HEIDEGGER'S CONCEPTION OF TECHNOLOGY AS REVEALING AND WELL-BEING IN THE MODERN ERA

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Abstract: The German-born Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) is considered one of the notable philosophers of technology. This paper traces the relevance of his conception of technology as projected into well-being of *Dasein*in the twenty-first century. One distinctive aspect of his philosophy is that all ways of having to do with things, all modes of *Dasein*'s comportment to entities let thingsshow themselves in some way. For him, the real danger of technology does not lie in the technical devices but in its essence, which he terms *Gestell*, translated as Enframing; a mode of revealing (Being) whereby any entity or reality (including human beings) is disclosed as standing-reserve of raw material and energy ready-to-hand (available for our use). He also opines that the ultimate threatlies in the fact that it may lead to a naive approval of calculative thinkingas the only way of thinking. As proposed by him, the paper shows that today's world needs "openness to a mystery" and "releasement towards things" in our relation to technology.

Keywords: Being, *Dasein*, Machination, Enframing, Calculative Thinking, Mystery, *Gelassenheit*.

Introduction

This work shall endeavor to show that in a Heidegger-inspired conception, technology is more than a mere complex of machines; it is a way of understanding beings as a whole. Rejecting the view that technology is neutral, Heidegger transcendsits instrumental conception (as means to an end) and the anthropological conception (as a human activity);and notes that we ask the question concerning technology when we ask what it is. Its essence is constituted by *Gestell*; which confines the being of all entities to 'resource'. The work shall also propose a Heidegger-inspired authentic mode of comportment towards technology that ensures sustainable wellness of existence.

1. Well-Being in the Technological Era

Well-being may be defined as "the extent to which all elements that are good for a person are accessible and enjoyable to a person"[1]. Science and technology have evidently done lots of good in attempting to make people live an easy and good life. Surely, even in the midst of the restrictions necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic, such things as studies, work and businesses have been made possible thanks to science and technology; travelling has been made easier, communication through social media has made dissemination and reception of information faster; there is an improvement in health care and undoubtedly an increase in life span, and many more positive things.

Notwithstanding the fact that these things are very beneficial to human well-being, there appears some ambivalence in technology's contribution to well-being or good life of man. Technology also names the numerous ways in which humans are tricked out of lives worth living. Particularly when wrongly handled, it kills, destroys and exploits; it is used to create automata that can 'replace'the human agents[2]. So the same technology with which man provides and protects himself seems to threaten his well-being, with death posing the ultimate threat.

2. Heidegger's Refutation of the Instrumental and Anthropological Conceptions

The ordinary understanding is that technology is a human activity and a means to an end, respectively termed as the anthropological and instrumental views:

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[1] Thomas Schramme, "Subjective and Objective Accounts of Well-Being and Quality of Life", in *Handbook of the Philosophy of Medicine* (Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media B.V., 2017), 167.

[2] Christopher John Müller, "Introduction" in *Prometheanism: Technology, Digital Culture and Human Obsolescence* (London & New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016).

We ask the question concerning technology when we ask what it is. Everyone knows the two statements that answer our question. One says: Technology is a means to an end. The other says: Technology is a human activity. The two definitions of technology belong together. For to posit ends and procure and utilize the means to them is a human activity. The manufacture and utilization of equipment, tools, and machines, the manufactured and used things themselves, and the needs and ends that they serve, all belong to what technology is. The whole complex of these contrivances is technology. Technology itself is a contrivance, or, in Latin, an *instrumentum* … The current conception of technology, according to which it is a means and a human activity, can therefore be called the instrumental and anthropological definition of technology[3].

The two are definitely reciprocal in that technology involves human activity and it seems to be specifically tailored to facilitate various human needs and desires by providing means to securing both which, in turn, involves allof human activity that serves man's well-being[4]. Indeed, we usually consider technology as an instrument, a means of getting things done. But this definition misses its actual essence and it often makes us think that by making the technology better –enabling us to get things easily done –we will master it and solve the problems that accompany it. This instrumental way of thinking most likely stems from our assumptions about causality[5].

Heidegger contends that in normal technological activity, the being-in-itself of things 'disappears into usefulness'[6]. He further states that "because it is determined by usefulness and serviceability, equipment takes into its service that of which it consists: the matter. In fabricating equipment— e.g., an ax—stone is used, and used up. It disappears into usefulness. The material is all the better and more suitable the less it resists perishing in the equipmental being of the equipment"[7]. He makes it clear that by 'technology' he means not just apparatus like the power plant, the jet aircraft and the radar station, nor even a definition of it that would include older handicraft technology such as a means and a human activity. This type of definition, he maintains, would not get at the 'essence'[8].

The instrumental view takes humans to be the masters of technology. This, however, forgets or misunderstands, that it is a way of revealing being to humans and so is not at the mercy of human activity and understanding. As a world-view, technology shapes how *Dasein*(man and his way of being) pictures and thinks about itself and the world[9]. Human activity and understanding are not its masters; they are rather themselves at the mercy of technology[10]. In conceiving of modern technology as a means to an end, we are hoodwinked into the utterly false assumption that it is something which we control, which we can master and bring under our sway as it facilitates our efforts to secure certain ends for our well-being[11].

3. Technology as Revealing: Machination (*Machenschaft*) and Enframing (*Gestell*)

As revelatory, technology constitutes a way of understanding the world. One distinctive feature of Heidegger's philosophy is that all ways of having to do with things, all modes of comportment to entities, and not just perception and observation, let things show themselves in some way. What lets things show themselves is what normally does not show itself; that is, the understanding of Being. As a matter of fact, getting Being to show itself,

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[3] Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*: Translated and with an Introduction by William Lovitt (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977),4-5.

[4] Mahon O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity: From Resoluteness to Releasement* (London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011), 95.

[5] CriticaLink, "Heidegger: The Question Concerning Technology" | Guide to pp. 333-338, accessed May 7, 2021. http://www.english.hawaii.edu/criticalink/heidegger/guide8.html

[6] Julian Young, *The Death of God and the Meaning of Life* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 206.

[7] Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Perennial Classics, 2001), 44.

[8] Nicholas Waghorn, *Nothingness and the Meaning of Life: Philosophical Approaches to Ultimate Meaning Through Nothing and Reflexivity* (London & New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 23.

[9] Gavin Rae, "Being and Technology: Heidegger on the Overcoming of Metaphysics", *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 43: 3, (2012), 311.

[10] See Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 4, 12.

[11] O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity,* 95. See See Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, (24 May, 2015), (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2017), §115.

letting it be seen, is the task of philosophy[12]. In his description of modern technology as revealing, he formulates the five fundamental terms of his philosophy of technology:

> Modern technology *challenges* (*herausfordern*) nature to yield its treasures to humans. Next, technology *positions* (*stellen*) and *orders* (*bestellen*) the yields of nature so that they are available and disposable to humans. Whatever is so positioned and ordered becomes a *resource* (*der Bestand*). Finally, Heidegger gathers this entire way of treating and disclosing nature under the title of *the framework* (*das Gestell*) – the essence of technology[13].

What is understood by 'essence' in this context is the understanding of being which makes technology possible[14]. Heidegger considers technology as that form of Being in which everything shows up simply in terms of machination or enframing.

The word "machination" (*machenschaft*) is his early term for the essence of technology[15]. He uses it in the *Contributions to Philosophy* for what he later called *Technik* (technology) or *Gestell*. Machination is not simply a human behavior, the act of manipulation; it is a revelation of beings as a wholeas exploitable and manipulable objects[16]. He states that "machination is the domination of making and what is made"[17]. The world appears to be a collection of present-at-hand things with no intrinsic meaning or purpose, a cold place where we cannot put down any roots such that all we can do is calculate and control. We observe and measure everything, we make things go faster and faster, our power and efficiency are ever increasing[18] but questioning and reflection are withering away and quality is reduced to quantity[19].

Heidegger explores the originof modern scienceas the key to understanding technologyas machination. Modern science uses the concept of magnitude to form in advance the parameters for defining nature. This way of grasping nature according to a numerical preconception of it requires mathematically projecting the essential properties of physical reality[20]. Furthermore, he describes the extreme point of the forgottennessof beingsas an occurrence in which entitiesappear exclusively in terms of their potential to be used and exploited for instrumental purposes. In this historical epoch of the dominance of modern technology, entities cease to appear in their uniqueness and singularity, but instead manifest themselves only one-dimensionally in terms of their instrumental value[21]. Sometimes people are lost in the unquestionable conviction that everything there is exists for human machination; whereby everything is exploited to serve what is thought to be human well-being[22]. This points both to the drive toward globalizationat the heart of technology, and to our entanglement in its illusion that we can master its multifaceted dangers, which places human civilization on the height of self-destruction[23].

So the human drive to obtain a quantifiable and controllable knowledge of the world sends humanity on the way to an orientation that views the world as a set of raw materials, as 'standing-reserve', culminating in modern technology[24].This means that as the essence of technology, enframing is not an activity in any ordinary sense nor is

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[12] Zaine Ridling, *The Lightness of Being: A comprehensive study of Heidegger's Thought* (Missouri: Access Foundation Kansas City, 2001), 455-456.

[13] Albert Borgmann, "Technology", in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2005), 428-429.

[14] Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*,454.

[15] Borgmann, "Technology", 424.

[16] Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*,524. See Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), §61.

[17] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, §61, p. 92.

[18] Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*,524.

[19] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, §57, §70.

[20] Frank Schalow and Alfred Denker, *Historical Dictionary of Heidegger's Philosophy*, 2nd ed., (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010), 181.

[21] Schalow and Denker, *Historical Dictionary of Heidegger's Philosophy*, 45.

[22] Borgmann, "Technology", 424.

[23] Schalow and Denker, *Historical Dictionary of Heidegger's Philosophy*, 39.

[24] CriticaLink, "Heidegger: The Question Concerning Technology".

itself something technological. It is a way of understanding being, namely, revealing (*Entbergen*); it is a way of disclosing, uncovering, bringing out of concealment of what is[25].

Therefore, revealing means the entering into a particular relation with reality in which reality manifests itself in a specific way. It is in and through revealing that reality comes to presence for human beings. Reality is always already marked by the relation that humans have to it[26]. Enframing is that mode of world-understanding in which the real reveals itself as resource (standing-reserve)[27]. The term 'resource' here covers not just things like oil, water or electricity, but also the machines that operate on, and are powered by, such resources. Not just the machines, but also the beings that operate such machines. Conclusively then, "*Gestell* is that mode of world understanding in which everything – human beings included – shows up as resource; as, again in a very broad use of the word, 'equipment' to be deployed in technological activity"[28]. Accordingly, Enframing does not allow for *poiesis* in the primordial and elemental sense, but instead blocks bringing-forth (authentic production) and challenges everything everywhere to stand as ordered and arranged under a stiflingly restrictive taxonomy covering naught but the coherence of forces and resources[29]. The assurance of positive well-being or the 'good life' that technology promises and the possibilities it opens makes man of this era to lose sight of its concomitant revealing.

Enframing projects a calculative thinking into well-being; only what is calculable in advance counts as being and constitutes well-being. Calculative thinking connotes "the reduction of knowledge to the power of domination"[30]. Modern technology enables man to live under the assumption that there is no limit to the realization of human will. Consequently, everything that *is* presents itself to us primarily in its potential for the realization of human will. This, for Heidegger, is the real significance of Friedrich Nietzsche's doctrine of the will to power; it is not the one, final, true interpretation of reality itself, but an acutely attentive response to the sending of being in this era[31]. *Gestell* brings scientific theory to base itself on the premise that being is nothing[32] but "a coherence of forces calculable in advance"[33]. Well-being, good life, flourishing or happy life is understood in the light of calculative tendencies. For practical implications of the technological revealing, let us consider some corollaries of calculative thinking.

3.1 Well-Being and Machination of Medical Sciences

From the 'benevolence' of medical science and technology, many people today continue to receive variousvaccines against the coronavirus, giving us a glimmer of hope that the 'old normal' may return. In as much as we appreciate the contribution of science and technology to medical science and health-enhancing technologies, there is something about it to call into question. Heidegger states that "in its ordinary meaning the word machination is the name for a "bad" type of human activity and plotting for such an activity"[34]. According to him, science (*Wissenschaft*) endeavours to know how things work and objectifies them through a mathematical projection of nature. To study an entity, as such, science must objectify it and transform it into an object of research. As objects, entities can be controlled and measured. They become available as standing-reserve. In its essence, science is calculative thinking, because it always takes the measure of its object. In the modern age, the being of entities is objectness. As an object for a subject, the real becomes a representation. In this era of technology, the objectness of the real is secured as standing-reserve or resource.[35] In the long run, then, "technology leads to the view that even humans are mere resources, raw material for manipulation, possessing no inherent dignity or special place"[36].

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[25]Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*, 455.

[26] Peter-Paul Verbeek, *What Things Do: Philosophical Reflections on Technology, Agency, and Design*, trans. by Robert P. Crease (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 50.

[27] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 23.

[28]Young, *The Death of God and the Meaning of Life*, 201-202.

[29]O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity,* 114.

[30] Lorella Congiunti, *Outlines of Philosophy of Nature*, 2nd, ed., trans. Stephen Okello (Roma: Urbaniana university Press, 2020), 102.

[31] Matthew King, *Heidegger and Happiness: Dwelling on Fitting and Being* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), 103.

[32]Rae, "Being and Technology", 314.

[33] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 21.

[34]Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*, §61, p. 88.

[35]Schalow and Denker, *Historical Dictionary of Heidegger's Philosophy*, 251-252.

[36]Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*,40.

The United Nations (UN) acknowledges that while the transplantation of healthy organs into persons whose own organs have failed, improves and saves a myriad of lives each year, the demand for organs has outstripped supply, creating an underground market for illicitly obtained organs. While granting that there are those who make their ends meet through human trafficking for the purpose of organ removal and other reasons, the most disturbing reality is that this form of trafficking in persons has in its profile of the of culprits, others who are doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and health care professionals who are involved in legitimate activities when they are not participating in trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal[37].

In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis bemoans that:

> Criminal networks are skilled in using modern means of communication as a way of luring young men and women in various parts of the world. Trafficking in persons and other contemporary forms of enslavement are a worldwide problem that needs to be taken seriously by humanity as a whole: since criminal organizations employ global networks to achieve their goals, efforts to eliminate this phenomenon also demand a common and, indeed, a global effort on the part of various sectors of society[38].

The calculative thinking is what, in the words of Francis, has created a "throwaway" world:

> Ultimately, persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, 'not yet useful' – like the unborn, or 'no longer needed' – like the elderly. We have grown indifferent to all kinds of wastefulness, starting with the waste of food, which is deplorable in the extreme … In this way, what is thrown away are not only food and dispensable objects, but often human beings themselves. We have seen what happened with the elderly in certain places in our world as a result of the coronavirus. They did not have to die that way[39].

Furthermore, Heidegger urges that the advantages of modern molecular medicine can and should be enjoyed but care must be taken to ensure that genetic engineering does not mean humanity's enslavement. Right in the 1950s he warned of how the future might bring the design and selection of 'human material' and of the danger that technology's enframing might lead to sick human beings' becoming mere 'clinical material' in hi-tech hospitals[40] which is, to say the least, deplorable.

3.2 Enframing and the Natural Environment

According to the United Nations Declaration made at the Stockholm's 1972 *Conference on Human Environment*, "Man is both creature and moulder of his environment" and "The protection and improvement of the human environment is a major issue which affects the well-being of peoples and economic development throughout the world"[41]. But in this mode of revealing, "The world now appears as an object open to the attacks of calculative thought, attacks that nothing is believed able any longer to resist. Nature becomes a gigantic gasoline station, an energy source for modern technology and industry"[42]. This underlines the assertion that "in the modern era, technology is increasingly regarded as a means of dominating nature"[43] because the revealing that accompanies it is manifested as a challenging, which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it should supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such or transformed and distributed[44].

In this age, a tract of land is challenged into the putting out of coal and ore. The earth now reveals itself as a coal mining district, the soil as a mineral deposit:

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[37] United Nations, "Organ Trafficking," accessed February 15, 2021. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/emerging-crimes/organ-trafficking.html.
[38] Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter, *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2020), §24.
[39] Pope Francis*, Fratelli Tutti*, §18-19.
[40] Walther Ziegler, *Heidegger in 60 Minutes*, eBook (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2016), 60.
[41] Articles 1 & 2, quoted by Congiunti, *Outlines of Philosophy of Nature*, 96.
[42] Martin Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969), 50.
[43] Congiunti, *Outlines of Philosophy of Nature*, 101.
[44] Rae, "Being and Technology", 311.

> The work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In the sowing of the grain it places the seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increase. But meanwhile even the cultivation of the field has come under the grip of another kind of setting-in-order, which sets upon [*stellt*] nature. It *sets* upon it in the sense of challenging it. Agriculture is now the mechanized food industry. Air is now set upon to yield nitrogen, the earth to yield ore, ore to yield uranium, for example; uranium is set upon to yield atomic energy, which can be released either for destruction or for peaceful use[45].

This entails that nature indeed becomes a reservoir of potential to be used for a particular human project or operation in the future. Instead of leaving nature alone, modern technology sets up a challenge to 'her' and expects 'her' to fulfil it. Then again, rather than fulfil this expectation by conforming to the rhythm of nature, modern technology imposes itself on 'her' and attempts and expects 'her' to conform to its ends[46]. The setting-upon ensures 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 new. It is accompanied by an ordering of components, mechanization, mathematics, and an emphasis on exactitude which help more efficiently and effectively to unlock the potential of nature[47]. The question remains, "Is man, then, a defenseless and perplexed victim at the mercy of the irresistible superior power of technology"[48]? It is comforting to note that Heidegger's philosophy of technology reveals not only the danger inherent in the technical, but also how this danger can be transcended[49].

4. Openness to a Mystery and Releasement towards Things as Authentic Comportment

It seems that Heidegger aims at finding an authentic expression to our fundamental ways of experiencing the meaning of existence. And this is central to ontological analysis. One important way in which he employs the concept of authenticity refers to an understanding of meaning that is acquired in immediate fashion, without the mediation of intellectual worldviews and technological means that distance us from the authentic meaning of things[50].

Considering the various ways in which science and technology have changed human life today, it compels us to argue that an inquiry into the meaning of life and its wellness in our age must take into account the possibility that we are ordered about in response to modern technology as Enframing (*Ge-Stell*). Technology shapes our emotions, thought, and action. Without doubt, the mystery of the question of being calls for thinking about our own being-in-the-world or the meaning of our lived situational experience[51].

The era of being as technology is the era in which being shows itself in such a way that the very question of Being is clogged up. Being has withdrawn itself, so that the first step on the way to overcoming technology is to reopen the question of Being, to make this withdrawal itself a subject of inquiry[52]. We stand at once within the realm of that which hides itself from us, and hides itself just in approaching us. That which shows itself and at the same time withdraws is the essential trait of what Heidegger refers to as "the mystery" and the comportment which enables us to keep open to the meaning hidden in technology is what he calls "openness to the mystery"[53].

The attitude of listening and being ready to respond is what Heidegger terms *Gelasseheit*, translated as *Releasement*; that in which one would let Being be as such and thus prepare the way for overcoming technology[54].It entails a

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[45] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*,14-15.
[46]Rae, "Being and Technology", 312.
[47]Rae, "Being and Technology", 312. See Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 16; Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*,trans. Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 34.
[48]Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, 49.
[49] James Michael Taylor, "The Question Concerning Heidegger: Technology and Being, a Deeper Understanding," (M.A., Texas A&M University, 2006), 1.
[50] Yuval Lurie, *Tracking the Meaning of Life: A Philosophical Journey* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2006), 207.
[51] Stephen Leach and James Tartaglia, eds. *The Meaning of Life and the Great Philosophers* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 102.
[52]Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*,40.
[53]Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, 54-55.
[54]Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*, 40.

comportment towards things that 'lets them be' or 'releases' them into being what they are[55].In order to overcome or to bring to light the partial unconcealment rooted in enframing, Heidegger urges that for our part, we must begin to pay heed to the coming to presence of technology[56]. That is, we need to think about technology and the impact that it has on being and well-being. Rather than merely passively accept it, or take it for granted, he wants us to reflect on it because he thinks that through genuine reflection we will not only come to see the damage that accompanies the enframing[57], but "when we once open ourselves expressly to the *essence* of technology, we find ourselves unexpectedly taken into a freeing claim"[58] and with this freeing, we discover that different ways of revealing being to that of the ordering calculation of modern technology present themselves[59].

According to him, "As the one so needed and used, man is given to belong to the coming-to-pass of truth"[60]. Thus, it important to note that *Gelassenheit* is not only a releasement from willful technological manipulation but also a releasement into a more attentive engagement in letting things be[61]. The very fact that any and all revealing ultimately has to come through and from us constitutes the foundation for everything we as humans are capable of; and it is for this reason that we are not condemned to an inescapable and unsavory fate[62].

With releasement, we can come out of the current rut of craving to master technology whereby it is conceived of as merely an instrument to expedite our everyday projects and thereby missing entirely our chance to pay attention to and develop a free relationship to its essence[63]. We need to heed Heidegger's call: "Let us at long last stop conceiving technology as something purely technical, that is, in terms of man and his machines. Let us listen to the claim placed in our age not only upon man, but also upon all beings, nature and history, with regard to their Being"[64].

Releasement toward things and openness to the mystery are said to belong together. Both grant us the possibility of dwelling in the world in a totally different way; they promise us a new ground and foundation upon which we can stand and endure in the world of technology without being endangered by it[65]. They constitute *Dasein*'s authentic mode of comportment as Being-in-the-world of technology for we can 'leave the world be', so that it can reveal itself as it is, and not only as we think it has to be. Only where we leave things be in this way do our eyes open to what is essential in life[66]. To drive this point home, Heidegger succinctly states that:

> We can use technical devices, and yet with proper use also keep ourselves so free of them, that we may let go of them any time. We can use technical devices as they ought to be used, and also let them alone as something which does not affect our inner and real core. 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 […] We let technical devices enter our daily life, and at the same time leave them outside, that is, let them alone, as things which are nothing absolute but remain dependent upon something higher[67].

In other words, we can allow the world to be revealed through us technologically, but once we grasp that it happens through us in a way that is beyond our immediate control or mastery, we can hope to engage authentically with what is happening; we can begin to appreciate that it is simply one way for the world to be revealed through us that is ineluctably part of our hermeneutic context[68]. Thus at the same time then, we allow ourselves the possibility of remaining open to the world being revealed in other ways besides the technological. We can allow the world we encounter around us to emerge as more than simply standing-reserve; woods can emerge as more than forests of

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[55] Leach and Tartaglia, eds. *The Meaning of Life and the Great Philosophers*, 52.

[56] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 32.

[57] Rae, "Being and Technology", 317.

[58] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 26.

[59] Rae, "Being and Technology", 318.

[60] Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, 32.

[61] Bret W. Davis, *Heidegger and the Will: On the Way to Gelassenheit (*Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 184.

[62] O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity,* 116.

[63] O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity,* 117.

[64] Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*,34.

[65] Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, 55.

[66] Ziegler, *Heidegger in 60 Minutes*, 59.

[67] Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, 55.

[68] O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity*,119.

timber and keeping animals for tourist attraction, mountains as more than quarries of rock, the mind can represent more than a chemically functioning Central Processing Unit, the planet does not have to level out in standing-reserve or resource to serve some misconstrued well-being[69]. Indeed, we can let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself[70]; to use Heidegger's own maxim, "To the things themselves"[71]!

More importantly, we must not derive our self-understanding from technology alone, such that we may truly enjoy the use of our computers, internet, TV, cellphones and many other gadgets but we must by no means let these things define our lives[72]. The hope is that we can achieve authentic well-being by a balanced life that keeps technology in its place, as a *tool* for *our* use, not for the use of *us*[73]; for technology originates from man's needs, man does not originate from technology.

5. Conclusion

This paper has highlighted the relevance of Heidegger byreflecting on the revealing of technology and its threats to the well-being of *Dasein*. The examples of calculative thinking given here show that Heidegger is as pertinent as ever.Evidently, it would be foolish to attack technology blindly; it would be shortsighted to condemn it as the work of the devil in that we depend on technical devices and they even challenge us to ever greater advances[74]. In as far as technology in the African region is concerned, an African *Dasein* has seen a positive growth and development; for example, technology has made available what was not accessible some years ago in Africa –like, we can talk of the E-world or E-Africa which is the digitalization of learning, working, advertising or even purchasing of goods. Although it is moving on a slow rate, we cannot ignore the fact of improving life standards of Africans in the contemporary world.

But then, *Dasein* should always be conscious of the shackling danger inherent in technology by hearkening the call for the 'turn'[75] and eventually embrace the authentic comportment. In other words, we should not reject technology as such but learn to live within it by cultivating our capacity of letting beor releasement of things.Releasement toward things and openness to a mystery leads to a new ground of meaning. This is premised on the claim that man's nature provides the basis through which one wins an understanding of Being[76]. So, Heidegger does not demonizetechnology but wants us to reflect on its endangerments to the authentic well-being of *Dasein*.

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[69]O'Brien, *Heidegger and Authenticity*, 119.

[70] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 58.

[71]Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 50.

[72]Ziegler, *Heidegger in 60 Minutes*, 59.

[73]Ridling, *The Lightness of Being*,580.

[74] Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, 53.

[75] See Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), 129.

[76] Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, 21.

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