sup>158</sup> We should rather be-alongside-Being and listen, since obeying is simple. Ian Thomson asserts on this issue: “as this historical transformation of beings into intrinsically meaningless resources becomes more pervasive, it comes ever more to elude our critical gaze; indeed, we late moderns come to treat even ourselves in the nihilistic terms that underlie our technological refashioning of the world: no longer as conscious subjects standing over against an objective world (as in the modern worldview Heidegger already criticized in *Being and Time*), but merely as one more intrinsically meaningless resource to be optimized, ordered, and enhanced with maximal efficiency, whether cosmetically, psychopharmacologically, genetically, or even cybernetically.”<sup>159</sup>

Ian Thomson along with Heidegger proclaims the need for a critical gaze in the technological world. It is only us who can take care of Being in the technological age. On the other hand, it may seem now that modern technology comparing to the old-fashioned hand-craftsmanship can be evil, but it also has a 'freeing claim', which lies in the very essence of technology. We can see this 'freeing claim' through the destining of technology: “in this way we are already sojourning within the free space of destining, a destining that in no way confines us to a stultified compulsion to push on blindly with technology or, what comes to the same, to rebel helplessly against it and curse it as the work of the devil. *Quite to the contrary, when we once open ourselves expressly to the essence of technology we find ourselves unexpectedly taken into a freeing claim.*”<sup>160</sup>

We have a freeing claim once we open ourselves to the essence of technology. That is, once we become more aware, more questioning about its essence and we consider other ways of revealing. Furthermore, once we have a destiny to reveal and bring things into presence, we are playing with the danger, even 'danger as such'. Nonetheless when destining reigns in the way of

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., p. 24-25.

<sup>159</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education', p. 56-57.

<sup>160</sup> QCT, p. 26. Emphasis added by me.



enframing, it is supremely dangerous. Heidegger notes that this danger attests itself to us in two ways:

1. As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but exclusively as standing-reserve, and “man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the standing-reserve, then he comes to the very brink of a precipitous fall; that is, *he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing-reserve.*”<sup>161</sup>
2. Meanwhile, man, precisely as the one so threatened, exalts himself and postures as a supreme ruler of all creation. In this way the illusion comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is constructed by him. “This illusion gives rise in turn to one final delusion: *it seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself.*”<sup>162</sup>

Ian Thomson comments on this: “Heidegger thinks this enframing could effect and enforce that double forgetting in which we lose sight of our distinctive capacity for world disclosure *and* forget that anything has thus been forgotten. The danger, as he provocatively puts it, is that we could become so *satiated* by the endless possibilities for flexible self-optimization opened up by treating our worlds and ourselves as resources to be optimized that we could lose the very sense that anything is lost with such a self-understanding... This helps explain the later Heidegger’s strange and seemingly paradoxical claim that the “greatest danger” is to be found in the “authentic need” of “needlessness”, his idea that we live in the age of greatest need precisely insofar as we experience ourselves as not needing anything at all.”<sup>163</sup>

Following Ian Thomson, we could say that the need of the newest technological devices is just another mask worn by the present world. It is just a mindless consumption.<sup>164</sup> Thus, it goes that what is dangerous and mysterious are not technological devices, but instead it is threatening character towards the essence of human. Although it has already affected the man. Heidegger adds: *„technology is not demonic; but its essence is mysterious.* The essence of technology, as a destining of revealing, is the danger. The threat to man does not come in the first instance from the potentially lethal machines and apparatus of technology. The actual threat has already afflicted man in his essence. *The rule of enframing threatens man with the possibility that it could be denied to him to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth.*”<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>163</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education', p. 57.

<sup>164</sup> Heidegger attacks consumerism during the war, by saying that “the circularity of consumption for the sake of consumption is the sole procedure which distinctively characterizes the history of a world which has become an unworld.” (Overcoming Metaphysics. The End of Philosophy (New York: Harper&Row, 1973), p. 107).

<sup>165</sup> QCT, p. 28. Emphasis added by me.

The enframing which happens in modern technology hence is denying for us the possibility to enter into more original, authentic revealing. Then, enframing as the essence of the modern technology, prevents man from more primordial revealing which is a non-instrumental one. Heidegger thus approaches technology not as “a problem for which we must find a solution [which would be a technological approach], but [rather as] an ontological condition that requires a *transformation of our understanding of being*.”<sup>166</sup>

Luckily enough nothing is lost, because “*we look into the danger and see the growth of saving power*.”<sup>167</sup> Although, if we know that, we are still not saved. But how can this *saving* happen? Heidegger answers: “here and now and in little things, that we may foster the saving power in its increase. This includes holding always before our eyes the extreme danger.”<sup>168</sup> Accordingly, “human activity can never directly counter this danger. Human achievement alone can never banish it. *But human reflection can ponder the fact that all saving power must be of a higher essence than what is endangered, though at the same time kindred to it*.”<sup>169</sup>

Much more than human activity, human reflection can weigh on the danger which lies in technology. And yet we should pay attention to the way that Greeks understand technology. It is the Greek understanding of the technology where Heidegger wants to take us. He says that “there was a time when it was not technology alone that bore the name *technē*. Once that revealing that brings forth truth into the splendor of radiant appearing also was called *technē*. Once there was a time when the bringing-forth of the true into the beautiful was called *technē*. And the *poiēsis* of the fine arts also was called *technē*. In Greece, at the outset of the destining of the West, the arts soared to the supreme height of the revealing granted them. They brought the presence of the gods, brought the dialogue of divine and human destinings, to radiance. And art was simply called *technē*. It was a single, manifold revealing.”<sup>170</sup>

Back then technologies revealed Being in a manifold way, their essence was not that much challenging and difficult as it is with the modern technologies. Since the essence of modern technologies is enframing, the poetic understanding of it just fades away. Heidegger embraces the notion when art still held the modest name of *technē*, “because it was a revealing that brought forth and hither, and therefore belonged within *poiēsis*. It was finally that revealing which holds complete sway in all the fine arts, in poetry, and in everything poetical that obtained *poiēsis* as its proper name.”<sup>171</sup> Heidegger gladly announces this new possibility for modern technology, namely, that “the

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<sup>166</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education', p. 63.

<sup>167</sup> QCT, p. 33.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 33-34.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

frenziedness of technology may entrench itself everywhere to such an extent that someday, throughout everything technological, the essence of technology may unfold essentially in the propriative event of truth.”<sup>172</sup>

Heidegger is hoping that someday 'the essence of technology' will unfold itself in the event of truth'. That is the truth must shine throughout everything technological but in a way Greeks thought about. For Greeks, as Heidegger showed, technology was bringing-forth and revealing of that what is still hidden (when *technē* still meant *poiēsis* and the other way round). And, since “the essence of technology is nothing technological, essential reflection upon technology and decisive confrontation with it must happen in a realm that is, on the one hand, akin to the essence of technology and, on the other, fundamentally different from it.”<sup>173</sup>

According to Heidegger, arts understood in the Greek way, should be this realm where the truth shines-forth in most beautiful way, but “certainly only if reflection upon art, for its part, does not shut its eyes to the constellation of truth, concerning which we are questioning.”<sup>174</sup> Heidegger takes arts as a crucial field of saving us from the dangers of modern technology, because arts can be taken both, firstly, as technology itself and, secondly, as the realm which brings-forth the truth from concealment into unconcealment. Heidegger shows that technology is not as dangerous as it can look from the first sight. Since “*closer we come to the danger, the more brightly do the ways into the saving power begin to shine and the more questioning we become.*”<sup>175</sup>

One may ask – why is the question concerning technology so important today? As I mentioned before, likely, because we are living in the age of technologies. Today man and technology are essentially indistinguishable. We can even probably say that there are more questions than answers concerning technology and our future history (or destiny, in terms of Heidegger). Heidegger showed what dangers lie hidden in the essence of technology. Namely, setting-upon nature, ordering and enframing. In addition to that, Heidegger gave us a clue, how we can save ourselves from the dangers evoked by technologies. The importance of questioning and reflection and artistic revealing was shown by Heidegger.

Nonetheless if we are considering that in this day of age our Being in the world is technologized more than ever, we are for sure able to notice a qualitative change in our lives. Man has turned to standing resource himself. It is hard to distinguish who is the user and who is abused. Man became a being-online (virtual being) instead of being-there (Dasein). Paul Virilio argues, that

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

preferring the virtual being over the real being is the same thing as to “take the shadow for the substance, to prefer the metaphor, the clone to a substantial being who gets in your way, who is literally on your hands, a flesh-and-blood being whose only fault is to be there, here and now, and not somewhere else.”<sup>176</sup> This leads us to another section. Where I am asking is it possible to gain a free relationship to technologies or did we forget being.

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<sup>176</sup> Virilio, Paul. 'Open Sky' (London: Verso, 1997), p. 103

## 2. 2. On Gaining a Free Relation to Technology<sup>177</sup>

Facebook will eventually become part of what philosopher Martin Heidegger would call the background of everydayness – something that simply “is”. And some people will really like it, and it will provide them with the kind of social interaction they are incapable of getting from the three-dimensional world around them.

And some people will turn it off, never to bask in its glow again.<sup>178</sup>

Isn't that future already here?

(Jim Meskauskas)

Internet's power over our lives is undeniable today. We sink into Internet to search for news, books and information. And we do not only that. We are even socializing in the Internet's social networks, instead of doing that in face-to-face real life situations. As Hubert Dreyfus puts it:

.... What the Net is doing to us is, in fact, making our lives worse rather than better. ... It should thus be clear that tools are not neutral, and that using the Net diminishes one's involvement in the physical and social world. This, in turn, diminishes one's sense of reality and of the meaning in one's life. Indeed, it seems that, the more we use the Net, the more it will tend to draw us into the unreal, virtual worlds populated by those who want to flee all the ills that flesh is heir to.<sup>179</sup>

Internet is one example of the larger virtual being that we are dealing with here. A man some hundreds of years ago probably did not sense what technological progress is going to take place (starting from computers, phones to the smart phones, from smart computers to smart bombs<sup>180</sup>). It is already the case that some phones are 'smarter' than us. And Heidegger, especially in his later writings, felt that this technological development threatens our understanding of Being. Most importantly, man's essence is changing in the technological age. Ian Thomson observes, “Heidegger's critique of our technological understanding of being; is not meant to help us sort good from bad technological devices and designs (although Heidegger is not without a few suggestive

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<sup>177</sup> The title and inspiration for this section comes from Dreyfus's text 'Heidegger on Gaining a Free Relation to Technology' printed in 'Technology and the Politics of Knowledge', ed., Andrew Feenberg and Alastair Hannay, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995). If stated, quotations of Heidegger also come from the mentioned text but with the references to the original source.

<sup>178</sup> Jim Meskauskas from iMedia Connection on the [future of Facebook](#). Jim Meskauskas is a Co-Founder of iMedia Connection which provides media strategy and planning.

<sup>179</sup> Dreyfus, Hubert. On the Internet (Thinking in Action), 2nd edition (Routledge, 2009), p. 137.

<sup>180</sup> Paul Virilio's expression.

remarks on this score – such as his interesting but problematic idea that we should not allow ourselves to become addicted to technological devices).”<sup>181</sup>

Speaking of addiction to technological devices, it is evident that we are surrounded by many kind of screens (television, computers and phones). Even the public spaces (city squares) are having screens to show time and news. Nobody wonders when people are using and looking at these screens in the streets or in the public transport today. People have forgotten gazing at the world. Moreover, some kind of miniaturized “being-in-the-world” which fascinates so much is gathered on these devices. The dramatic increase of technologies in our world leads us to losing touch with our Being. We are not only ordering and optimizing nature, but we are also failing to see how we become standing-reserves ourselves<sup>182</sup>. In other words, we are enframing and we are enframed. Simon Cooper notes on this, “Heidegger wrote that the danger of technology lay in the way the one-dimensional framework of Gestell denied the existence of other modes of relatedness. Despite his tendency to overstate the degree to which technology has hollowed out or concealed other modes of revealing, he maintained that we could say 'a yes and a no' to the use of technology.”<sup>183</sup> But how can we say this 'yes or no' to technology? “To say a yes and a no to technology suggests the ability to adopt a certain reflexivity. This would require an understanding of the way technology works to *reconstitute human modes of relatedness to the world*. In some cases this may be desirable; though Heidegger was much more eloquent in pointing to cases where it was not. What enables the grounds for such reflexivity is an understanding of the interplay of different modes of revealing.”<sup>184</sup> Clearly enough, technologies reconstitute our relatedness to the world as human beings, because all kind devices interrupt into our being in the world. On the *Memorial Address* in 1955 Heidegger commented on appearance of radio and television:

Hourly and daily they are chained to radio and television. ... All that which modern techniques of communication stimulate, assail and drive man – all that is already much closer to man today than his fields around his farmstead, closer than the sky over the earth, closer than the change from night to day, closer than conventions and customs of his village, than the tradition of his native world.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Thomson, Iain. 'Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education', p. 57.

<sup>182</sup> For example, personal management can be considered as a perfect illustration. The ingenious connection with Heidegger comes through the idea of *human resources*, where a human being is regarded as being enframed as a standing-reserve.

<sup>183</sup> Cooper, Simon. 'Beyond Enframing: Heidegger and a Further Question Concerning Technology' in *Arena Journal* (1997), p. 41.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>185</sup> Quotation of Heidegger is taken from Dreyfus's text 'Heidegger on Gaining a Free Relation to Technology', p. 98. (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'Discourse on Thinking', p. 48).

In early sixties Heidegger was already worried about this *qualitative change* in our being. If we take into consideration our present situation, we indeed see that many technological devices are closer to us than the surrounding world. As follows, the 'greatest danger' is

the approaching tide of technological revolution in the atomic age could so captivate, bewitch, dazzle, and beguile man that calculative thinking may someday come to be accepted and practiced *as the only way* of thinking.<sup>186</sup>

It seems Heidegger's prophecy came true, namely, that 'calculative thinking someday will be the only way of thinking'. As a matter of fact, many countries are oriented towards technological development today. Due to this enormous speed of development, we are becoming standing-reserve ourselves. We not only optimize, order and challenge, but we also let enframing happen. As Heidegger summarizes it in the Question Concerning Technologies, "whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as object."<sup>187</sup> Thus since the object is gone, Heidegger says, that "*man, who no longer conceals his character of being the most important raw material, is also drawn into this process.*"<sup>188</sup>

That is, 'man is drawn into this process' of technological development without any bit of reflection. So to say, we are pursuing the technological growth only for its own sake and without even realizing that, we are supporting the technological well being of our societies. In this sense, we become part of a system which no one directs but which moves forward towards the glorious *telos* of technological progress. And this eventually culminates in our technological understanding of being. It may seem that Heidegger is a technophobic and he advocates return to the pre-technological world. Not at all. He says:

It would be foolish to attack technology blindly. It would be shortsighted to condemn it as the work of devil. We depend on technical devices; they even challenge us to ever greater advances.<sup>189</sup>

Rather, there is a way we can have our technological devices and still stay true to ourselves. Heidegger assumes, that

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. 98. (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'Discourse on Thinking', p. 56).

<sup>187</sup> QCT, p. 17.

<sup>188</sup> Quotation of Heidegger is taken from Dreyfus's text 'Heidegger on Gaining a Free Relation to Technology', p. 101. (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'Overcoming Metaphysics. The End of Philosophy', p. 104).

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 98. (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'Discourse on Thinking', p. 53).

we can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices, and also deny them the right to dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay waste our nature.<sup>190</sup>

How can this can be possible? Only by letting things shine in their presence. It is when we understand the gift of seeing and being. It is when we do not drown into technological calculative and optimizing thinking. For example, Japan is famous for its high-low technologies but the respectful appreciation of nature and each other there still exists. So, we can think that having technology without technological understanding of being is still possible. And, if realize this possibility both practically and theoretically, we are stepping out of the technological understanding of being. It is the very moment when we come to see what is of importance in our lives. Hence Heidegger wants us to overcome the calculative thinking. Heidegger says on this:

Modern man must first and above all *find his way back into the full breadth of the space proper to his essence*. That essential space of man's essential being receives the dimension that unites it to something beyond itself ... that is the way in which the safekeeping of being itself is given to belong to the essence of man as the one who is needed and used by being.<sup>191</sup>

Where is Heidegger is getting at here? In the words of Dreyfus, “according to Heidegger we can break out of the technological understanding of being *whenever we find ourselves gathered by things rather than controlling them*. When a thing like a celebratory meal, to take, pulls our practices together and draws us in, we experience a focusing and a nearness that resists technological ordering.”<sup>192</sup> To rephrase, focusing and nearness – to what *is* near – resists technological understanding. Heidegger describes what is nearness in Bremen lectures:

Nearing is the essence of nearness. Nearness nears what is remote, and it does so as what is remote. Nearness preserves remoteness. Preserving remoteness, nearness holds sway in its nearing. Nearing in such a way, nearness conceals itself and its way remains what is closest. ... Insofar as we protect the thing as the thing, we inhabit nearness. The nearing of nearness is the actual and only dimension of the mirror-game of the word ... The thing things the world. Thinging is nearing that holds the world in nearness, as the world.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 98. (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'Discourse on Thinking', p. 54)

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p. 102. (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'The Turning, in The Question Concerning Technologies', p. 39).

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>193</sup> Heidegger. 'Bremen Lectures: Insight into That Which Is', in The Heidegger Reader, ed. Günter Figal, trans. Jerome Veith (Indiana University Press, 2009), p. 263, 266-267.



According to Heidegger, things do not arrive through human machinations because it is forcing, challenging of the world. Neither does nearness arrives through shrinking of distances. Heidegger says that,

the airplane and all traffic devices that continually increase their speed shorten the distance. Everyone knows this. Everyone assures us that the world is getting smaller. Everyone knows that technology is doing this ... What is decisive is not that distances are decreasing through the help of technology, but rather that *nearness remains eschewed*. Yet we do not merely take note on this.<sup>194</sup>

How then can nearness arrive? It may arrive through the hand work which gathers the fourfold (earth, sky, divinities and mortals) and brings about the nearness of presence. As Heidegger puts it: “what is present can announce itself as the created thing of the creator, who himself is constantly and everywhere present in everything. What is present can hold sway as that which comes forth from itself, out from concealment, forth into concealment.”<sup>195</sup>

And so, as Heidegger says famously following Hölderlin, '*where the danger is,... grows, the saving power also*'.<sup>196</sup> Once we grasp the danger of technological understanding of being, once we take a note on it, the danger becomes that which saves us. And then “*the issue is the saving of man's essential nature. Therefore, the issue is keeping meditative thinking alive*.”<sup>197</sup> We should keep meditative thinking as opposed to the calculative thinking of technological age. In addition to meditative thinking, as Dreyfus tells, “we must learn to appreciate marginal practices – what Heidegger calls the saving power of significant things – practices such as friendship, backpacking in the wilderness, and drinking the local wine with friends.”<sup>198</sup> That is, essentially bringing about nearness of local things, living rather in local village rather than in the global village.

We can see that meditative thinking along with marginal practices might help to overcome technological understanding of the world. It is when we meditate on what is nearest and closest to us and what concerns us most. It is when we stop manipulating the world and contemplate the meaning that prevails in every thing that is. It is the very moment when we come to wonder that things are there at all. It is when we will start to reflect on our existence with-in the world. In our recent times we have lost this ability to wonder because we are overloaded with the global world-wide-web rather than with local nearness. To summarize this section, let me quote Jeff Palmas:

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 278.

<sup>196</sup> QCT, p. 35.

<sup>197</sup> Quotation from Dreyfus's text 'Heidegger on Gaining a Free Relation to Technology', p. 104 (Original quote of Heidegger comes from 'Discourse on Thinking', p. 56).

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

In finding ourselves “in” the world, we find ourselves already “in” a place, already given over to and involved with things, with persons, with our lives. On this basis the central questions of philosophy, questions of being and existence, as well as of ethics and virtue, must themselves take their determination and their starting point from this same place. Such ideas seem to underpin much of Heidegger’s thinking, both early and late ... The idea is that philosophy has its origin in our being already “there,” in the world, alongside other persons and things.<sup>199</sup>

And thus the possibility, Heidegger thought, to overcome and gain a more freer relation to technology appears when we learn to cultivate a different mode of being:

We can thus think of overcoming technology in terms of learning to hear a different language than that spoken by the technological world. We learn to hear and respond differently, by practicing dwelling with the fourfold of earth, sky, mortals, and divinities.<sup>200</sup>

In the words of Dreyfus and Wrathall, “the fourfold names the different regions of our existence which can contribute to giving us a particular, *localized way of dwelling*. As we *learn to live in harmony with our particular world* – our earth, our sky, our mortality, and our divinities – *we can be pulled out of a technologically frenzied existence*. This is because, in such being at home, we allow our-selves to be conditioned by things, understood as a special class of entities – namely, entities that are uniquely suited to our way of being in the world, as Heidegger noted in one of the very last things he wrote, '*reflection is required on whether and how, in the age of the technologized uniform world civilization, there can still be a home*'.”<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Palmas, J. 'Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World' (MIT Press, 2007), p. 39.

<sup>200</sup> QCT, p. 28 and 'Poetry, Language. Thought' (Harpercollins, 1976), p. 213.

<sup>201</sup> Dreyfus, Wrathall. A Companion to Heidegger, p. 3

## Conclusions

What are we thinking and doing? Indeed, this has been the leading question of my thesis. Trying to make our passive minds and bodies of the technological age wonder, think and reflect, is what this current inquiry has been aiming at. In front of our very eyes, there manifests a prevalent tendency and alienation from Being and Being-in-the-world as such<sup>202</sup>. The early Heidegger of *Being and Time* was much more optimistic about these developments than the later Heidegger of *Question Concerning Technology*.<sup>203</sup> In *Being and Time* Heidegger elaborated about simple average everyday being-there (*Dasein*) in the world, where the things were surrounding one's being. Since the world's technological development progressed Heidegger started to be more and more concerned about our understanding of Being, that was changing as rapidly. Heidegger himself witnessed the appearance of television and radio and how it slowly but surely came to occupy the every-day life of the peasants. Today, our lives are even more preoccupied by the enormous amount of all kinds of technological “wonders” (computers, phones, Internet, electronic book readers, etc.). We are so drawn, like moths to a flame, into this kind of 'virtually wonder-full being', which in turn makes us forget that we are actually drowning in the world of *technological* devices. The result is an utter forgetfulness of the nearness and closeness of the surrounding world.

Furthermore, technological understanding of Being leads to Enframing (*Gestell*). According to Heidegger, as we have been inquiring in the second part, enframing allows only one type of revealing which is challenging. The challenging revealing sets upon man to order not only the world but man himself. This ends in world and man becoming both a standing-reserve (*Bestand*). Thus, the essence of technologies itself is nothing technological, because the revealing that holds sway in modern technology is enframing.

In the last section I tried to build a positive relationship to technologies and show that the skill of *balancing* and *knowing* when it is appropriate to allow one revealing or another. All possibilities of revealing are available to us, whether it is technological, poetical or artistic, etc. The later thought of Heidegger had mainly to do with art and poetry as the power that can save us from the technological mode of thinking. He thought that we can rely on the simplicity of revealing that

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<sup>202</sup> Heidegger in *Being and Time* claimed that we are directly and factually in the world. Our facticity of being-there is undeniable. And, *Dasein* is a being-there for which his being is an issue.

<sup>203</sup> Heidegger's *Being and Time* lie the conceptual background for the rest of his philosophy. *Being and Time* is the alpha and omega of Heidegger's thought. When I analyzing his later views it is inevitable to miss out his magnum opus. As for my thesis, I also analyzed Heidegger's notions of *being*, *being-in-the-world* and *worldhood*, in order to understand what means to be in the technological world.

art and poetry offers. In addition, poetry and art remain present in relation to human being. Poetry is closer than anything else to the order and placement of technological thinking, and it is, like no other, totally different from this. Placing of art and poetry is essentially different from that of technology. It does not fix in place or challenge-forth like it happens with modern technology, but it shows and lets it to be seen. Altogether with marginal practices, as Dreyfus assumes, art and poetry becomes that which saves us and brings about nearness of being-the-world.

It does not hurt to rehearse, that Heidegger is not a technophobic. He does not advocate going back to the pre-technological world. The fact is we were never purely free from technologies and Heidegger is definitely aware of this. For example, at the very moment I am using my computer, because I am obliged to write my thesis. Computer's efficiency ensures me a possibility that I will finally finish writing. In this sense, the inevitability of technology is obvious.

In addition, as we were analyzing in the first part of the work (section 2 and section 3), Heidegger shows that things in the world are interconnected or interrelated (e.g. I need a computer in order to write my thesis concerning being in the word of technologies aiming at questioning technologies and for the sake of finishing my master's studies). This example of a sequence shows that things indeed exist in relations, that is, one cannot exist without the other. Things not only connect the world but without things there would not be connections. Through these connections – interconnections – humans belong to the world. Moreover, these relations or the network of relations is what Heidegger calls *worldhood*. Because we are in the world, we can speak of countless possibilities of revealing these relations. Yet, we can also speak about countless possibilities of receptivity *to open* these relations.

To put it more simply, for Heidegger being-in-the-world is characterized by the relationships of the surrounding world and the human being and vice versa. And, Dasein, as being-there, refers to the awareness and potential to bring things of the world forth in their shining (either it is art, poetry, music, etc.). The relationship of human beings to these things is built up in *concern* and *care* (for instance, I am concerned about writing my thesis and giving it in on time). This is what in *Being and Time* Heidegger calls concerned dealings with-in the world. But since the appearance of modern technologies in our world, late Heidegger claims that, our understanding of being has changed and therefore our relationship with being has altered too. Things in the world are now optimized, exploited, transmitted, etc. Things, as Heidegger wrote in *Being and Time*, have the fundamental feature of being ready-at-hand, although in the technological world they rather appear as present-on-hand. Consequently, human beings reduce these things and themselves to 'being-on-hand' beings, to being merely objects, mere means to an end, to be exploited and used. Despite all of this, there is a possibility to overcome this technological understanding of being. Once human

beings realize their potential for other possibilities of understanding the being, there is a chance that they will transform themselves by their own choice. So, Heidegger leaves aside humanistic concerns<sup>204</sup> and embraces “ecstatic dwelling in the nearness of Being. It is the guardianship, that is, the care for Being.”<sup>205</sup>

In the last section of the work, we were asking whether it is possible to gain a free relation to technologies? What does it mean to be a human being in the world of technologies? What does it mean to exist in the world of technologies, such that it mediates most of our relations? It is a fact that we are thrown into the world of the technological. But as long as we are addicted to the *technological* we are forced to believe that it cannot be otherwise. Only few examples for consideration: we forgot how to write a real letter, because we type with the a keyboard now; we are engaging with people in social networks rather than in the real world; we are focusing on the air conditioning systems rather than the air itself; we are guided around by GPS rather than by our own mind and maps. Heidegger tells us that not at all – the technological understanding of the world is not the only way to conceive our relationship to the world. Heidegger proposes that instead of the technological way of being, we should grasp the possibility of *meditative* thinking and dwelling on earth. This means to declare the unified self and the unified world as mutually related notions, since there cannot be one without another. The problem remains how are we going to live in the future and how are we going to reveal the world in other ways.

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<sup>204</sup> According to Heidegger, human is not the center of the world. He is rather the part, man is a shepherd of Being.

<sup>205</sup> Heidegger. 'Letter on Humanism' in Basic Writings (HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), p. 234.

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