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THINKING, WITH HEIDEGGER,
THE RELIGION-SCIENCE-THEOLOGY RELATION

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the University of Denver

and the Iliff School of Theology Joint PhD Program

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

David L. Carlson

March 2013

Advisor: Dr. Francis Seeburger

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ABSTRACT

This work is an attempt to think the essential nature of the interrelationships among religion, science, and theology (RST) out of Heidegger's engagement with the question of Being. Three primary questions initially motivated this inquiry: First, how are the interrelations (if any) among religion, science, and theology to be understood? Second, is a relation of "dialogue," in some sense, possible among the three elements of the RST triad? And third, does theology have a rightful place in the public square dominated by the view that science serves as the "gold standard" for rationality and truth? The inquiry interweaves five threads, or lines of inquiry, which are posited as pertinent in the current RST discourse and central to Heidegger's thought. The first thread consists of the chapter themes: phenomenology, truth, technology, and ethics. The other four threads—comportment toward things, reflection, thinking, and destiny—each "cross-cut," or traverse, the chapter themes.

By Heidegger's lights, each cross-cutting thread harbors a duality: comportment toward things as objectification or non-objectification; reflection as *Reflexion* or *Besinnung* (mindfulness); thinking as calculative or meditative; and destiny as fate or the sending of Being (*Geschick*). Heidegger's critique of each duality—and the expanded global context suggested here for thinking the RST relation—offer fresh opportunities for reinscribing the customary formulation of theology (i.e., reflection upon religious

experience and belief) as a basis for a compelling dialogue among religion, science, and theology today.

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Abbreviations

Selected Works by Heidegger

BPP *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*

BQP *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected "Problems" of "Logic"*

BT *Being and Time*

GA *Gesamtausgabe (Collected Works; e.g., GA7 denotes Volume 7 of GA)*

IM *Introduction to Metaphysics*

OBT *Off the Beaten Track*

OWL *On the Way to Language*

P *Pathmarks*

PLT *Poetry, Language, Thought*

POR *The Principle of Reason*

PRL *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*

QCT *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*

WCT *What Is Called Thinking?*

Selected Works by Ian Barbour

EIAT *Ethics in an Age of Technology: The Gifford Lectures 1989-1991 Vol. 2*

RAS *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*

RIAS *Religion in an Age of Science: The Gifford Lectures 1989-1991 Vol. 1*

Chapter 1: Introduction

When we consider what religion is for mankind, and what science is, it is no exaggeration to say that the future course of history depends upon the decision of this generation as to the relations between them. We have here the two strongest general forces . . . which influence men, and they seem to be set one against the other—the force of our religious institutions, and the force of our impulse to accurate observation and logical deduction.¹

1.1 Thesis and Scope

For decades, the religion-science relation—and the closely related science-theology relation—have been customarily framed as a contested field of possible positions or states in which the two realms of meaning in each duality can be construed as being in relation to each other (or not). One of the more well-known frameworks employed in studying both relations is the four-position model of conflict, independence, dialogue, and integration developed by theologian and physicist Ian Barbour.² No consensus exists among participants in the scholarly “conversation” as to how things stand within each binary and between them. However, some theologians, such as Philip Hefner and J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, contend—via quite different approaches—that

1. Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 181-82. First published in 1925 by Macmillan.

2. Ian G. Barbour, *Religion in an Age of Science* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990). (Hereafter cited as *RIAS*.) He has consistently employed this fourfold typology in subsequent publications, including Ian G. Barbour, *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues* ([San Francisco]: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), hereafter cited as *RAS*, and Ian G. Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?* ([San Francisco]: HarperSanFrancisco, 2000).

postmodern critiques of the philosophy of science and epistemology provide new possibilities for genuine dialogue between science and religion, theology, or both.³

This dissertation is an inquiry into the possible contribution the thought of philosopher Martin Heidegger can make to the question of whether dialogue, in some important sense, is possible in the religion-science and science-theology relations, and, more generally, how the threefold relation of religion, science, and theology is best characterized or thought. Through his creative appropriation of the phenomenological method, Heidegger wrote extensively about science, theology, and the religious dimension of existence, and consistently affirmed theology's rightful place in public discourse.

My thesis is that: (i) contemporary explications of the religion-science and science-theology relations are conducted in the mode of *metaphysical* (i.e., representational, reason-seeking and -giving) thinking; and that (ii) Heidegger's thought provides resources for complementing such thought with *non-metaphysical* (i.e., reflective, meditative, noncalculative) thinking in ways that open a space for meaningful, significant dialogue in these relations. In defending this thesis, I shall argue that non-metaphysical thinking is a possibility—and a necessity—for thinking the religion-science-theology relation fruitfully in our time.⁴

3. Philip Hefner, *The Human Factor: Evolution, Culture, and Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, *Duet or Duel? Theology and Science in a Postmodern World* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998).

4. Although Heidegger famously declares that “science does not think” in *What Is Called Thinking?* (trans. J. Glenn Gray [New York: Harper & Row, 1968], 8), he also states that scientists are capable of reflective, mindful thinking. See Martin Heidegger, “Science and Reflection,” in *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 181-82.

In sum, my primary purpose is not to critique or reinterpret Heidegger's work, but rather to bring his thought—and my own—to bear constructively upon the contemporary discourse regarding these relations. I call this agenda “thinking, with Heidegger,” an inquiry which is at once complementary and innovative, imaginative, and constructive.

1.2 Context

This section provides a rationale for framing this inquiry in terms of the RST relation rather than either the religion-science or science-theology relation. I present brief background information about the field of religion-science-theology studies before and since its ostensible founding in the 1960s.

1.2.1 Religion-Science, Science-Theology, or Religion-Science-Theology?

In a recent essay reflecting upon the study of the interrelationships among religion, science, and theology, theologian Philip Hefner offers reasons for regarding the *religion-science* duality as the primary focus for analysis and reflection.⁵ In the same compendium of essays, theologian Michael Welker defends the primacy of the *science-theology* binary.⁶ In this section, I shall briefly describe their views and then proffer a potential bridge between these dualities as an initial step in thinking the religion-science-theology relation holistically.

5. Philip Hefner, “Religion-and-Science,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*, ed. Philip Clayton and Zachary Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 562-76.

6. Michael Welker, “Science and Theology: Their Relation at the Beginning of the Third Millennium,” in Clayton and Simpson, *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*, 551-61.

Welker favors the study of the science-theology binary for two reasons.⁷ First, he contends that meaningful discourse between religion and science is inherently problematic: “There is no such thing, and there can be no such thing, as a discourse between a religion and a science, not to speak of a discourse between ‘religion as such’ and ‘science as such’, whatever that might be” (Welker, “Science and Theology,” 552). For Welker, the academy is the arena for meaningful discourse, so theology and religious studies are the appropriate dialogue partners for science. Second, he observes that reflection upon the religion-science relation runs the risk of settling for nonspecific “comparative observations” between the two fields. While he acknowledges that “general methodological reflections” are indeed necessary for fruitful interdisciplinary discourse of any sort, science-theology interaction should aim for producing mutually enriching results, formulated as testable truth-claims, in specific topics that are meaningful to each field:

. . . the great potentials of the Science and Theology discourse lie neither in the establishment of a meta-level above their area of research, nor in attempts to synthesize both approaches. The great potential of these dialogues lie instead in raising boundary sensitivities and in gaining specific insights into conceptual limits and the dangers of pernicious reductionisms. (Welker, “Science and Theology,” 558)

7. More precisely, Welker restricts the possibility of meaningful dialogue to that between *Theology* and *Science* (each with capitalized initial letters). Each of these “moves between elementary authentic experience, observations, and thoughts [characteristic of *theology* and *science*, without capital letters] on the one hand, and elaborate theories [characteristic of *THEOLOGY* and *SCIENCE*, in capital letters], on the other” (Welker, “Science and Theology,” 557). That is, *theology* and *science* are *minimalist* in the sense that the former entails only minimal levels of conviction and “existential influence,” while the latter merely requires “immediate observations and reflections about nature and natural events” without appealing to a theoretical framework (555-56). At the other extreme, *THEOLOGY* and *SCIENCE* are *maximalist* in the sense that each entails “an elaborate interconnection of thought and conviction,” bolstered in the case of *SCIENCE* by “tested experience related to nature and its texture” (554). On his view, dialogue is only possible between these minimalist and maximalist expressions of theology and science.

Examples of topics that meet Welker's criteria include "cosmological and natural religious questions," "evolutionary theory and genetic research," and "divine action" (553).

In contrast, Hefner favors engaging science "from a stance within religious experience" (Hefner, "Religion-and-Science," 562) rather than primarily with theology (or its nontheistic equivalent), for two primary reasons: first, theology is increasingly isolated as a separate discipline within the academy, and second, Hefner construes "religion" broadly in terms of Tillich's (arguably universal) notion of ultimate concern. Also, he notes that the terminology of "theology" and "theologian" is foreign to the world's religious communities outside of Christianity (566-69).

Hefner calls the task of undertaking such engagement *religion-and-science*. He contends that religion-and-science is rooted in the beginnings of human history as the primordial quest for meaning and order. In this context, he defines *meaning* as "the establishing of a link or a 'fit' between what is important to us in our own lives and the world in which we live" (563). "Since . . . our experience of the world, to a significant degree, is mediated through scientific knowledge, the work of forging links of meaning is itself our most significant engagement with science" (ibid.) Moreover, Hefner distinguishes between what he calls the *doing* of religion-and-science and the *study* of such doing. He cites his theological model of the *created co-creator*⁸ as an example of the *doing* of religion-and-science and cites his reflective essay as an example of the *study* of the doing of religion-and-science (562-63).

8. "Human beings are God's created co-creators whose purpose is to be the agency, acting in freedom, to birth the future that is most wholesome for the nature that has birthed us . . . Exercising this agency is said to be God's will for humans" (Hefner, *The Human Factor*, 27).

To emphasize, Hefner views religion-and-science as an activity originating from *within*, or out of, religious experience, rather than a disinterested approach as commonly taken, for example, in religious studies:

We do not simply observe religion-and-science or study its components; the grappling with meaning *vis-à-vis* that which is most important to us requires our full engagement, because it is the meaning of our lives that is at stake, not just the mapping of an academic terrain. (Hefner, "Religion-and-Science," 566)

In contrast to Welker, Hefner does not limit the study of religion-and-science in order to conform to an academic understanding of religion and its mode of discourse. Instead, such study takes place at the "border" between academic and religious communities, and necessarily incorporates different modes of thinking: "Academia fosters the critical thinking that is essential, but it is ambivalent about religion-and-science, because discernment, authenticity of experience, and confessional thinking are not its criteria of success and advancement" (574).

Ian Barbour agrees with Hefner in viewing the religion-science binary as primary. Like Hefner, Barbour invokes Tillich's universalizing articulation of the nexus of religion in his own broad definition of "religion" as "total life-orientation in response to what is deemed worthy of ultimate concern and devotion."⁹ For Barbour, the experiences and beliefs of the religious community are primary; these form the basis for the secondary, or derivative, activity of theological reflection. Barbour also notes that, unlike theology, religion and science as everyday practices are unreflective. Consequently, he

9. Ian G. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 10. (Hereafter cited as *Issues*.)

acknowledges an important role for the philosophies of religion and science in his analysis of the religion-science relation:

Scientists and theologians have usually tried to relate science directly to religion, neglecting the contribution that philosophy can make to the clarification of issues. On the other hand, professional philosophers have often had little contact with either the scientific or the religious community, and their abstract formulations sometimes bear little resemblance to what scientists and theologians are actually doing. The point of departure for philosophy of religion must be the worshipping community and its theological ideas; only then can philosophy serve a function both critical and relevant to religion. Similarly, philosophy of science must be based on the actual practice of scientific work. (*Issues*, 11)

Is the border between religion-and-science and science-and-theology perhaps more porous than their ardent defenders claim? First, as *prima facie* evidence, consider two examples, which could easily be multiplied. As mentioned earlier, Hefner cites his *theological* model of the created co-creator as an example of the doing of religion-and-science. Barbour first published his fourfold typology as “Ways of Relating Science and Theology” (emphasis added) in 1988.¹⁰ Two years later, he published the same typology, together with essentially the same detailed explication, as “Ways of Relating Science and Religion” (emphasis added)!¹¹

Second, the current literature in the “subfields” (as I would like to regard them) of religion-and-science and theology-and-science already contains language that appears to connect them fundamentally. I have in mind statements that regard theology, in some

10. Ian G. Barbour, “Ways of Relating Science and Theology,” in *Physics, Philosophy and Theology: A Common Quest for Understanding*, Robert J. Russell, William R. Stoeger, and George V. Coyne, eds. (Vatican City State: Vatican Observatory, 1988), 21-45.

11. Barbour, *RIAS*, 3-30. The sections on Conflict, Independence, and Dialogue in these two publications are virtually identical. The original essay described two versions of Integration: Doctrinal Reformulation and Systematic Synthesis. In *RIAS*, the subsection, Doctrinal Reformulation, was split into two subsections, Natural Theology and Theology of Nature, each expanded slightly.

sense, as *reflection upon religious experience and/or belief*. Consider some examples. From Barbour's writings, "Theology is systematic reflection about the beliefs of a particular religious community" (*Issues*, 10); and later, "Theology is critical reflection on the life and thought of the religious community" (*RIAS*, 267). Van Huyssteen writes: "In theology, as a critical reflection on religious experience . . ." ¹² Thus, for some writers at least, viewing theology as a form of reflection upon religious experience and/or belief perhaps can serve as a bridge between these the religion-science and science-theology dualities as well as between their respective academic subfields.

Although viewing theology in this way has many adherents, others, such as Thomas Torrance, define theology in terms of the literal etymological meaning of *theology* as *the study of God*. ¹³ In addition, some start from the premise that theology is, in some sense, a science or "scientific." These three views are not mutually exclusive, however. Arthur Peacocke incorporates elements from the first two views to formulate theology as "the reflective and intellectual analysis of the experience of God and . . . principally the Christian forms of that experience." ¹⁴ In a variant on the first view, Alister McGrath understands theology as "intellectual reflection on the content of the Christian

12. J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality: Toward Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 201. (Hereafter cited as *Shaping*.)

13. "Theology is the unique science devoted to knowledge of God, differing from other sciences by the uniqueness of its object which can be apprehended only on its own terms and from within the actual situation it has created in our existence in making itself known." Thomas Torrance, *Theological Science* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 281.

14. Arthur Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming—Natural, Divine, and Human* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 6.

faith.”¹⁵ McGrath, like Torrance and Peacocke, take the methods of science to be deeply relevant to the task of theology.

Despite these different characterizations of “theology,” I shall provisionally employ in this inquiry the formulation of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief as a possible means for bridging the religion-science and science-theology relations. At minimum, this formulation is intended to acknowledge that, in the investigation of either duality, the “missing” element (theology or religion) is usually, if not nearly always, at issue as well. Hence, unless a specific binary is under scrutiny, I shall continue to refer to the matter for thought in this inquiry as the *religion-science-theology relation* (aka *RST relation*) and this field of study as the *religion-science-theology field* (aka *RST field*).

The formulation of theology as reflection upon religious experience and belief is not to be regarded in this inquiry as a *definition*, but rather as a *question*: namely, What is the essential nature of theology? I shall engage this question by starting from this proffered “formula” for theology and then interrogating it at various points in this inquiry. For example, in Sections 2.3 (Phenomenology and Theology) and 2.4 (Theology, Natural Science, and Objectification) below, we shall examine Heidegger’s engagement with the question of whether theology is, in some sense, a science. Also, Section 3.4 below (Truth and Reflection) examines multiple meanings of “reflection.”

Finally, the contrasting views of Hefner and Welker regarding the study of religion-and-science-and-theology briefly presented here bring into focus a central

15. Alistair McGrath, *The Foundations of Dialogue in Science and Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 32.

question for this entire inquiry: What are the most appropriate arenas and modes of discourse for thinking the RST relation? Based upon the brief examination of their views above, Welker apparently holds that such thinking is most meaningfully conducted within academia and its conventions regarding discourse, while Hefner opts for engaging the border between academic and religious communities in which different modes of thinking may be incorporated.¹⁶ Also, Welker seems to conflate “discourse” and “dialogue” in his defense of Theology rather than religion as the appropriate partner for dialogue (as discourse) with Science.¹⁷

On my view, this question of appropriate arenas and modes of thinking the RST relation—together with the question of the essential nature of theology and the discourse/dialogue distinction (if any)—bear directly upon the questions that initially motivated this inquiry: What is the nature of the RST relation? Can “dialogue” meaningfully characterize this relation—at least under some circumstances? And can theology legitimately claim a place in the public square?

1.2.2 Origins of an Academic Field?

Two fundamental—perhaps essential--signs of an emergent academic field are the existence of a founding textbook and a founding journal devoted to the field of inquiry. If

16. Hefner does not neglect the public square as a third arena. In “Public Intellectual or Disciplinary Journal?”—his final editorial as editor for *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* (hereafter cited as *Zygon*)—Hefner traces the movement of *Zygon* between the “poles” of the public square and academia since its inception in 1966. “The dissonance between public square and specialized academic discipline is serious and important. The public sphere requires clarity, simplicity, and relevance; policy and action are present immediacies—they cannot be delayed interminably until research projects are completed. On the other hand, the complexities of specialization and research do make an irreplaceable contribution.” *Zygon* 44, no. 2 (June 2009): 239.

17. I shall briefly take up the question of the dialogue/discourse difference in Section 5.1 below.

this claim is granted, then the year 1966 arguably marks the beginning of the RST academic field. In that year, Ian Barbour published *Issues in Science and Religion*, and *Zygon* was launched under its first editor, Ralph Burhoe. Hefner, an editor of *Zygon* during 1989-2009, observed in his retrospective on *Zygon*'s origins and purpose: "In 1966, there was no religion-and-science field, no enterprise designated as 'religion-and-science'."¹⁸

What were the issues, questions, and visions that motivated the founders and predecessors that led to the establishment of what I am calling the RST field? Simply stated, *why* and *when* did this academic field get underway? Of particular interest and relevance to this inquiry are those concerns, questions, and hopes *that are still pertinent, and even compelling*, today, while engaging these questions in their full scope is beyond the purpose of this inquiry.¹⁹ This subsection briefly examines some of the motivational origins of *Issues* and *Zygon* to provide a glimpse of the origins of the RST academic field.

Issues is a strong candidate for designation as a founding textbook. Robert John Russell, founder and director of the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, regards *Issues* as decisive in the initial formulation and development of RST studies.

18. Hefner, "Public Intellectual or Disciplinary Journal?", 237.

19. On Heidegger's view, such a project would be an *historical reflection*, because it would study the past for the sake of the future. He contrasts this understanding of the purposes of history with *historiological consideration*, which studies the past from the standpoint of the present. Section 3.2 refers to this distinction in discussing Heidegger's critique of the customary understanding of truth as the correctness of the correspondence between assertions and their referents.

In his groundbreaking 1966 publication, *Issues in Science and Religion*, Ian G. Barbour laid out a series of well-crafted arguments involving issues in epistemology . . . language . . . and methodology. Together these arguments provide what I call the ‘bridge’ between science and religion; more than any other scholar’s work, these arguments, in my opinion, have made possible the developments of the past five decades.²⁰

In his Introduction to *Issues*, Barbour acknowledges the lack of suitable textbooks for study in this field: “A number of universities and seminaries have in the last decade introduced courses in ‘Science and Religion’ . . . ; there is need for a comprehensive text for such courses” (*Issues*, 11).

What propelled Barbour to devote more than five decades of his life to the RST field? He recently described his “intellectual and spiritual journey” from birth to his eightieth year (1923-2002),²¹ but, in my view, his writings in the RST field (and earlier) illuminate more specifically the questions, issues, and vision that have guided his contributions to this field. Space permits only a couple of examples. Barbour begins his Introduction to *Issues* with these three questions: “Is the scientific method the only reliable guide to truth? Is man only a complex biochemical mechanism? How can God act if the world is law-abiding?” His largest intended audience for *Issues* “includes those persons . . . who recognize the importance of scientific and religious ideas in the modern world and are concerned about the relation between them” (*Issues*, 11-12). He closes the Introduction by quoting the first sentence of the paragraph from Whitehead that appears as the epitaph to this inquiry: “When we consider what religion is for mankind, and what

20. Robert John Russell, “Ian Barbour’s Methodological Breakthrough: Creating the ‘Bridge’ between Science and Theology,” in *Fifty Years in Science and Religion: Ian G. Barbour and His Legacy*, ed. Robert John Russell (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 45.

21. Ian G. Barbour, “A Personal Odyssey,” in Russell, *Fifty Years*, 17-28.

science is, it is no exaggeration to say that the future course of history depends upon the decision of this generation as to the relations between them.”

Several years earlier, he quoted this same sentence as the lead-in for his seminal paper, “The Methods of Science and Religion.”²² Immediately following the quote, he wrote: “Alfred North Whitehead’s words of thirty years ago find new urgency in the age of nuclear fission and the Sputniks. What factors today hinder the co-operation of science and religion on which the future course of Western civilization may depend?” Barbour adopted, and adapted, Whitehead’s assessment of the fundamental importance of thinking the RST relation for the sake of the future of history as the context for his life’s work.

Turning to *Zygon*, What were some of the concerns and hopes that contributed to its founding? In its inaugural issue, the editors articulated the meaning of the journal’s title and its fundamental purpose:

Zygon, the Greek term for anything which joins two bodies, especially the yoking or harnessing of a team which must effectively pull together, is a symbol for this journal whose aim is to reunite the split team, values and knowledge, where co-ordination is essential for a viable dynamics of human culture.

We respond to the growing fears that the widening chasm in twentieth-century culture between values and knowledge, or good and truth, or religion and science, is disruptive if not lethal for human destiny. In this split, the traditional faiths and philosophies, which once informed men of what is of most sacred concern for them, have lost their credibility and hence their power. Yet human fulfilment or *salvation in the age of science* requires not less but more insight and conviction concerning life’s basic values and moral requirements.²³

22. Ian G. Barbour, “The Methods of Science and Religion,” in *Science Ponders Religion*, ed. Harlow Shapley (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1960), 196.

23. Ralph W. Burhoe et al., [inaugural editorial], in *Zygon* 1, no. 1 (March 1966): 1 (emphasis added).

In what way might this aim of “salvation” be understood and realized? In the same first issue of *Zygon*, the editors announced that this journal would be about the *doing* of religion-and-science as well as the *study* of the doing of religion-and-science. Writing about the roots of this journal, the editors sharpened and simplified the rather lengthy statement of *Zygon*’s purpose stated above: “. . . to develop an integration of religious systems with the contemporary scientific views of man and the world” (ibid., 119).

The term “salvation” was evidently not chosen lightly by the *Zygon* editors. Several years earlier, Burhoe published an essay, “Salvation in the Twentieth Century.”²⁴ In response to “prophets of doom,” such as (in his view) Toynbee, Spengler, and Sorokin, Burhoe contended “that our salvation today lies in *religion*” (*Science Ponders Religion*, 66; emphasis added). However, he qualified his claim by insisting that religion “must also be scientific” (ibid.), and that the notion of “religion” is best understood *functionally*—that is, in terms of religion’s social utility:

I submit that religions in whatever culture—and the anthropologists are hardly able to find any culture without one—are the organs or institutions whose functions it is to engender attitudes and behavior that tend to adapt man to the conditions of his total environment in such a way as to optimize his prime values. I submit further that these prime values will probably be found to be essentially a continuation of the long-established values of all living creatures: the continuation and advancement of life. (Burhoe, *Science Ponders Religion*, 67)

In the next few paragraphs, I shall draw from the editors’ summary of the three roots of *Zygon* to illuminate some of the motivating concerns and expectations therein in

24. Ralph Burhoe, “Salvation in the Twentieth Century,” in Shapley, *Science Ponders Religion*, 65-86.

regard to the status of the religion-science relation. One of the roots was the Committee on Science and Values, established in 1950 by the American Academy for Arts and Sciences at the urging of Burhoe, the executive officer of the Academy at the time. The Committee's charter document is consonant with the stated purpose of *Zygon* and the views of its founding editor, Burhoe:

We believe that the sudden changing of man's physical and mental climate brought about by science and technology in the last century has rendered inadequate ancient institutional structures and educational forms, and that the survival of human society depends on a re-formation of man's world view and ethics, by grounding them in the revelations of modern science as well as on tradition and intuition.²⁵

A second root of *Zygon* was a series of summer conferences held on Star Island, a few miles off the coast of New Hampshire, during the 1950s. In 1950, a group of "freethinking theologians and clergymen" met there to launch a "Conference on the Coming Great Church" to increase cooperation among religious groups and expand the influence of religion in seeking world peace. In 1954, again at the suggestion of Burhoe, more than 200 liberal theologians and clergy from the 1950 conference and scientists from the Academy Committee met together to discuss possibilities for greater harmony between religion, science, and theology under the theme, "Conference on Religion in the Age of Science." Burhoe summed up the conference consensus as follows:

While there were a number of both scientists and clergymen who held that religious truth was hardly susceptible to being approached by scientific methods, except perhaps in the negative sense of being prohibited by scientific beliefs, there was a strong and seemingly growing recognition that today man can increase the scope and validity of his understanding of his destiny and of his

25. Ralph W. Burhoe et al., "Some Roots of *Zygon*," in *Zygon* 1, no. 1 (March 1966): 118.

relationship to that “in which he lives and moves and has his being,” not only by reading ancient texts, but also by building up the science of theology in harmony with other science.²⁶

A few months later, the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science (IRAS) was founded.

Among the three purposes of this “nondenominational, independent society” is the following: “to formulate dynamic and positive relationships between the concepts developed by science and the goals and hopes of humanity expressed through religion.”²⁷

A third root was the interest shown by a number of schools of theology and liberal programs at the denominational level in the activities of IRAS, especially the Star Island summer conferences. “During the late 1950s, the Institute sought to stimulate various theological schools to consider more systematically the potential role of the science in reformulating man’s religious conceptions of his nature and destiny.”²⁸

To sum up, I suggest that what we hear in these expressions of concerns and hopes regarding the RST relation are, for the most part, eloquent and imaginative re-statements of Whitehead’s claim, quoted on the first page of this entire inquiry, that thinking (or perhaps better, re-thinking) the essential nature of the RST relation is both vitally important and urgent. With comparable emphasis, I would say, we also hear an imperative to *ground*—or otherwise orient, in some sense—religion and theology in the

26. Ralph W. Burhoe, “Religion in an Age of Science,” in *Science* 120 (1 October 1954): 522.

27. “Mission Statement,” Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, accessed September 3, 2012, <http://www.iras.org/Welcome.html>.

28. Burhoe et al., *Zygon*, 1 (1966): 118.

knowledge and methods of science. Bluntly speaking, the message seems to be that religion and theology, need to “get with it” if religion and theology are to be, in some sense, “effective” or “relevant” to our lives individually, and in community with others and the earth itself. I say, “for the most part,” because Philip Hefner, for one, approaches both the doing as well as the study of the doing of religion-and-science from “the stance of religious experience.” That is, he seeks no (illusory) Archimedean point or synoptic perch from which to survey dispassionately the field of religion-and-science.

Let these tensions continue to hover over and inform this inquiry.

1.2.3 Ian Barbour’s Fourfold Typology and Critical Realism Methodology

The purpose of this section is to explicate how Barbour thinks the RST relation from his formulation of *critical realism* and, in particular, how he construes—and defends—the possibility of meaningful “dialogue” within this relation. Specifically, I shall show that Barbour’s fourfold typology—Conflict, Independence, Dialogue, and Integration—unfolds from his methodology of critical realism.²⁹ In so doing, we shall see

29. Several thinkers in the RST field have developed typologies that describe possible modes, or states, of relationality between religion and science, or between science and theology. One group offers modified formulations of some or all of Barbour’s specific modalities but posits a “gradient” of increasing interaction, such as Barbour’s framework. See, for example, David R. Griffin, *God and Religion in the Postmodern World* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989) and John F. Haught, *Science and Religion: From Conflict to Conversation* (New York: Paulist, 1995). A second group also formulates modal typologies, but without an explicit or implied gradient of modalities, and often without explicit reference to Barbour’s fourfold schema. For example, see the eightfold typology in Ted Peters, “Science and Theology: Toward Consonance,” in *Science and Theology: The New Consonance*, ed. Ted Peters (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998), 13-22. A third group has created *nonmodal* typologies by employing “dimension” or “axis” as a primal notion. For example, Mikael Stenmark embeds a reformulated version of Barbour’s modalities within four “dimensions”—social, teleological, epistemic, and theoretical; see Mikael Stenmark, *How to Relate Science and Religion: A Multidimensional Model* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004). In a more radical move, Christian Berg advocates *replacing* Barbour’s four modalities with the “dimensions” of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics; see Christian Berg, “Barbour’s Way(s) of Relating Science and Theology,” in Russell, *Fifty Years*, 61-75.

how Barbour engages the primary themes of Chapters 2 and 3 of this inquiry: namely, *phenomenology* (in general terms, the role of philosophy in thinking the RST relation) and *truth*. In Section 5.2 below, I shall engage Barbour's views on *technology* and *ethics*—the themes of Chapters 4 and 5, respectively. In *Issues* and throughout most of his later writings, Barbour interprets *science* primarily in terms of the natural sciences and *religion* in terms of the three Abrahamic faith traditions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

As a form of realism, critical realism affirms that a world of objects and their interrelations exists independently of our minds. However, critical realism opposes *naïve realism*, which holds that our access to that which is real is direct and immediate. In contrast, critical realism asserts that our knowledge of these objects is always indirect and incomplete, mediated through language and models. Against *positivism*, critical realism contends that the real is greater than the merely perceptible. With respect to *anti-realism*, (i) critical realism rejects idealism's claim that our ideas about reality exhaust (or even constitute) reality itself; and (ii) critical realism opposes *instrumentalism*, which reduces our knowledge of the real to the merely useful or functional (162-74). Briefly stated, Barbour describes critical realism "as a middle ground between classical realism and instrumentalism."³⁰

Barbour nuanced explication of truth is based upon his critical realist orientation: ". . . the *meaning* of truth is correspondence with reality. But because reality is inaccessible to us, the *criteria* of truth must include all four of the [following] criteria . . .

30. Barbour, "Personal Odyssey," in Russell, *Fifty Years*, 23.

.” (RAS, 110): namely, agreement with data, coherence, scope, and fertility. These are four criteria “for assessing theories in normal scientific research” (109). The first criterion reflects the classical realist understanding of truth. By including the other three criteria, Barbour intends to incorporate as well the *coherence* view of truth (“a set of propositions is true if it is comprehensive and internally coherent”) and the *pragmatic* view (“a proposition is true if it works in practice”) (109-10). In sum, he says: “Because correspondence is taken as the definition of truth, this is a form of realism, but it is a *critical* realism because a combination of criteria is used” (109). Barbour subsequently employs this twofold formulation of truth in explicating the nature of truth-claims of religion. In so doing, Barbour reinterprets the four criteria in ways appropriate to religion, while acknowledging important—even fundamental—differences between religion and science (110-13).

For Barbour, *methodology* has at least two distinct meanings. Taken broadly, “methodology” refers to his formulation of critical realism,³¹ which encompasses distinctive positions with respect to metaphysics, epistemology, and language, together with the analysis of “methodology” in a narrower sense. The latter (“method-ology” in

31. Other contributors to the RST discourse have developed slightly different formulations of critical realism. See, for example, Arthur Peacocke, *Intimations of Reality: Critical Realism in Science and Religion* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984) and John Polkinghorne, *One World: The Interaction of Science and Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986). Polkinghorne has described the differences and similarities in the formulations of critical realism by himself, Barbour, and Peacocke in John Polkinghorne, *Scientists as Theologians: A Comparison of the Writings of Ian Barbour, Arthur Peacocke, and John Polkinghorne* (London: SPCK, 1996). For a critique of critical realism itself, see Niels H. Gregersen, “Critical Realism and Other Realisms,” in Russell, *Fifty Years*, 77-95.

the narrower sense) refers to Barbour's extensive examination of similarities and differences between the methods of science and those of religion.³²

Describing the intertwining of methodology and typology in *Issues* will show it exemplifies both the *study* of the doing of RST as well as the *doing* itself.³³ Indeed, in Barbour's own words, *Issues* has these two complementary objectives: "to compare alternative positions [regarding the RST relation] and to suggest a consistent constructive position in relation to these alternatives" (*Issues*, 9; original emphases). To establish the first half of the claim, I shall briefly trace in *Issues* Barbour's explication of "conflict," "independence," "dialogue," and (implicitly) "integration" as possible modalities for the religion-science relation. For the second half of the claim, I shall briefly analyze the key role of critical realism in his explication—and defense—of a form of process theology that exemplifies what he later calls "integration."

Throughout *Issues*, Barbour's analysis of the RST relation is thought *philosophically*: ". . . a central concern of this volume is the relationship between *philosophy of religion* and *philosophy of science*, that is, comparative questions of epistemology, metaphysics, and language analysis in the two fields" (*ibid.*, 11). For Barbour, engaging philosophy in thinking the RST relation is essential, because the everyday practices of religion and science are unreflective. In particular, critical realism is explicated in epistemic and metaphysical terms:

32. Barbour analyzes the similarities and differences between religion and science in terms of their *methods* rather than their *content* because of the widely-held "assumption that the scientific method is the only road to knowledge" (*Issues*, 137).

33. This will also bolster the plausibility of regarding *Issues* as a founding textbook for the RST field.

Among the areas of classical philosophy that bear on religion (and on science), *epistemology* deals with the nature of knowledge (methods of inquiry, criteria of truth, the role of the knower, the status of theories), and *metaphysics* deals with the most general categories for interpreting the structure of reality (time, causality, mind, matter, and so forth). (*Issues*, 11)

Let us now briefly examine Barbour's four-position model for describing possible relationships between religion and science (alternatively, theology and science).³⁴ For the purposes of this inquiry, the modalities of Dialogue and Integration are of special interest. As we examine these modalities, keep in mind that Barbour viewed their employment in thinking the RST relation flexibly.

Conflict. Scientific materialism and biblical literalism are Barbour's canonical examples of irreconcilable conflict between religion and science. On his view, epistemic and metaphysical issues are at the center of both manifestations of Conflict.³⁵ In his Gifford lectures (1989-91), Barbour noted that this "inflation" of science to a philosophy of "scientific materialism" continues today. Its tenets are *epistemological* (science is the only reliable road to knowledge) and *metaphysical* (matter is [or matter and energy are] the basic reality of the universe) (*RIAS*, 4-7).

In Barbour's view, then, the conflict between science and religion posed by scientific materialism is only apparent, as it is based upon a conflation of philosophical claims with findings based upon scientific reasoning. Similarly, biblical literalism has "overreached" its domain for centuries by making "scientific" claims about nature and

34. As pointed out earlier, Barbour employs the same four-position model in examining both binary relations.

35. In this section (and hereafter, as appropriate) I shall follow Barbour's practice (in *RIAS*) of capitalizing each of the modalities in his fourfold typology: thus, Conflict, Independence, Dialogue, and Integration.

the world. Although Barbour acknowledges the historical importance of the Conflict modality, he treats Conflict, in effect, as a foil for delineating the other three modalities in more detail.

Independence. In this modality, religion and science separate into nonoverlapping compartments, “motivated . . . not simply by the desire to avoid unnecessary conflicts, but also by the desire to be faithful to the distinctive character of each area of life and thought” (10). In *Issues*, Barbour traces the rise of three 20th century “movements” that serve to highlight differences between the methods of religion and science: neo-orthodoxy, existentialism, and linguistic analysis. Within each movement, conflict between religion and science is avoided because the domains do not overlap:

In neo-orthodoxy, it is the uniqueness of revelation that distinguishes theology from all human discovery. In existentialism, the dichotomy between personal existence and impersonal objects is the ground of the contrast. For linguistic analysis, the difference in the functions of religious and scientific language is the basis of the distinction. (*Issues*, 116)

In effect, the “two language” view of linguistic analysis gives rise to a “two-world” view of reality, which Barbour finds unacceptable. “I advocate a critical realism holding that both communities make cognitive claims about realities beyond the human world. We cannot remain content with a plurality of unrelated languages if they are languages about the same world” (*RAS*, 89).

Dialogue. This modality requires “indirect interactions between science and religion [or science and theology] involving boundary questions and methods [i.e.,

methodological parallels]” (RIAS, 16).³⁶ Barbour’s detailed defense of cognitive claims in religious language relies on critical realism: “[W]e seek in religion, as in science, a *critical realism* which preserves what is valid in both positivism and linguistic analysis, without being restricted to ‘summaries of sense-data,’ on the one hand, or ‘useful fictions’ on the other.”³⁷

Barbour defends the possibility of cognitive claims in religious language by examining similarities (as well as differences) in the *criteria* for evaluating religious beliefs and scientific theories stated above. In his view, religion and science share the common goal of the “intelligible ordering of experience”; the methods of both are grounded in the interweaving of experience and interpretation. Barbour delineates three common criteria of intelligibility across science and religion: (1) relation to “data,” (2) coherence, and (3) comprehensiveness, although the interpretation of these criteria is specific to each field (253).

Barbour turns to metaphysics to bolster his case for the legitimacy of a modality of Dialogue between religion and science. Both of them, he says, are necessarily linked to metaphysics in a significant sense. For Barbour, a set of religious beliefs constitutes a “world view” because such beliefs not only function in the domain of worship and personal experience but also make claims about nature, God, and humanity. Such a collection of beliefs may therefore be viewed as *metaphysical* in the sense that they

36. Except for the replacement of “religion” with “theology,” exactly the same phrase appears in Barbour’s earlier essay, “Ways of Relating Science and Theology,” 33 (see n. 10). I therefore shall regard hereafter the two expressions as equivalent characterizations of Barbour’s modality of Dialogue.

37. *Issues*, 248, original emphasis.

include assertions about the “fundamental character of reality” (261). Thus, for Barbour, religious beliefs inescapably make use of metaphysical categories and hence share a kinship with scientific theories.

Integration. This modality requires a move beyond demonstrating “*indirect* interaction” between religion and science (sufficient for Dialogue) to “*direct* relationships” that meet at least one of two criteria: namely, “when scientific theories influence religious beliefs, or when they both contribute to the formulation of a coherent world view or a systematic metaphysics” (*RIAS*, 16).³⁸ In particular, this modality entails integration “between the *content* of theology and the *content* of science” (23, emphasis added).³⁹

Barbour revisits the three “movements” discussed under Independence—neo-orthodoxy, existentialism, and linguistic analysis—and examines other “classical views” (e.g., neo-Thomism) with regard to the relation between God and nature. (*Issues*, Chapter 13, Sections I and II). Roughly speaking, neo-orthodoxy, existentialism, and linguistic analysis ignore nature *as* nature. Natural theology, such as neo-Thomism, can at best establish the plausibility of the existence of God but can say nothing about God’s relationship to the world (*ibid.*). He then turns to process philosophy, as developed by Whitehead and refined by Charles Hartshorne, to develop his own *theology of nature* as a contemporary example of an inclusive metaphysical system that incorporates essential

38. Barbour’s characterization of Integration for the science-theology relation is identical; see Barbour, “Ways of Relating Science and Theology,” 33.

39. Barbour’s criteria for Integration, and his inclusion of boundary questions in his criteria for Dialogue, seem consistent with Welker’s statement of “the great potentials of the Science and Theology discourse” (Welker, “Science and Theology,” 558); also quoted in Subsection 1.2.1 above.

elements of science and religion, thus satisfying the second criterion for the modality of integration (ibid., Section III).

I omit details here, except to note Barbour's indebtedness to critical realism in his adaptation of concepts from process thought: ". . . Whitehead does affirm that God makes a difference in the world, not just in our attitudes toward the world. A critical realism acknowledges the symbolic character of all languages, but insists that they refer to a single world" (463).

To summarize: *Issues* prefigures the modalities in Barbour's well-known fourfold typology of the RST relation more than two decades prior to its formal publication. The metaphysical and epistemological assumptions of critical realism are essential in Barbour's arguments for establishing Dialogue and Integration as legitimate modalities. Although Independence is a helpful "first approximation" to thinking the RST relation, its insufficiency is glaring in light of the imperative to think the relation in terms of the "one world" we all live in. The possibility of Integration emerges from his commitment to a robust theology of nature—rooted in communities of faith and supported by certain resources of process thought. For more than four decades, Barbour has continued to develop and refine these basic insights found in *Issues*.⁴⁰

40. Some other writers contend that *non-typological* approaches are needed for thinking the RST relation, in light of increasing pluralisms in religion, the philosophy of science, and cognition in general. See, for example, Niels H. Gregersen and J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, "Theology and Science in a Pluralist World: An Introduction," in *Rethinking Theology and Science: Six Models for the Current Dialogue*, eds. Niels H. Gregersen and J. Wentzel van Huyssteen (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 3-6. Barbour defends the use of typologies in thinking the RST relation against the charge that they are too static and too simple in his article, "On Typologies for Relating Science and Religion," in *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 37, no. 2 (June 2002): 345-59.

This section sets the stage for thinking the RST relation with Heidegger. First, it provides a rationale for engaging the RST relation instead of either the religion-science or science-theology binary (or both). It does so by employing (and subsequently critiquing) the customary formulation of theology as the reflection of religious experience and belief. Second, reviewing key elements of Ian Barbour’s fourfold typology (applicable to either binary) and its basis in critical realism illustrates two themes that are central to this inquiry—the role of philosophy and the question of truth. And third, examining the ostensible origins of the RST academic field in Barbour’s work and the founding of *Zygon* supports my claim that thinking the RST relation is of crucial importance.

1.3 Methodology

Any attempt to think the RST relation with Heidegger—or to think, with him, any other question or matter—must acknowledge from the start that Heidegger’s contribution (if any) will be made out of thinking the question of Being. Briefly stated, the “methodology” that I have tried to employ in this inquiry is to become cognizant of the principles, procedures, and practices that Heidegger has used in thinking the question of Being and to employ, or otherwise imaginatively adapt, them to the purposes of this inquiry.

Any discussion of methodology in Heidegger’s work is tricky, for he regarded *method* itself as deeply problematic. He understood “method” as not only the path by which science gains knowledge, but method as the heart of science itself. “Method, especially in today’s modern scientific thought, is not a mere instrument serving the

sciences; rather, it has pressed the sciences into its own service.”⁴¹ I shall discuss this later in Section 4.4 (Technology, Science, and Thinking), in which Heidegger’s claim that “science does not think”—and his explication of the nature of thinking itself—are examined. Despite this caveat concerning “method,” Heidegger *did* employ a methodology—i.e., phenomenology—but in a sense very different from the method(s) of the sciences.

Following a brief explication of Heidegger’s formulation of the question of Being, I shall explicate several ways in which Heidegger’s engagement with this question has decisively shaped the principles, procedures, and practices that have guided this inquiry. In turn, these elements of my methodology are reflected in the chapter-by-chapter outline in Section 1.5 below.

In *Being and Time*,⁴² Heidegger contends that the question of Being has been forgotten, or covered over, in the history of philosophy since Plato and Aristotle. On his view, metaphysics—or more precisely, ontology—has focused instead upon the question of *beings as such and in their entirety* (i.e., beings as beings). Heidegger seeks instead the meaning of *Being itself*—also expressed as “that which determines entities as entities” (*BT*, 6).⁴³ As he sees it, “[t]he task of ontology is to explain Being itself and to make the

41. Martin Heidegger, “The Nature of Language,” in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 74. (*On the Way to Language* is hereafter cited as *OWL*.)

42. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962). (Hereafter cited as *BT*.) All pages cited from *Being and Time* throughout this dissertation use the standard pagination from *Sein und Zeit*—that is, the page numbers that appear in the margins of *Being and Time*.

43. Heidegger distinguishes absolutely between “Being” (*das Sein*) and “being” (*das Seiende*), as the latter (with lower case “b”) is equivalent to “entity” (i.e., anything that is). This absolute distinction is referred to as the *ontological difference*. Some translators and other interlocutors prefer to employ “being”

Being of entities stand out in full relief” (27). Roughly speaking, *phenomenology* is the method employed by Heidegger to investigate the question of Being.⁴⁴

First, Heidegger necessarily approaches the question of Being *indirectly*—in the sense of interrogating something *other than Being itself* in order to comprehend the meaning, or sense (*Sinn*), of Being. This indirect approach is necessary, as Being does not have the character of an entity (i.e., being). Thus, it is meaningless to ask, What is Being?, as “Being” cannot be the predicate of an assertion. Heidegger’s indirect approach is to interrogate that entity “which each of us is himself⁴⁵ and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being”—namely, *Dasein* (7). He expresses this rubric, or pattern, of analysis compactly as: *das Gefragte*—that which is asked about (i.e., Being); *das Erfragte*—that which is to be found out by the asking (i.e., the meaning of Being); and *das Befragte*—that which is interrogated (i.e., Dasein) (5).⁴⁶

In this inquiry, it will also be necessary to approach the question of the essence, or nature, of the RST relation *indirectly* for the most part, because Heidegger wrote very little specifically on this topic. In the language of the G-E-B pattern, we could describe our inquiry as follows: the Gefragte is the RST relation, and the Erfragten (plural) are,

in the sense of “Being.” In this inquiry, I shall usually defer to the translator or other interlocutor involved. The context in which “being” appears usually is sufficient to clarify its intended meaning. In some cases, I have written “being itself” to address possible ambiguities.

44. Heidegger provides an extensive explication of “phenomenology” in Section 7 of *Being and Time*: “The Phenomenological Method of Investigation” (*BT*, 27-38).

45. The gender-exclusive language is from Macquarrie and Robinson’s translation of Heidegger’s original German line, which does not contain such gendering: “das wir selbst je sind” (*GA2*, 7).

46. The term “Dasein” is intended by Heidegger to express its Being. Dasein is distinguished from all other beings in that Being is an issue for Dasein, and this fact *constitutes* Dasein (*BT*, 12). Moreover, Dasein “always understands itself in terms of its existence . . .” (*ibid.*). For this reason, Heidegger’s investigation of Being by interrogating Dasein is often referred to as an *existential analytic of Dasein* (13).

first, the essence of the relation itself, and second, whether, in some sense, “dialogue” might possibly obtain within the relation. The primary Befragten may be read off the titles of Chapters 2-5: phenomenology, truth, technology, and ethics—as interpreted by Heidegger. The G-E-B rubric also operates *within* some chapters. For example, in Chapter 4 (Technology and the RST Relation), the Gefragte is modern technology, the Erfragte is its essence, and the Befragten are the technology-art relation (Section 4.1), the technology-poetry relation (Section 4.2), and the science-fourfold relation as mediated by Heidegger’s analysis of the “thing” (Section 4.3).

In *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*,⁴⁷ Heidegger employs the G-E-B pattern in a distinctive way that informs the entire structure of my inquiry. In *BPP*, Heidegger asserts that the essence, or nature, of phenomenology itself can be approached by examining in detail four basic problems.⁴⁸ Moreover, he claims that these problems are *the* four basic ontological problems (*BPP*, 225), and that they “grow out of the inner systematic coherence of the general problem of being” (19). In the language of the G-E-B rubric, the Gefragte is phenomenology itself, the Erfragte is its essence, and the Befragten are the four basic problems.

In a roughly analogous fashion, I posit that four questions are fundamental in the RST discourse; these serve as guiding questions for the following chapters: Chapter 2 (Phenomenology and the RST Relation): What is the proper role of philosophy in

47. Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982). (Hereafter cited as *BPP*.)

48. “[F]irst, the problem of the *ontological difference*, the distinction between being and beings; secondly, the problem of the *basic articulation of being*, the essential content of a being and its mode of being; thirdly, the problem of the *possible modifications of being* and of the *unity of the concept of being* in its ambiguity; fourthly, the problem of the *truth-character of being*” (*BPP*, 225; original italics).

thinking the RST relation? (An important related question will be taken up in Sections 2.3 and 2.4 below: namely, is theology a “science” or otherwise “scientific” in some sense?) Chapter 3 (Truth and the RST Relation): In what sense(s)—comparable or not—are the claims of religion, science, and theology “true”? Chapter 4 (Technology and the RST Relation): What is the relation of technology to the RST triad? Chapter 5 (Ethics and the RST Relation): Is thinking the RST relation compelling for our time? That is, does such thinking truly matter for our dwelling (*ethos*) and destiny on planet earth? From this perspective, the Gefragte and the Erfragten remain as before (i.e., the RST relation and its essence), but the Befragten are the four basic questions just listed.⁴⁹

Second, Heidegger frequently engages his primary question of Being in relation to other fundamental questions, some of which can be read directly from the Chapter headings—for example, the question of truth (Chapter 3) and the question of technology (Chapter 4). Other basic questions *cross cut*, or *traverse*, the questions implicit in the chapter headings. For example, the question of *truth* is in the foreground throughout *Basic Questions of Philosophy*.⁵⁰ Yet Heidegger tells us that this question is inseparable from the question of Being (*BQP*, 41) and from the question of “man”—i.e., the question of what it means to be human. (*ibid.*, 20). In *What Is Called Thinking?*,⁵¹ the questions of

49. However, I do not claim, as Heidegger does, that these four questions are *the* basic questions of the RST relation, nor that they “constitute an intrinsic unit,” as he says regarding the four basic problems of phenomenology (*BPP*, 225).

50. Martin Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected “Problems” of “Logic,”* trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994). (Hereafter cited as *BQP*.)

51. Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1968.) (Hereafter cited as *WCT*.)

thinking, man, and destiny (the last in the form of the question of nihilism) predominate in Part I, while the question of Being “joins,” so to speak, the question of thinking in the foreground in Part II.

In any of Heidegger’s works, I contend that the question of Being is always at issue—explicitly or implicitly. Other basic questions come into play in relation to the question of Being *and in relation to each other*. For example, in *The Principle of Reason*, the questionable interpretation of man as *animal rationale* is directly linked to the question of the hegemony of calculative thinking.⁵² Furthermore, not only are the fundamental questions linked to the question of Being and to each other, I suggest that this family of questions is essentially a *single* question—the question of Being, a question that Heidegger continually engages, explicitly or not, in its many guises.

Third, for Heidegger, the merely correct is not wrong but is “on the way to truth.” Heidegger often begins his inquiries by starting with the customary understanding of something with the intention of thinking it more essentially, more originarily. One example that comes to light in this inquiry is the traditional notion of truth as the correctness of an assertion (more precisely, the correspondence of an assertion with its object or referent). (See Sections 3.1 and 3.2.) Another is the traditional notion of causality in terms of four “causes” (more precisely, four senses of “cause”). (See Sections 4.1 on the essence of modern technology and Section 4.3 on the nature of *the thing*.) I have applied this principle myself throughout this inquiry by starting with the widespread characterization of theology as reflection on religious experience and/or belief.

52. Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 129. (Hereafter cited as *POR*.)

Fourth, Heidegger's relentless questioning, putting question after question to himself and to his readers, permeates his works. Already up to this point in the Introduction to this inquiry, page after page contains questions as questions, as well as references to the questions of Being, thinking, technology, etc. For Heidegger, questioning is never to "know" more but rather is always in the service of thinking the question of Being. At the close of his 1955 lecture, "The Question Concerning Technology," he writes: "For questioning is the piety of thought" (*QCT*, 35).⁵³ In a later lecture, he explicates the meaning of *piety* and brings to light the relation between thinking and listening:

'Piety' is meant here in the ancient sense: obedient, or submissive, and in this case submitting to what thinking has to think about. . . . The lecture ending with that sentence was already in the ambiance of the realization that the true stance of thinking cannot be to put questions, but must be to listen to that which our questioning vouchsafes—and all questioning begins to be a questioning only in virtue of pursuing its quest for essential being.⁵⁴

Heidegger sums it up: "The authentic attitude of thinking is not a putting of questions—rather, it is a listening to the grant, the promise of what is to be put in question" (*OWL*, 71).

Finally, keeping in mind Heidegger's understanding of *essence* will be important throughout this inquiry. For example, in the chapters ahead we shall examine Heidegger's explications of the essence of phenomenology, religion, science, truth, and modern

53. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology, and other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977). Hereafter, *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays* is cited as *QCT*. In order to differentiate between this collection of essays and the specific essay, "The Question Concerning Technology," that is included in this collection, the latter is denoted hereafter by "the QCT essay" or "the QCT lecture."

54. Heidegger, "Nature of Language," in *OWL*, 72.

technology. Briefly stated, the essence of an entity or being is not something timeless and ahistorical, but rather that which *persistently endures* over a period of time (*QCT*, 29-31). Furthermore, the essence of something is not limited to its “whatness,” as Plato held. Section 3.2 examines Heidegger’s notion of “essence” in light of his critique of the traditional understanding of truth as the correctness of an assertion (Section 3.2) and his explication of the essence of modern technology (Section 4.1).

1.4 Significance and Contribution

The question or matter of the significance of this inquiry has two parts: first, the significance of thinking the RST relation at all; and second, the significance (if any) of this particular inquiry.

In response to the first question, I suggest that my brief investigation in Sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 above attest to the continued relevance of thinking the RST relation—not only for academic reasons, but for the sake of the future. In Section 1.2.1, I quote theologian Philip Hefner who expresses it thusly:

We do not simply observe religion-and-science or study its components; the grappling with meaning *vis-à-vis* that which is most important to us requires our full engagement, because it is the meaning of our lives that is at stake, not just the mapping of an academic terrain.”⁵⁵

Forty years earlier, Whitehead declared that religion and science are the two most powerful forces shaping human history. He felt that it was vitally important that there be some sort of rapprochement between them. His words have clearly inspired Ian Barbour

55. Hefner, “Religion-and-Science,” 566.

to devote more than five decades to doing what Hefner calls religion-and-science, but also studying the doing of religion-and-science. In Section 1.2.2, the editors of *Zygon* articulated the purpose of their new journal in terms of responding to the “growing fears that the widening chasm in twentieth century culture between values and knowledge, . . . is disruptive, if not lethal, for human destiny” (*Zygon* 1 [1966]: 1). I have tried to structure and carry out this inquiry from this overarching context. (That said, I do not agree with those who seem to assume from the beginning that religion and/or theology are “out of step” in some way.) Moreover, judging from the growing literature on the religion-science and science-theology relations and the lack of consensus on their proper construal, the topic is widely taken to be of enduring importance.

With regard to the second question, research into Heidegger’s examination of the individual elements of the relation—and the relation itself—via his method of phenomenological analysis may shed light on whether the lack of consensus in thinking the RST relation is an essential feature of these relations or whether the essence of these relations itself remains to be more fruitfully thought through.

In addition, based upon my review of the many texts and publications available in the RST literature, few of the writers in the field engage Heidegger explicitly in conducting their own analyses in the doing of RST and the study of such doing, as Philip Hefner might put it. These include, for example, such authors as: Albert Borgmann, Frederick Ferré, Alister McGrath, and Carl Mitcham.⁵⁶ (Selected works from their writings on the RST relation, including those that refer to Heidegger, are listed in the

56. I am grateful to Dr. Ian Barbour for bringing to my attention the work of Borgmann and Ferré, especially their analyses of the theology-technology relation. (E-mail message, January 18, 2010.)

Bibliography.) While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to critique the limited employment of Heidegger's thinking in their own work, the purpose of this inquiry is to bring Heidegger's thinking explicitly to bear what I consider to be fundamental, enduring issues in the RST relation and then to articulate my own views. Suffice it to say that none of their treatments of Heidegger with regard to the RST relation engage his thought with the scope intended in this inquiry.

1.5 Chapter Outline

The body of this work is structured as a series of five interwoven "threads," each pertinent to thinking the RST relation, and each thought out of Heidegger's engagement with the question of Being. The first thread is a set of four questions that I take to be fundamental in thinking the RST relation (and that arguably are reflected in much of the RST literature). These questions are directly reflected in the titles of Chapters 2-5. The other four threads—comportment (to things), reflection, thinking, and destiny—"cross-cut," or traverse, the stated themes of these four chapters and their underlying questions. (These transversal themes are successively introduced in Chapters 2-5, respectively.) In particular, these four cross-cutting threads serve to interrogate the common formulation of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief. I display the chapter outline and these threads as follows:

Chapter 2: Phenomenology and the RST Relation

- What is the role of philosophy in the RST relation?
- (Transversal thread: compartment to things) What is objectification?
- Is theology “objectifying,” in some sense? That is, does it possess characteristics of a science?

Chapter 3: Truth and the RST Relation

- What is truth for each element in the RST relation, and for the relation itself?
- (Transversal thread: reflection) What is “reflection”?
- In what sense is theology “reflective”?

Chapter 4: Technology and the RST Relation

- What is the standing of technology with regard to the RST relation?
- (Transversal thread: thinking) What is (called) thinking?
- What sort of thinking characterizes theology: calculative thinking, meditative thinking, neither, or both?

Chapter 5: Ethics and the RST Relation

- What is the significance for thinking the RST relation with regard to our dwelling (ethos) on planet earth?
- (Transversal thread : destiny) What is destiny?
- Does theology have a role in shaping our destiny?

The overall structure of this inquiry is also shaped by Heidegger’s retrospective description of his life-long engagement with the question of being as “three successive

formulations” of the “question of being as being”: the *meaning*, or *sense*, of being; the *truth* of being, and the *place*, or *location*, of being.⁵⁷ Roughly speaking, these three formulations of the question of being serve as the “arc” of this entire inquiry. The *meaning, or sense*, of being undergirds Heidegger’s phenomenological analyses of religion, science, and theology in Chapter 2; the *truth* of being is the *leitmotiv* of Chapter 3 and an underlying theme in Chapter 4; and the *place* of being, resonant with “dwelling” (*ethos*), is the opening context for Chapter 5.

In light of this synoptic view of the entire work, I now briefly describe the focus of each chapter and the Epilogue. The Appendix contains a one-page *schema* of the entire work.

Chapter 2 sequentially examines Heidegger’s explication of religion, science, and theology through the lens of phenomenology. Each is interpreted as one of Dasein’s modes of Being-in-the-world. The possibility—and implications—of thinking theology as a science is addressed. The different meanings of *objectification* in terms of “object” as *Gegenstand* and *Objekt* are elucidated and employed to clarify similarities and differences between science and theology. On Heidegger’s view, if theology were a science, it would be the science of *faith*. And if this were the case, philosophy (as ontology) would have a role in clarifying the basic concepts that underlie theology. Evidence indicates, however, that Heidegger did not hold that theology is, in fact, a science. Throughout this chapter, “religion” is taken as *Christian (factual) life experience* (aka *Christianness*), grounded in faith, and “theology” as *Christian* theology.

57. Martin Heidegger, “Seminar in Le Thor 1969,” in *Four Seminars*, trans. Andrew Mitchell and François Raffoul (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 46-47.

Heidegger's explication of the phenomenology of religious life is prefaced by articulating the meaning, or sense, of being in the "analogical moments" of content, relationality, and enactment.

Chapter 3 presents Heidegger's critique of the customary understanding of truth as the "correctness" of the correspondence between assertions and their referents. He recovers the pre-Socratic understanding of truth as *disclosure* and traces its transmutation to truth as *correctness* (Aristotle), thence to truth as *certainty* (Descartes). At issue is whether or not the question of the essence of truth is best engaged as a "problem" of logic. Heidegger's claim that truth and untruth are inextricably intertwined is also presented. In the third section, theologian J. Wentzel van Huyssteen's characterization of theology in terms of reason-seeking and giving is examined in light of Heidegger's critique of Leibniz's grand principle of reason: *nihil est sine ratione*.⁵⁸ The final section presents Heidegger's distinction between the two senses of *reflection* as *Reflexion* (based upon representational, idea-forming thinking) and *Besinnung* (mindfulness). These last two sections raise questions about the essential nature of theology: namely, Is reason-seeking and giving sufficient to characterize theology? And, in what sense(s) of *reflection* is might theology be understood as "reflection on religious experience and belief" with regard to thinking the RST relation?

Chapter 4 examines the essences of modern technology and modern science and their interrelation, together with Heidegger's explication of the relationships of art, poetry, and the fourfold of earth and sky, mortals and divinities, to technology and to the

58. Literally, "nothing is without reason," paraphrased as "everything has a reason."

holy/divine. The first two sections examine Heidegger's analysis of the essence of technology and his claim that a "saving power" grows in the midst of the extreme danger posed by this essence. Heidegger explicates the possibility that art and poetry offer paths for hope and constructive response in the face of the growing hegemony of the essence of modern technology. Heidegger's explication of "thingness" in relation to the fourfold points to a mode of relating to entities other than by objectification in either of its senses. The final section presents Heidegger's analysis of the essential nature of thinking. Representational, idea-forming thinking (aka "calculative thinking")—characteristic of science and reflection as *Reflexion*—is contrasted with meditative, reflective thinking in the sense of mindfulness (*Besinnung*). Questions for theology: Which form(s) of thinking, if any, meaningfully apply to theology? What can theology learn from poetry's task of giving expression to wholeness in the midst of unwholeness?

Chapter 5 engages Heidegger's explication of "ethics" in the sense of *dwelling or abode (ethos)*, in relation to *destiny*. Here, Heidegger's understanding of "destiny" as the "sending of Being" (*Geschick*)—as well as its customary understanding as our *fate*, in some sense—are both in play. His analysis of the crucial roles of poetry and thinking—separately and together—in service of dwelling is explicated. Ian Barbour's analysis of technology, including the central role of "values" in developing effective responses to its dangers, is contrasted with Heidegger's critique of the notion of "values." Nietzsche's epigram for nihilism, "God is dead," and its implications for thinking the essence of religion, science, and theology are examined. In closing, the question of destiny—and the urgency and importance of thinking the RST relation—is considered in light of

Heidegger's formulation of Nietzsche's question, "Is the man of today in his metaphysical nature prepared to assume dominion over the earth as a whole?" (*WCT*, 65).⁵⁹

In the Epilogue, I return to the original motivating questions for this inquiry: What is the essence of the RST relation? Is "dialogue," in some sense, possible in the RST triad? And does theology have a legitimate place in the public square in an age dominated by scientific, calculative thinking? In response, I re-examine the proffered formula of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief in light of the underlying questions and transversal themes addressed in the intervening four chapters. This context is expanded in view of the unquestionable and growing impact of human activity across the earth. In my view, this entails incorporating within theology both senses of comportment to things, reflection, and thinking—including poeticizing. And finally, the forums for such theologizing can—and must—include the public square as well as the academy and religious communities.

59. Unless otherwise noted, "man" and "mankind" are translations of *der Mensch*, which also connotes more broadly "human being" and "people," in all portions of Heidegger's works cited in this dissertation. Unless otherwise noted, I interpret as well the use of "man" and "mankind" by others cited herein in the broad sense of *der Mensch*.

Chapter 2: Phenomenology and the RST Relation

This chapter examines Heidegger’s explication of “phenomenology” and its employment in understanding the essential nature of religion, science, theology, and their interrelations. In so doing, I shall begin to engage one of the basic questions in the RST discourse and this inquiry: namely, What is the appropriate role of philosophy in thinking the RST relation? In *Being and Time*, Heidegger avers that phenomenology is *the* method of philosophy, taken as ontology—the study of Being itself. On his view, phenomenology is not merely a branch, or field, in philosophy—along with ethics, epistemology, etc.—but the *only* path to follow to think Being itself.⁶⁰

The first three sections of this chapter focus upon Heidegger’s analyses of religion, science, and theology, respectively, through the lens of phenomenology. As we shall see, however, all three members of the RST relation are unavoidably “in play” in each section. The first section (2.1 The Phenomenology of Religion) provides a formal, but preliminary, characterization of the phenomenological method and employs it to: (i) interpret specific “religious phenomena” in several of Paul’s letters in the New Testament, and (ii) characterize the life experience of early Christians. The next section

60. “Ontology and phenomenology are not two distinct philosophical disciplines among others. These terms characterize philosophy itself with regard to its object and its way of treating that object. Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology . . .” (*BT*, 38). Heidegger explicates “The Preliminary Conception of Phenomenology” in *BT*, 34-39. A reminder: In this chapter and throughout the remainder of this inquiry, page numbers in *BT* refer to the standard pagination of *Sein und Zeit*. These “standard” pages appear in the margins of *Being and Time*.

(2.2 Phenomenology and Science) focuses upon Heidegger's explication of the essence of science in terms of the existential analytic of Dasein as presented in *Being and Time*. On Heidegger's view, "science" (*Wissenschaft*) is a specific mode of Dasein as *Being-in-the-World*—a view very different from regarding science as "the totality established through an interconnection of true propositions" (*BT*, 11). In the following section (2.3 Phenomenology and Theology), Heidegger investigates what might be learned by regarding theology and phenomenology as "sciences." In so doing, he characterizes theology as the "science of faith" and argues that philosophy can assist theology in clarifying its fundamental concepts by articulating the ontological bases for them. The final section (2.4 Theology, Natural Science, and Objectification) takes up the question of whether theology is a "non-objectifying thinking and speaking" and provisionally examines the notion of "objectification" itself—a recurring theme in this inquiry.

2.1 The Phenomenology of Religion

What does Heidegger mean by "phenomenology," and in what way(s) does it illuminate the nature, or essence, of religion? I shall engage these guiding questions by drawing upon Heidegger's lecture course of 1920-21, titled "Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion."⁶¹ This lecture course consists of two parts. Part I examines essential differences between philosophy and science and provides a formal definition of phenomenology in terms of a threefold understanding of the sense (*Sinn*), or meaning, of

61. Heidegger's notes, and notes from his students for this lecture course have been compiled and published in *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthew Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 3-111. *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* is hereafter cited as *PRL*.

“experience.” Heidegger names these three “directions” of sense (*Sinnesrichtungen*) of experience as the *content*-sense, *relational*-sense, and *enactment*-sense of experience. In Part II, Heidegger employs this threefold understanding of experience to interpret key events and claims in several of Paul’s letters in the New Testament and, more broadly, to explicate characteristics of early Christian life. In contrast to this three-fold meaning of Christian life experience, Heidegger contends that the horizon of science is limited to the *content*-sense of experience: that is, *what* is experienced.

Before proffering a formal definition of “phenomenology,” Heidegger draws several sharp distinctions between philosophy and science and then explicates his fundamental notion of *factual life experience*. On his view, each scientific discipline is founded upon a specific and delimited “material complex,” out of which its concepts are formed. Moreover, the greater the familiarity with the complex, the greater the exactness with which its concepts may be formulated. Philosophy, however, does not have access to any such complex. Hence its concepts are necessarily “vacillating, vague, manifold, and fluctuating” (*PRL*, 3). Heidegger also contends that science cannot determine its own essence, but that the constant reappraisal of its basic notions and its very essence is constitutive of philosophy itself (6-7).

In light of the absence of any material complex within which to secure its concepts, philosophy (as phenomenology) must turn elsewhere to begin philosophizing. For Heidegger, factual life experience is the “point of departure” and the goal of philosophy (11). Let us examine Heidegger’s interpretation of this key term, starting with “experience.” On his view, every experience entails a twofold meaning: (i) the activity of

experiencing, and (ii) that which is experienced by means of this activity (7). Moreover, he says, regarding these two expressions as inseparable is essential for factual life experience. By “life experience,” Heidegger means “the active and passive pose of the human being toward the world” (8). Heidegger further delineates “world” as *surrounding* world (i.e., all that we encounter, including “ideal objectivities”); *communal* world (i.e., other human beings in specific characterizations—e.g., student, relative, etc.); and *self*-world. The term “world” is not an object but instead points to “that in which we can *live*.”

By applying the adjective “factual” to “life experience,” Heidegger intends to articulate a particular character or manner of the pose (*Stellung*), or stance, toward the world. I suggest that factual life experience can be expressed compactly as *relational indifference* toward the worlds in which we live—the self-world, the communal world, and the surrounding world.⁶²

The peculiarity of factual life experience consists in the fact that ‘how I stand with regard to things,’ the manner of experiencing, is *not* co-experienced. . . . Factual life experience puts all its weight on its *content*; the *how* of factual life experience at most merges into its content. . . . factual life experience manifests an indifference with regard to the manner of experiencing. (*PRL*, 9)

Heidegger’s notion of factual life experience is further clarified by his formal characterizations of “phenomenon” and “phenomenology” in terms of the three directions of sense in experience. The two-fold meaning of experience unfolds into three basic ways, or directions, of inquiring after the experience: (i) What was experienced? (a *content* question). (ii) How was the experience experienced? (a *relational* question) and

62. Heidegger provides a comprehensive “formula”: “Factual life experience is ‘the attitudinal, falling, relationally indifferent, self-sufficient concern for significance’” (*PRL*, 11).

(iii) How was the relational meaning of the experience acted upon and fulfilled? (a question of *enactment*) (43). Then *phenomenon* is “the totality of sense in these three directions,” and *phenomenology* is the “explication of this totality of sense” (43).⁶³

In terms of the threefold sense of experience, factual life experience is “one-dimensional,” so to speak, as it is dominated by the direction of *content*-sense. Factual life experience reduces the twofold nature of experience to the “onfold” of *what* is experienced and ignores *how* the experiencing itself unfolds. Moreover, it turns to science for its basic orientation, as it “constantly strives for an articulation in science and ultimately for a ‘scientific culture’” (11).

In Part Two, Heidegger employs the three directions of sense to explicate the meaning of *early Christian* factual life experience (aka, “primordial Christian religiosity”). On his view, primordial Christian religiosity is not only *in* factual life experience, but is factual life experience *itself* (57).⁶⁴ On the face of it, this hypothetical claim is paradoxical. On the one hand, as I shall show below, he claims that early Christian factual life experience exhibits the characteristics of *all* three directions of “sense.” On the other hand, we have just cited passages that emphasize the relational indifference and content-heavy character of factual life experience itself. Heidegger writes: “We attempt to understand this [apparent paradox] *from out of the apostolic*

63. Heidegger names this threefold, yet unitary, sense of phenomenological explication, *formal indication* (*PRL*, 38). It is intended to guide such explication without theoretical preconceptions (characteristic of *formalization*) or approaches based upon classification (characteristic of *generalization*) (*ibid.*, 39-44). For a deeper examination of Heidegger’s notion of formal indication, see Leslie MacAvoy, “Formal Indication and the Hermeneutics of Facticity,” in *Philosophy Today* 54 (2010): 84-90, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/762702248?accountid=14608>.

64. This is a more compelling claim than his earlier statement: “Primordial Christian religiosity is in primordial *Christian* life experience and is itself such” (*PRL*, 55; emphasis added).

proclamation of Paul” (93, original emphasis). Paul’s proclamation is that *Jesus is the Messiah* (83).

Acceptance of the apostolic proclamation by the early Christian communities, such as the Thessalonians, is a “having-become,” says Heidegger (65f). “Having-become” entails mundane as well as “spiritual,” so to speak, consequences. “The having-become is understood such that with the acceptance, the one who accepts treads upon an effective connection with God. . . . That which is accepted concerns the how of self-conduct in factual life” (66). Acceptance of the proclamation is transformational—an “*absolute turning-around*, more precisely about a *turning-toward God and a turning-away from idol-images*” (ibid.). Furthermore, understood as the acceptance of the apostolic proclamation, the “having-become” is not a once-and-for-all experience, but rather is “incessantly co-experienced” (ibid.). In sum, “having-become” is the *relational*-sense of Christian factual life experience, as it expresses *how* the experience of hearing the apostolic proclamation was experienced—namely, transformationally. In turn, “having become” gives rise to the *enactment*-sense of this experience as well:

Christian factual life experience is historically determined by its emergence with the proclamation that hits the people in a moment, and then is unceasingly also alive in the enactment of life. Further, this life experience determines, for its part, the relations which are found in it. (*PRL*, 83)

The paradox still at issue is illuminated by Paul’s response to the urgent question of many—perhaps most—early Christians: When will the *parousia*⁶⁵ take place? On

65. Heidegger traces the meaning of *parousia* from its classical roots (meaning “arrival”) through Judaism to its Christian meaning as “the appearing again of the already appeared Messiah” (*PRL*, 71). Equivalently, he says, the Christian meaning of *parousia* may be expressed as “the second coming of Christ at the end of time.”

Heidegger's reading of Paul's letters, Paul ignores the *content*-sense of the question but provides an *enactment*-sense response instead. Heidegger summarizes the heart of Paul's reply: "What is decisive is how I *comport* [*verhalte*] myself to it in actual life. From that results the meaning of the 'when?, ' time and the moment" (70, emphasis added; see also 51). By "comportment," Heidegger means the *enactment*-sense of early Christian life experience—i.e., how the transformative experience of being "hit" with the apostolic proclamation is lived out in one's surrounding, communal, and self-worlds (84).⁶⁶

Heidegger turns to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians to explicate in more detail what such comportment entails. "Let each one of you remain in the condition in which you were called."⁶⁷ Heidegger gives examples. If a Christian is a slave, he or she should anticipate remaining a slave. If Christian men are married, they "should be such that those who have a wife, should have her in such a way, *that* they do not have her, etc." (85, original emphasis).⁶⁸

This example illuminates and affirms the tension in the paradoxical claim that early Christian factual like experience "is factual life experience *itself*" (57). On the one

66. "Comportment" is one of the translations of *das Verhalten*; others include "attitude," "manner," "conduct," "bearing," and "demeanor." The translations of the infinitive, *verhalten*, are more specific: "to restrain, contain, hold, control, curb." *Online Dictionary English-German*, s.v. "Verhalten," accessed October 26, 2012, <http://www.dict.cc/?s=Verhalten>. In this inquiry, I shall use "comportment" in its more general sense. (See chap. 4, n. 161, regarding the translation of *die Haltung* as "comportment.")

67. 1 Cor. 7:20 (New Revised Standard Version). Heidegger's version: "One should remain in the calling in which one is" (*PRL*, 84).

68. Heidegger translates *ὡς μή* (1 Cor. 7:29) as "*that* . . . do not" and critiques the insertion of the conditional "if" in its customary translation "as if not" or some close variation (*PRL*, 84-86). Examples of such translations are "as if . . . none" (New International Version) and "as *though* . . . none" (NRSV) (emphases added). By so doing, he guards against implying that either relation, slavery or marriage, is to be avoided or preferred. In support of Heidegger's move, *ὡς μή* literally means "that (or as) not," which does not imply a conditional (Dennis Haugh, personal communication).

hand, married men who have become Christians should stay married, Paul says. As Heidegger puts it, “[T]he Christian does not step out of the world” (85). On the other hand, Heidegger states that their marriage relationships, like “all surrounding-world relations,” “must pass through the complex of enactment having-become, so that this complex is then co-present, but the relations themselves, and that to which they refer, are in no way touched” (86). Given the polysemic understanding of “experience,” we can affirm that *early Christian* factual life experience is factual life experience *itself*.

To sum up, early Christian factual life experience is grounded in the “having become” as the transformational acceptance of the apostolic proclamation, “Jesus is the Messiah.” This relational sense of Christian factual life experience gives rise to enacting, or living out, that transforming experience in ways that, in turn, transform the manner of one’s relationships to all the worlds of life experience—surrounding, communal, and self—without altering their content and the relations therein. Christian factual life experience is factual life experience in the fullest meaning of “experience.” It is beyond human power to effect this enactment, Heidegger says. God is the source of this Christian facticity—“the phenomenon of the effects of grace” (87). One’s comportment to this facticity is decisive.

What about theology? In terms of *Christian* theology, Heidegger says that it is grounded in the enactment of Christian factual life experience. Specifically, it is grounded in the knowledge that arises from the “having become”:

Knowledge of one’s own having-become is the starting point and the origin of theology. In the explication of this knowledge and its conceptual form of expression the sense of a theological conceptual formation arises. (*PRL*, 66)

Heidegger interprets Paul's explications of comportment to both faith and law (Phil. Chapter 3) as a form of theology, but not as a *system* of theology. On Heidegger's view, Paul is articulating the "consciousness of faith, in the sense of making comprehensible the posture of faith for the individual himself" (51).

Heidegger sharply distinguishes his phenomenological explication of theology, thought from out of early Christian life experience, from Troeltsch's philosophy of religion. On Heidegger's view, Troeltsch attempts a scientific approach to discern the essence of religion (19).⁶⁹ This entails regarding religion as an object (*Objekt*) for scientific analysis. "Religion is for him an external object and can as such be integrated into different material complexes (as appropriate to different philosophical 'systems')" (20). In contrast to Troeltsch's objectification of religion, Heidegger regards "*faith in the existence of God*" as the primal phenomenon of religion. *The question of "objectification" for religion, science, and theology runs through this entire inquiry.*

I close this section with two observations with regard to thinking the RST relation. First, on Heidegger's view, religion and science can be distinguished in terms of the span, or range, of the directions of sense in experience that each engages: roughly speaking, three for religion, one for science. As for theology, perhaps we could say "three" in light of Heidegger's phenomenological articulation of theology as grounded in the "having-become" and "one" for Troeltsch's scientific study of the essence of religion. This doesn't quite wash, however, as Troeltsch's work is philosophy of religion—not theology. Nonetheless, Troeltsch's analysis of religion raises the question of whether

69. Heidegger takes issue with attempts to explicate the "essence" of religion. "Everything that is said of the—for reason—indissoluble residue that supposedly remains in all religions, is merely an aesthetic play with things that are not understood" (*PRL*, 55).

theology is, in some sense, a science—and if not, whether it could, or even should, be.

We shall take up these questions in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.

Second, Heidegger's characterization of Christian theology as grounded upon the "having become" has implications for thinking anew the "formula" of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief. In particular, the conventional formula is silent about the place of faith. In terms of Christian factual life experience, the relational-sense of religious experience (i.e., the "having become") is grounded upon the faith-filled acceptance of the apostolic proclamation. Thus, Christian faith and Christian (factual life) experience are inseparable. Still to be clarified: What is the relation between Christian faith and belief? And what is the meaning, or sense (in all three directions) of the phenomenon of "reflection"?

2.2 Phenomenology and Science

The primary task of this section is to examine Heidegger's explication of the nature, or essence, of science in phenomenological terms as it is presented in *Being and Time*.⁷⁰ My guiding questions are: What makes science possible? That is, thought phenomenologically, what are the conditions necessary for doing science? What is the phenomenological understanding of the nature of scientific activity? How does it differ from conventional understandings, and how does the latter flow from the former? To address these questions, I shall focus on the distinctive manner in which science engages, or otherwise relates, to the entities that it analyzes. In the following two sections of this

70. The question of the essential nature of science will also be investigated in other sections that reference other writings by Heidegger.

chapter, I shall compare and contrast the manner of science and the manner of theology in such engaging and relating.

I take as a starting point Heidegger's claim that science is a *mode of Being-in-the-World* (BT, 357). According to Heidegger, Being-in-the-world is Dasein's basic state or structure (53).⁷¹ Roughly speaking, this means that, as human beings, we always "show up" already embedded in a world of entities (aka beings), other Dasein, and relations among them before "science" or any other concept is—or can be—formulated and appropriated intelligibly. Just as Heidegger approaches the meaning, or sense, of Being itself by interrogating Dasein as Being-in-the-world, so he interrogates this basic state by examining the "world" of everyday Dasein and the entities within it. This examination consists of "an ontological Interpretation of those entities within-the-*environment* which we encounter as closest to us" (66).⁷² Such entities, he says, are those that we *deal with* or that otherwise *concern* us.⁷³ Heidegger calls such entities *equipment*—understood as "essentially something 'in-order-to'" (68). That is, equipment is *purposeful*.
Ontologically speaking, equipment is a presencing of Being (as the Being of an entity) that Heidegger calls *readiness-to-hand* (69).

71. This follows from his development of the existential analytic of Dasein, which was briefly described in the Methodology section (1.3).

72. More precisely, his method seeks "the worldhood of the environment . . ." (BT, 66). For Heidegger, "world," denotes, in this context, "that 'wherein' a factual Dasein as such can be said to 'live'" (65). "Environment" is "that world of everyday Dasein which is closest to it" (66). The "worldhood of the world" is "the Being of that ontical condition which makes it possible for entities within-the-world to be discovered at all" (88).

73. For Heidegger, "concern" (*Besorgen*) designates "the Being of a possible way of Being-in-the-World" (BT, 57). According to Macquarrie and Robinson, it is meant in the sense of concerning ourselves with activities or purchases (57, n. 1). This mode, like other modes, can also manifest itself in a *deficient* manner, such as renouncing and neglecting (57).

To illustrate, Heidegger explicates this mode of the presencing of Being of a hammer and contrasts it with a second mode. It might seem obvious that readiness-to-hand would characterize the presencing of Being of a hammer, since a hammer as such clearly fits the conventional understanding of “equipment” as something ready to be used by a carpenter, say. According to Heidegger, however, we cannot tell the mode in which the Being of something presences just by looking at it. “No matter how sharply we just *look* at the ‘outward appearance’ of Things in whatever form this takes, we cannot discover anything ready-to-hand” (69; original emphasis). However, “the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is—as equipment” (ibid.). In contrast, suppose we focus on the heaviness of the hammer, say, as a property of some sort, viewing the hammer “not as a tool, but as a corporeal Thing subject to the law of gravity” (361). We would then be looking at the hammer, he says, as something *present-at-hand*. *What* the hammer is has not changed, but the *mode of the presencing of Being* of the hammer “has changed over” from *readiness-to-hand* to *presence-at-hand* (361).

The contrast between *readiness-to-hand* and *presence-at-hand* may be expressed by relating them to the three directions of sense that together comprise “phenomenon” as discussed in Section 2.1. On one hand, the *experience* of hammering just described clearly includes the relational-sense and enactment-sense of the phenomenon of the hammer. On the other hand, by focusing on the heaviness of the hammer in isolation, its Being presences as *presence-at-hand*, limiting its meaning to content-sense only. In other

words, readiness-to-hand encompasses the *how* as well as the *what* of the hammer as phenomenon, while presence-at-hand limits the extent of its sense, or meaning, to the *what* of the hammer, now as mere entity.

Heidegger explicates in detail the manner by which this changeover of the mode of the presencing of Being of entities within-the-world of Dasein can take place. Briefly stated, the *circumspective concern* of the readiness-to-hand is modified to the *theoretical discovery* of the presence-at-hand (357-61). Both modes in which Being presences involve sight or seeing, but in very different ways. *Circumspection (Umsicht)* means “looking around,” or “looking in order to get something done” (69, n. 2)—a manner of sight appropriate for the concerned involvement that characterizes readiness-to-hand. In contrast, the theoretical has its own form of looking as *observation*, in which the “in-order-to” is absent (69). On the one hand, the modification from the practical to the theoretical ignores, or even eliminates, the purposiveness of the readiness-to-hand. On the other hand, the shift to the theoretical *releases* the entities in Dasein’s environment from their confinement, due to circumspective concern, to possibly become an “area of subject-matter for a science . . .” (362). By the changeover, the hammer’s mode of the presencing of Being is no longer that of a phenomenon (in the three directions of its meaning) but has become the presencing of Being as merely an entity whose meaning has become reduced to its whatness.

The shift from the practical to the theoretical is on the path to science, so to speak, but more is needed. Heidegger selects *mathematical physics* in order to illuminate additional features of the theoretical. For this natural science and others, the

mathematical projection of Nature is key (ibid.). Such projection has both a determinative and restricting effect. On the one hand, the projection provides for the explicit quantification of such fundamental concepts as force, location, and motion; on the other hand, the projection delimits the horizon within which entities taken as its theme can be discovered (ibid.). The shift from circumspective concern to theoretical discovery thus entails a trade-off: namely, securing a measure of the *what*, or content, of the phenomenon, now merely an entity, while excluding the *how* of relationality and enactment that flesh out the meaning, or sense, of the phenomenon itself.

Briefly stated, phenomena become Objects (*Objekte*)⁷⁴ under mathematical projection. Considered comprehensively as *thematizing*, such projection determines the understanding of the Being of its entities and identifies the region of its theoretically discovered entities. Thematizing is objectivizing; it “awaits solely the discoveredness of the present-at-hand” (363).

Heidegger’s explication of the changeover from the ready-to-hand (i.e., the practical) to presence-at-hand (i.e., the theoretical) substantiates his claim that science, thought phenomenologically, is a mode of Dasein’s fundamental state as Being-in-the-world:

When the basic concepts of that understanding of Being by which we are guided have been worked out, the clues of its methods, the structure of its way of conceiving things, the possibility of truth and certainty which belongs to it, the ways in which things get grounded or proved, the mode in which it is binding for us, and the way it is communicated—all these will be Determined. *The totality of*

74. Consider these etymological connections: “Projection” (*Entwurf*) basically denotes “throwing off” or “throwing away.” (*BT*, 145, n. 1). “Object” (*Objekt*) has the literal meaning of “something thrown against” (363, n. 1).

*these items constitutes the full existential conception of science. (BT, 362-63; emphasis added)*⁷⁵

Heidegger sharply distinguishes this existential conception of science from “. . . the ‘logical’ conception which understands science with regard to its results and defines it as ‘something established on an interconnection of true propositions—that is, propositions counted as valid’” (357).

To sum up, two points appear to be germane to our inquiry into the nature of the RST relation—in particular, to the thread of comportment to things. First, presence-at-hand and ready-to-hand are different modes of the presencing of Being of entities. The sharp distinctions between them arise from the different modes of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world—roughly speaking, science mode and non-science mode, respectively. As the example of the hammer illustrates, the presencing of Being may manifest in either mode, and the modes may “coexist”: “The ready-to-hand can become the ‘Object’ of a science without having to lose its character as equipment” (361). Thus, entities in Dasein’s environment do not possess inherent characteristics that can be used to sort them into stable, disjoint categories of phenomena (in which all three directions of sense are operative) and mere entities (in which sense or meaning is reduced to whatness).

Second, ready-to-hand is a primary mode for Heidegger in at least two important senses. Heidegger’s explication of science as the mathematical projection of nature is derived from the changeover from ready-to-hand to presence-at-hand. So, in a sense, the latter is derivative of the former. Also, the ready-to-hand can be viewed, in some sense,

75. Heidegger distinguishes this existential conception of science from what he calls “the ‘logical’ conception which understands science with regard to its results and defines it as ‘something established on an interconnection of true propositions—that is, propositions counted as valid’” (BT, 357).

as the “default” option among the two modes of the presencing of Being. In writing about the relation of Dasein to involvement with entities in its environment, he states: “Dasein always assigns itself from a ‘for the sake of which’ to the ‘with which’ of an involvement; that is to say, to the extent that it is, *it always lets entities be encountered as ready-to-hand*” (86; emphasis added). In addition, the potential reach of the mode of readiness-to-hand appears to be almost without limit. It might seem that *equipment* applies to only a small fraction of what Heidegger calls “Things of Nature,” such as woodworking tools, golfing gear, surgical instruments, and so forth. However, Heidegger seems to say that the range of the readiness-to-hand apparently can extend as far as the range of our concern and dealings—even to Nature, appropriately understood:

Any work with which one concerns oneself is ready-to-hand not only in the domestic world of the workshop but also in the *public world*. Along with this public world, the *environing Nature* . . . is discovered and is accessible to everyone. (BT, 71)

Could it be inferred from this claim that Dasein, in its basic mode of Being-in-the-World, can impute, or co-determine, in some sense, the mode of the presencing of Being of entities in Dasein’s environment—simply by dealing with or concerning oneself with them? For example, if I concern myself with, say, preserving a threatened or endangered species, then does the Being of such a plant or animal—individually or collectively—necessarily presence as ready-to-hand? In other words, is the ready-to-hand mode of the presencing of Being of a threatened or endangered organism “triggered,” in some sense, simply by my dealings with the organism and the matter of its threatened or endangered status? It seems so, as Heidegger writes:

To the extent that any *entity* shows itself to concern—that is, to the extent that it is discovered in its Being—it is already something ready-to-hand environmentally; it just is not 'proximally' a 'world-stuff' that is merely present-at-hand. (*BT*, 85)

Before closing this section, I wish to indicate how *Being and Time* explicitly sets the stage for the next two sections that bring theology into the foreground of our inquiry. Prefiguring Thomas Kuhn's explanation 35 years later of the dynamic process by which the fundamental assumptions of *normal science* are called into question and eventually replaced,⁷⁶ Heidegger states that major changes occur in the sciences when their basic concepts are challenged. Taking theology to be a "science," in some sense, he succinctly states his understanding of the crisis facing theology and signals the approach he will soon take to respond to it:

The real movement of the sciences takes place when their basic concepts undergo a more or less radical revision which is transparent to itself. The level which a science has reached is determined by how far it is *capable* of a crisis in its basic concepts. . . . *Theology* is seeking a more primordial interpretation of man's Being toward God, prescribed by the meaning of faith itself and remaining within it. It is slowly beginning to understand once more Luther's insight that the 'foundation' on which its system of dogma rests has not arisen from an inquiry in which faith is primary, and that conceptually this 'foundation' is not only inadequate for the problematic of theology, but conceals and distorts it. (*BT*, 9-10; original emphasis)

2.3 Phenomenology and Theology

The purpose of this section is to examine Heidegger's explication of the relationship between phenomenology and theology by a close reading of his work,

76. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). First published in 1962 by University of Chicago Press.

“Phenomenology and Theology.”⁷⁷ A few months after delivering this lecture for the second time in 1928, Heidegger expressed its purpose succinctly in a private letter: “. . . to see what theology can—and cannot—learn from phenomenology.”⁷⁸

As explicitly stated in the PAT lecture, Heidegger’s thesis is that “. . . *theology is a positive science, and as such, therefore, is absolutely different from philosophy*” (P, 41, original emphasis). The gloss of phenomenology/philosophy is addressed in the Preface, in which Heidegger refers the reader to portions of the Introduction to *Being and Time* that discuss “the notion of phenomenology (as well as its relation to the positive sciences) that guides the presentation here” (39). Briefly put,

Ontology and phenomenology are not two distinct philosophical disciplines among others. These terms characterize philosophy itself with regard to its object and its way of treating that object. Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology (BT, 38)

Following Heidegger, I shall use the term “philosophy” for “phenomenology” in discussing the PAT lecture in this section.

Heidegger begins his analysis of the theology-philosophy relation with a formal definition of “science” (Wissenschaft) as “the founding disclosure, for the sheer sake of

77. Martin Heidegger, “Phenomenology and Theology,” trans. James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo, in Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, 39-62. (*Pathmarks* is hereafter cited as *P.*) This work consists of three parts—a lecture, an Appendix, and a Preface. The Preface states that the lecture portion of this work is based upon a reworking of the second delivery of the lecture in February 1928; the lecture was first given in March 1927. Hereafter, I shall refer to this lecture as “the 1927/28 lecture” or “the PAT lecture.” The Appendix (*Anhang*) is described in Heidegger’s Preface as a “letter” for a theological discussion at Drew University in April 1964. In the following section, I shall provide additional background about the discussion and a close reading of this letter (hereafter, “the 1964 letter,” “the 1964 Appendix,” “the PAT letter,” or “the PAT Appendix”).

78. “. . . was kann ein Theologie von der Phänomenologie lernen u. was nicht.” Martin Heidegger to Elisabeth Blochmann, 8 August 1928, in *Martin Heidegger — Elisabeth Blochmann. Briefwechsel 1918–1969*, 2nd ed., ed. Joachim W. Storck (Marbach am Neckar: Deutsches Literatur-Archiv, 1990), 24 (my translation, with assistance from Stephanie Carlson).

disclosure, of a self-contained region of beings, or of being” (*P*, 41). This phenomenological definition of science readily leads to its partitioning into *philosophy* (as the *ontological* science of Being—i.e., ontology), and the *positive sciences* (as the *ontic* sciences of beings). For Heidegger, the latter includes theology as well as modern sciences. Thus “. . . theology, as a positive science, is in principle closer to chemistry and mathematics than to philosophy” (*ibid.*).

On the face of it, treating philosophy as a science would seem to contradict the sharp contrasts between science and philosophy that Heidegger explicated only a few years earlier in “Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion”: namely, that scientific concepts are formed out of a material complex, while philosophy does not have access to *any* such complex (*PRL*, 3).

Indeed, Heidegger does say that he sees the question of the relationship between theology and phenomenology as a “question about the *relationship of two sciences*”—but *not* as a matter of “comparing the factual circumstances of two historically given sciences” (*P*, 40). He concludes:

Thus what is needed as a basis for a fundamental discussion of the problem is an *ideal* construction of the ideas behind the two sciences. One can decide their *possible* relationship to one another from the *possibilities* they both have as sciences. (*P*, 40; emphasis added)

That is, Heidegger is *not* claiming that philosophy and theology *are* sciences—either in their historical manifestations or even “ideally.” Instead, he is suggesting that something might be learned regarding their *possible* relationship by “bracketing” any claims as to

whether either of them is actually, or even possibly, a science, in some sense.⁷⁹ In other words, Heidegger's analysis of the possible relationship between philosophy and theology proceeds *as if* theology and philosophy are sciences—but without committing one way or another as to whether this is actually the case or not.⁸⁰

Returning to Heidegger's explication in the PAT lecture, he implies that all other positive sciences—which include mathematics, economics, and those disciplines typically associated with modern science, such as chemistry, physics, and biology—are also absolutely different from philosophy. It follows that modern Western science and theology are both “absolutely different” from philosophy. Hence we have a limited, preliminary characterization of the (modern) science-theology relation, subject to the hypothetical claim briefly stated: namely, *theology and the modern sciences are positive sciences and share the characteristic of their “absolute difference” with philosophy.*

Before attempting to characterize further the theology-philosophy relation, Heidegger defends in detail the claim that theology is a *positive* science. A positive science is *positive* by virtue of having a *positum*—i.e., “a given being that in a certain manner is always already disclosed *prior* to scientific disclosure” (*P*, 41). Roughly speaking, a *positum* for a positive science is a region of beings (i.e., entities) that determines the form and extent of that science's ontic inquiry. In harmony with the phenomenological slant to his formal definition of science, Heidegger links the positive

79. This “bracketing” can be described as *formal indication*—a term explicated in “Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion” (*PRL*, 38-45) and employed later in this lecture, as we shall see. Note also that Heidegger characterizes his definition of science as “formal.”

80. I shall engage the question of whether, in fact, Heidegger considered theology to be a science in the closing paragraphs of this section. Until then, this hypothetical assumption is tacitly in effect.

character of any ontic science to the question of Being itself: “. . . this scientific comportment toward whatever is given (nature, history, economy, space, number) is also already illuminated and guided by an understanding of being—even if it be nonconceptual” (42). Since the subject matter of ontology is being itself—i.e., not an entity, or region thereof—this ontological science is barred by definition from having a positum. Therefore the presence, or absence, of a positum absolutely distinguishes the positive, ontic sciences (including theology) from the single ontological science of philosophy—namely, ontology.

What makes theology a positive science for Heidegger? In particular, what is theology’s positum? And in what way(s), if any, is theology different from (and possibly unique among) the other ontic sciences? Throughout the remainder of this lecture, Heidegger confines himself to *Christian* theology, although he acknowledges that “Christian theology is not the only theology” (ibid.).⁸¹ (Hereinafter in this section, “theology” shall therefore refer to *Christian* theology.) Compactly stated, Heidegger responds to the first two questions by claiming that the positum of theology is *Christianness* (*Christlichkeit*) (43), and that theology is the science of *faith* (45). On the face of it, then, it may seem as though *faith* is another positum of theology in addition to Christianness, or that the two are synonymous. In what follows, I shall attempt to clarify this apparent conundrum, and I shall argue that the uniqueness of theology among the ontic sciences follows from a “reciprocal” relation between faith and theology.

81. Heidegger offers no substantive justification for this move. Following the quote, Heidegger instead explains that he must first clarify “the idea of theology” before he can address the question of whether theology is a (positive) science. But then his ensuing clarification explicitly incorporates Christian themes.

As the positem of theology, Christianness denotes, by definition, the being which is given to theology for further disclosure, after its primal disclosure. But what does “Christianness” mean?⁸² Heidegger writes: “For the ‘Christian’ faith, that being which is primarily revealed to faith, and only to it, and which, as revelation, first gives rise to faith, is Christ, the crucified God” (44). Thus, faith and revelation have a reciprocal relationship in disclosing the positem of theology, since faith “owes its existence,” so to speak, to revelation and is nevertheless the only means by which revelation can appear and be received as revelation.

Now, *disclosure* can be understood in two complementary ways: namely, as *what* is disclosed, and as *how* that which is disclosed *is* disclosed (i.e., the process by which the disclosure is effected or, equivalently, its mode of existence). With that distinction in mind, I contend that the *what* of Christianness, as the positem of theology, is “Christ, the crucified God,” and that the *how* of this positem is faith, including its equivalence as *rebirth*.⁸³ Such a reading is supported by these statements by Heidegger:

The totality of this being [i.e., the Crucified] that is disclosed by faith . . . constitutes the character of the positem that theology finds before it. . . . theology is constituted in thematizing faith and that which is disclosed through faith, that which is “revealed.” (*P*, 45)

82. In the Preface, Heidegger refers to theologian Franz Overbeck, who “established the world-denying expectation of the end as the basic characteristic of what is primordially Christian.” .See Franz Overbeck, *On the Christianity of Theology*, trans. John Elbert Wilson (San Jose, CA: Pickwick, 2002). This is a translation of *Über die Christlichkeit unserer heutigen Theologie (On the Christianity of Our Today’s Theology)*, 2nd. ed. Leipzig: C. G. Naumann, 1903. First ed. Leipzig: E. W. Frisch, 1873.

83. In other words, “Christ, the crucified God” is the *content*-sense of Christianness, and “faith” is the *relational*-sense of Christianness. Cf. the discussion in Section 2.1 in which the phenomenological meaning, or sense, of early Christian life experience is expressed in three “directions” of sense as “the apostolic proclamation” (content-sense), “having become” (relational-sense), and “comportment to this having become” (enactment-sense).

Briefly stated, Christianness is *co-constituted* by faith and by that which is disclosed primarily by faith (and only to it)—namely, Christ, the crucified God.

Next, he moves to “radically revise” the basic theological concept of faith and to thereby justify his claim that “theology is the science of faith”—but in a way that remains consonant with affirming that Christ, the crucified God, as revealed solely to faith, co-constitutes theology’s positum. His summary claim: “Formally considered, then, faith as the existing relation to the Crucified is a mode of historical Dasein, of human existence, of historically being in a history that discloses itself only in and for faith” (46). Space permits only a sketch of his argument. Just as Heidegger approaches his analysis of Being in *Being and Time* through interrogating the modes of existence of Dasein, so here he explicates “faith” as a particular mode of existence of Dasein.

That which is primarily disclosed (i.e., Christ, the crucified God) is revealed in faith to “individual human beings factically existing historically” (44). That is, this revelation is imparted to persons in the midst of everyday living in such a way that lets the faithful take part in this revelation event. Such “part-taking” is a reorientation of one’s existence “in and through the mercy of God grasped in faith” (ibid.). This reorientation, or *rebirth*, is the *existentiell* meaning of faith.⁸⁴ For Heidegger, then, faith is not belief “in some coherent order of propositions” or “a modified type of knowing” (ibid.) but rather “*is the believing-understanding mode of existing in the history revealed, i.e., occurring, with the Crucified*” (45, original emphasis).

84. In other words, the life of faith, as rebirth, occurs in the midst of ongoing ordinary life. *Rebirth* is daily existence, lived out of “part-taking” in the revelation event. Re-birth is the fulfillment of the faith relation to the apostolic proclamation. Rebirth is the *enactment*-sense of Christianness.

Just as the faith-revelation relation is reciprocal, analogously so is the theology-faith relation. This reciprocal relationship between faith and theology is the basis for Heidegger's claim that theology is the science of faith. "Theology . . . is the science of faith, not only insofar as it makes faith and that which is believed its object, but because it itself arises out of faith" (46). Theology is unique among the ontic sciences insofar as what it thematizes is also its origin. Physics, for example, is "absolutely different" from theology in that it does not arise from nature but objectifies nature from a vantage point outside of nature. Whereas the sole purpose of theology is "to help cultivate faith" (*ibid.*), physics *qua* physics has no such corresponding relation to nature.

Heidegger further illuminates the *scientific* character of theology by reformulating the purposes of the disciplines of historical, systematic, and practical theology and that of theology as a whole. First, the imparting of the revelation of "Christ, the crucified God" to, and its appropriation by, the faithful is *historical* in the sense of happening or occurring (*geschichtlichen*) rather than as past event (*historische*) (*ibid.*). This "Christian occurrence in its Christianness and historicity" is "the primary object" of theology (48). As for systematic theology, its task is "[t]o grasp the substantive content and the specific mode of being of the Christian occurrence, and to grasp it solely as it is testified to in faith and for faith" (47). Theology is also "'innately' homiletical" (and is therefore a practical science) because it is "the science of the action of God on human beings who act in faith" (48). These three theological disciplines are unified in their plurality by their founding in the revelation of "Christ, the crucified God" as disclosed solely to faith, which itself is understood as the mode of concrete Christian existence.

Heidegger's reinscriptions of theology and its disciplines from its positum provide the basis for his claim that "theology is a fully autonomous ontic science" (50). His reformulations ward off attempts to regard theology as a form of the history, philosophy, or psychology of religion applied to Christianity. He does not deny that "theology represents a special case of the philosophy and history of religion," but insists that theology, "itself founded primarily by faith," need not "borrow from other sciences in order to augment and secure its proofs" (49).

Next, let us turn to Heidegger's analysis of the relation of philosophy to theology—and to faith. Compactly stated, ". . . faith does not need philosophy, [but] the *science* of faith [i.e., theology] as a positive science does" (50). I unpack these claims and argue for their relevance in thinking the RST relation. First, faith and philosophy are "mortal enemies," as their relationship is "a basic (existential) confrontation of two possibilities of existence"—faithfulness vs. autonomous thought (53, n. 4). Otherwise said, ". . . what is revealed in faith can never be founded by a way of rational knowing as exercised by autonomously functioning reason . . ." (51). Yet Heidegger surprisingly does not rule out the possibility of genuine dialogue between philosophy and theology, as the science of faith:

This *existentiell* opposition between faithfulness and the free appropriation of one's whole Dasein is not first brought about by the sciences of theology and philosophy but is prior to them. Furthermore, it is precisely this opposition that must bear the possibility of a community of the sciences of theology and philosophy, if indeed they are to communicate in a genuine way, free from illusions and weak attempts at mediation. (*P*, 53)

Second, as already stated in *BT*, all positive sciences need philosophy to clarify the ontological character of the region in which their basic concepts are operative; as a positive science, theology is no exception. This clarification is especially important when the nature of these basic concepts is under re-examination. For each nontheological science such as physics, say, this clarification secures for these basic concepts “their original foundation, the demonstration of all their inner possibilities, and hence their higher truth” (52). Heidegger’s claim for philosophy’s clarifying role with respect to theology is much more modest, however. As stated earlier, philosophy cannot found the positum of theology, because what is disclosed by faith is beyond the reach of autonomous thought. Nevertheless, philosophy has a “co-directing” role or function (aka formal indication) which points to the ontological concepts (e.g., guilt) that underlie theological concepts (e.g., sin) *without influencing the content of the theological claims made therein*. Heidegger argues that this weaker form of correction “does not serve to bind but, on the contrary, to release and point to the specific, i.e., credal, source of the disclosure of theological concepts” (ibid.).

In sum, philosophy (as ontology) has a strong directive function vis-à-vis the nontheological positive sciences, as it *founds* the basic concepts of these sciences by disclosing the ontological character of the region in which these concepts are operative. Due to the autonomy of faith from philosophy, however, philosophy’s role with respect to theology is much weaker and merely formal, in the sense of pointing to the ontological concepts that undergird theological concepts, but in a nonfoundational manner. Nonetheless, an asymmetry in the theology-philosophy relation is evident. Heidegger

contends that philosophy is not required to play this co-directing role for theology; instead, he says, theology should “demand” the assistance of philosophy to clarify its own concepts (53).⁸⁵ However, this asymmetry also maintains the legitimacy—and necessity—of employing *theological* concepts to grasp the “inconceivability” of faith. Indeed, faith would otherwise remain “mute,” and theology would have abdicated its responsibility as a positive science to thematize its positum, faithful existence (50). In this way, Heidegger thinks against those who would isolate faith from all contact with conceptual thought.

In this lecture, claims regarding the RST relation are mediated through the primary analysis of the philosophy-theology relation and the hypothetical assumption that both are sciences, interpreted phenomenologically. In light of these given conditions, we can say the following: First, science (taken now as the nontheological positive sciences) and theology *as science* (taken here as Christian theology, centered in faith) are related in the sense that they share two basic characteristics: (i) both are *positive* sciences, and (ii) both are absolutely different from philosophy (i.e., ontology). Second, theology is a fully *autonomous* ontic science, insofar as it has no need of other ontic sciences to help legitimize its claims. And third, theology is unique among the ontic sciences in that its positum is co-constituted by faith, which cannot be objectified, since faith is an appropriation of revelation.

Under such conditions, does “dialogue,” in some sense, obtain between theology and science in the RST relation? Recall that Barbour’s criteria for Dialogue requires

85. We shall see in the following section, however, that Heidegger later abandons urging theology to turn to philosophy to clarify its basic concepts.

“indirect interactions between science and religion [or science and theology] involving boundary questions and methods [i.e., methodological parallels]” (*RIAS*, 16).⁸⁶ As the previous paragraph attests, Science and Theology do interact indirectly, as their relationships are mediated through philosophy, understood as phenomenological ontology. Moreover, these interactions involve boundary questions in the form of the ontological status of their respective regional ontologies. However, methodologically speaking, I would say at this point that differences outweigh similarities. For example, as noted earlier, theology is unique among the positive ontic sciences in that philosophy does not determine the positum for theology. This positum is co-constituted by faith, which is beyond the scope of autonomous thought. A major task for this entire inquiry is to examine whether similarities in other dimensions of the science-theology relationship might outweigh this fundamental difference as we continue to think the RST relation with Heidegger. In sum, I conclude that the question of genuine Dialogue remains open at this point of the inquiry.

2.4 Theology, Natural Science, and Objectification

Thirty-seven years after delivering the first lecture on “Phenomenology and Theology” to the theological faculty at Tübingen, Heidegger wrote a “letter” to another group of theologians, as they prepared for a discussion at Drew University on the topic: “The Problem of a Nonobjectifying Thinking and Speaking in Today’s Theology.” At issue for the conferees was whether or not—or to what extent—is objectifying language

86. See Section 1.2.1 for an explanation of the appropriateness of applying Barbour’s fourfold typology to the science-theology relation as well as to the religion-science relation.

unavoidable, otherwise possible, or even impossible for theology. As Robert Funk's overview article and the discussion papers themselves indicate, the six presenters (including Heidegger, *in absentia*) covered a wide spectrum of positions.⁸⁷

The purpose of this section is to explicate Heidegger's reformulation of the problem statement for this Second Consultation on Hermeneutics and his claim that theological discourse is necessarily *nonobjectifying*. In so doing, I shall begin to examine the multiple meanings of *object* and its cognates from Heidegger's employment of *Objekt* in the 1964 letter and *Gegenstand* in the 1927/28 lecture. His letter also addresses two of the guiding questions of this chapter—the nature of the philosophy-theology relation and the nature of the theology-science relation.

What prompted this formulation of the question posed by the Second Consultation organizers? Heidegger presumed that it stemmed from “the widespread, uncritically accepted opinion that all thinking, as representing, and all speaking, as vocalization, are already ‘objectifying’ [*objektivierend*]” (*P*, 56). Given this interpretation, the task would then seem to be one of establishing that *nonobjectifying* (*nichtobjektivierenden*) thinking and speaking is possible in contemporary theology. As we shall see, Heidegger defends an even stronger claim.

87. The “letter” was read as the opening keynote address for the Second Consultation on Hermeneutics: Theological Discourse and the Proclamation of the Gospel held at Drew University, April 9-11, 1964. (Heidegger was unable to attend, at the direction of his physician.) This information, together with a summary, background, and commentary on the Consultation itself, is contained in Robert W. Funk, “Colloquium on Hermeneutics,” in *Theology Today* 21, no. 3 (October 1964): 287-306, doi: 10.1177/004057366402100305. Funk, Associate Professor of New Testament at Drew, was a moderator for one of the Consultation's sessions. This Colloquium was conceived as a sequel to the First Consultation at Drew two years earlier, in which Heidegger's thought was prominently discussed. The six papers presented at the Consultation are compiled in Drew University, *Consultation on Hermeneutics, 2nd: Theology and the Proclamation of the Gospel* (Madison, NJ: Drew University, 1964).

As indicated by the following quotation from near the beginning of the letter, Heidegger continues to maintain several basic themes of the PAT lecture, while at the same time signaling a possible widening of the divide between philosophy and theology:

. . . the requisite of its [i.e., theology's] major task [is] not to borrow *the categories of its thinking and the form of its speech from philosophy* or the sciences, but to think and speak out of faith for faith with fidelity to its subject matter. If this faith by the power of its own conviction concerns the human being as human being in his very nature, then genuine theological thinking and speaking have no need of any special preparation in order to reach people and find a hearing among them. (*P*, 55; emphasis added)

Thus, *faith* remains at the center of Heidegger's view of Christian theology; theology is still thought by him to be fully independent of the nontheological sciences; and theology still has a rightful place in the "public square." On the face of it, however, the *italicized* portion above seems to point away from Heidegger's claim in 1927/28 that philosophy has a "co-directive" role in clarifying the ontological region out of which theological concepts arise—albeit in a formally indicative manner (*P*, 52-53; cf. Section 2.3 above). However, we must keep in mind that, in the PAT lecture, Heidegger is explicating the philosophy-theology relation *as if* both are sciences as defined phenomenologically in terms of disclosure. In this letter, however, there is no such presupposition. The 1964 letter leaves the "co-directing" issue unaddressed.

The continuities and the semblance of a discontinuity between the lecture and the letter just noted are consistent with notes taken during Heidegger's conversation with a small group of "directors of study groups and colleagues" at the Protestant Academy at

Hofgeismar in 1953.⁸⁸ Recorder Hermann Noack characterized the discussions as “occasioned by his [Professor Heidegger’s] philosophical writings and which were focused on the relationship between thinking and faith or between philosophy and theology” (Noack, 59). I focus here on the apparent discontinuity, in which Heidegger declares, in effect, a complete separation between philosophy and theology. According to Noack, Heidegger “literally said”:

Within thinking nothing can be achieved which would be a preparation or a confirmation for that which occurs in faith and in grace. Were I so addressed by faith I would have to close up my shop . . . Philosophy engages in a kind of thinking of which man is capable on his own. This stops when he is addressed by revelation. (Noack, 64)

Heidegger then spoke directly about the theology-philosophy relation. Noack writes:

Theologians, Heidegger continued, have simply too little trust in their own standpoint and have too much to do with philosophy. . . . Because revelation itself determines the manner of manifestness and because theology does not have to prove or interpret ‘Being’, theology does not have to defend itself before philosophy. (ibid.)

Somewhat later, Noack noted that “Heidegger denied that philosophy has *any* significance for theology” (65; emphasis added). Had the “absolute difference” between philosophy (as ontology) and theology (as an ontic science) in 1927/28 become an “absolute chasm” in 1953? Not quite. Noack notes Heidegger’s remark that “. . . this does not mean that we must all simply withdraw into our mutual positions! There are historical

88. “Appendix: Conversation with Martin Heidegger, Recorded by Hermann Noack,” in *The Piety of Thinking: Essays by Martin Heidegger*, trans. James G. Hart and John C. Maraldo (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 59-71. (Hereafter cited as “Noack.”) According to the translators, Professor Noack stated in a letter to them that he had sent a copy of his notes to Heidegger and the others present before publishing them, and that “Professor Heidegger did not find anything in the text or in Professor Noack’s concluding summary with which he chose to take exception” (Heidegger, *Piety of Thinking*, 182).

encounters which entail passing closely by one another without indifference” (ibid.). In sum, Heidegger’s endorsement of the centrality of faith and the possibility of “dialogue,” in some sense, between philosophy and theology continue to shine through Heidegger’s thinking.

Thus, any claim of an actual discontinuity of viewpoints in the 1927/28 lecture (i.e., philosophy has a “co-directing” role with respect to theology to help clarify the ontological basis for its concepts) and this 1953 consultation (i.e., philosophy has *no* significance for theology) appears to be groundless. As stated before, the PAT lecture is an exploration of the possibilities of the theology-philosophy relation *as if* both members were sciences—while formally suspending the question of their actual nature, or essence. On the other hand, as is the case with the 1964 letter, the 1953 discussion makes no such formally indicative assumptions.

I turn now to another important contrast between the 1927/28 lecture and the 1964 letter—the striking difference between the meaning of “object” and its cognates in these two works. The focus of the PAT letter is to examine “what is intended by *objectifying* thinking and speaking” (*P*, 54; original emphasis). He concludes that:

Thinking and speaking objectify [*sein objektivierend*], i.e., posit as an object [*Objekt*] something given, in the field of natural-scientific and technical representation. Here they are of necessity objectifying [*objektivierend*], because scientific-technological knowing must establish its theme in advance as a calculable, causally explicable *Gegenstand*, i.e., as an object [*Objekt*] as Kant defined the word.⁸⁹ Outside this field thinking and speaking are by no means objectifying [*objektivierend*]. (*P*, 60; *GA9*, 75-76; emphasis added)

89. Heidegger briefly described Kant’s position earlier: “For Kant object [*Objekt*] means what exists as standing over against [*Gegenstand*] the experience of the natural sciences” (*P*, 58).

Throughout the PAT letter, “object” and its cognates are translates of *Objekt* and its cognates. However, in the much earlier PAT lecture, “object” and its cognates are translates of *Gegenstand* (literally, “that which stands over against”) and *its* cognates. For example, immediately following the formal definition of science in the PAT lecture, Heidegger writes:

Every region of objects [*Gegenstandsbiet*], according to its subject matter and the mode of being of its objects [*Gegenstände*], has its own mode of possible disclosure Their characteristic feature lies in the fact that the objectification [*Vergegenständlichung*] of whatever it is that they thematize is oriented directly toward beings, . . . (P, 41; GA9, 48)

Roughly speaking, then, beings thematized by positive sciences are *Gegenstände*; beings thematized by the natural sciences are *Objekte*. Thus, all such thematized *Objekte* are *Gegenstände*, but not conversely.⁹⁰

It would be totally incorrect, however, to infer that all entities are, factually speaking, either *Objekte* or *Gegenstände*. In the first place, as the discussion in Section 2.2 indicates, these terms are not inherent characteristics of entities that can serve to “sort” the class of all entities (if such a notion is even meaningful) into two subclasses. Rather, they are different possible *modes of presencing* of the Being of any given entity; and second, for some entities, the presencing of their Being is neither as *Objekt* nor as *Gegenstand* (P, 62). The blooming rose and the redness of the rose *may* serve as examples—depending upon our comportment as *Dasein* to them.

Our everyday experience of things, in the wider sense of the word, is neither objectifying nor a placing over against [*wieder objektivierend noch eine*

90. Note that, in the above passage that begins “Thinking and speaking . . . ,” Heidegger provides criteria to distinguish between *Objekt* and *Gegenstand*: namely, the former is a “calculable, causally explicable *Gegenstand*” (P, 60).

Vergegenständlichung]. When, for example, we sit in the garden and take delight in the blossoming rose, we do not make an object [*Objekt*] of the rose, nor do we even make it something standing over against us [*zu einem Gegenstand*] in the sense of something represented thematically. When in tacit saying (*Sagen*) we are enthralled with the lucid red of the rose and muse on the redness of the rose, then this redness [of the rose] is neither an object nor a thing nor something standing over against us like the blossoming rose. [*Wenn . . . , dann ist dieses Rotsein weder ein Objekt, noch ein Ding, noch ein Gegenstand wie die blühende Rose.*] There is accordingly a thinking and saying that in no manner objectifies [*objektiviert*] or places things over us [*vergegenständlicht*]. (*P*, 58; *GA*9, 73; underlined emphasis added).⁹¹

Heidegger comes to this nuanced view of different modes of presencing of entities primarily from his understanding of language as “speculative-hermeneutical”—in sharp contrast to the “technical-scientific view of language,” exemplified by the thinking of Rudolf Carnap. According to Heidegger, thinking such as Carnap’s seeks to “subjugate all thinking and speaking, including that of philosophy, . . . , to secure them as an instrument of science” (56). The danger, as Heidegger sees it, is not the use of objectifying language *per se*, but the threat that this mode of thinking and saying “will spread to all forms of life” (60).

In contrast, Heidegger contends that

Language, in what is most proper to it, is a saying *of* that which reveals itself to human beings in manifold ways and which addresses itself to human beings

91. Hart and Maraldo detect “ambiguities” in this passage “when Heidegger first says we do not make a *Gegenstand* of the rose, then opposes the blossoming rose as a *Gegenstand* to the redness of the rose” (*Piety of Thinking*, 175, n. 6). As I see it, their interpretation of this passage amounts to declaring a contradiction in Heidegger’s thinking—not merely “ambiguities.” I offer an alternative interpretation of the passage that obviates either claim. My interpretation entails regarding the underlined portions in the passage above as specifying our *comportment* to the entities in question. First, when our comportment to the blooming rose is one of everyday experience (and not of thematic representation), then the blooming rose is *not* objectified in either sense. Second, when our comportment is focused upon the *redness* of the blossoming rose, instead of upon the blooming rose itself, the blooming rose has “shifted,” so to speak, from the foreground to the background of our comportment and is now plausibly objectified as “something standing over against us” (*Gegenstand*). The larger point to be made is that our comportment to entities “co-determines,” in a sense, the mode of the presencing of their Being. (See Section 2.2 above.)

insofar as they do not, under the dominion of objectifying [*objektivierenden*] thinking, confine themselves to the latter and close themselves off from what shows itself. (*P*, 60; *GA9*, 76)

Here, Heidegger is emphasizing the interconnectedness, phenomenologically understood, of thinking, speaking, and that which is thereby revealed. “Objectification” in the sense of Objekt severs this interconnection. This is the heart of his critique of scientific-technical thinking.

Heidegger concludes his analysis of objectifying thinking and saying by proposing a more precise formulation of the theme for the theological discussion at Drew as “the problem of a *nontechnological, non-natural-scientific* thinking and speaking in today’s theology” (61; emphasis added). (The italicized words replace the single word, “nonobjectifying,” in the original problem statement for the Consultation.) “From this more commensurate reformulation, it is very clear that the problem as stated is not a genuine problem insofar as it is geared to a presupposition whose nonsense is evident to anyone” (*ibid.*).

To recap, Heidegger holds that theology does *not* engage in objectifying thinking and speaking—if by “objectifying” we mean the thinking and forms of speech that characterize the natural sciences. To those who might hold that today’s theology *does* exhibit in practice such thinking and saying (at least from time to time), he has stated, in effect, another qualification for his claim. At the beginning of his letter, he stresses that a requirement of theology’s major task is “not to borrow the categories of its thinking and the form of its speech from philosophy *or the sciences*, but to think and speak out of faith for faith with fidelity to its subject matter” (*P*, 55; emphasis added). To say this more

simply, Heidegger's claim is that theological thinking and speaking are not objectifying—if “objectifying” is taken in the sense of “object” as Objekt. However, as I read it, he has left unaddressed the question of whether or not theology is objectifying in the sense of “object” as Gegenstand.

Otherwise said, Heidegger has ruled out theology as a *natural* science (Naturwissenschaft), which objectifies in the sense of Objekt, but has left in abeyance whether theology can still be a science (Wissenschaft), which objectifies in the sense of Gegenstand. The question still lingers, even as Heidegger closes the letter by reaffirming the legitimacy of theological thinking and speaking in the public square:

The positive task for theology is for theology to place in discussion, within its own realm of the Christian faith and out of the proper nature of that faith, what theology has to think and how it has to speak. This task also includes the question whether theology can still be a science—*because presumably it should not be a science at all.* (P, 61; emphasis added)

As we have emphasized more than once, Heidegger does not take a stand in the PAT lecture as to whether or not theology is, factually speaking, a science (Wissenschaft). However, in the same letter of August 1928 in which he described the purpose of the PAT lecture (given in the first paragraph of this section), he unequivocally stated his privately-held position on this question:

I am personally convinced that theology is *no* science—but I am today not yet in a position to actually show this and indeed so that thereby the great function of theology as a history of ideas is comprehended as positive.⁹²

92. “Zwar bin ich persönlich überzeugt, daß Th[eologie] *keine* Wissenschaft ist—aber ich bin heute noch nicht im Stande, das *wirklich zu zeigen* u. zwar so, daß dabei die große geistesgeschichtliche Funktion der Theologie *positiv* begriffen ist.” Martin Heidegger to Elisabeth Blochmann, *Heidegger-Blochmann Briefwechsel*, 25 (my translation, with assistance from Stephanie Carlson).

Thus, the public 1964 letter and the private 1928 letter together support the claim that, on Heidegger's view, theology is *not* a science—natural or otherwise. In other words, he held that theology is *totally* non-objectifying— i.e., nonobjectifying with regard to “object” taken either as Objekt or Gegenstand.

Finally, I read the 1964 letter as tacitly signaling to theologians the *manner* in which theology might enact its interrelationality with religion. That is, is it possible that the manner by and through which theology is totally nonobjectifying might resemble the “mannering” of the blooming rose, the redness of the blooming rose, and poetry in any significant way or ways? I shall take up this second question with regard to poetry in Sections 4.2 and 5.1 that follow.

2.5 Chapter Summary

Let us return to three guiding questions of this chapter: Is philosophy necessary in thinking the RST relation? Is theology, in some sense, a “science”? And more generally, what can be said about the essential nature of the RST relation itself?

With regard to the first question, our preliminary response must be “yes,” given our intention to think the RST relation with Heidegger. This inquiry accepts that our thinking will be done in light of the question of Being—not beings as such and in their entirety. As Heidegger sees it, thinking the question of Being is the true task of ontology. In this Chapter, we have attempted to think the RST relation through the lens of phenomenology. The nature of thinking, however, remains unthought. We shall take this up in Section 4.4 below.

With regard to the other two guiding questions, let us consider the three dualities within the RST relation and the beginning thread of comportment to things in light of the method of phenomenology and Heidegger's works engaged so far.

Religion and science. In this chapter, religion and science are interpreted as modes of Dasein's Being-in-the-world. *Religion* is interpreted as Christian factual life experience (aka, Christianness), grounded faithfully in the apostolic proclamation, "Jesus is the Messiah" (equivalently, "Christ, the crucified God"). *Science* is interpreted in terms of "disclosure." In terms of their meaning, or sense, religion is "three-directional" (content-, relational-, and enactment-senses), while science is "uni-directional" (content-sense dominant). Science is limited to addressing the *whatness* of the phenomenon (aka, experience) at issue, while religion engages as well the *manner*, or the *how*, of the experience in its relationality and enactment.

Religion and theology. As Christian factual life experience, religion is the ground of theology: "Knowledge of one's own having-become is the starting point and the origin of theology" (*PRL*, 66). Provisionally taking theology to be a science and interpreting religion as faith-filled Christianness, the religion-theology relation is reciprocal: "Theology . . . is the science of faith, not only insofar as it make faith and that which is believed its object, but because it itself arises out of faith" (*P*, 46). Moreover, on these assumptions, theology needs philosophy to *clarify* its basic concepts, for otherwise faith would be "mute." However, unlike all the nontheological positive sciences, theology does not need philosophy to *ground* its basic concepts, as theological concepts are grounded in faith. Taking theology as the science of faith creates an opening for re-thinking its

widespread formulation as reflection on religious experience and belief. However, the essence of “reflection” is as yet unthought. (See Section 3.4 below.)

Science, theology, and Objectification. In the PAT lecture, theology shares with the other positive sciences the defining attribute of having a positum, yet they differ in a fundamental way. Philosophy (as ontology) has a strong directive function vis-à-vis the nontheological positive sciences, as it *founds* the basic concepts of these sciences by disclosing the ontological character of the region in which these concepts are operative. Due to the autonomy of faith from philosophy, however, philosophy’s role with respect to theology is much weaker and merely formal, in *pointing to* and *clarifying* the ontological concepts that undergird theological concepts, but in a nonfoundational manner.

Is theology actually a science, in Heidegger’s view? Roughly speaking, he says “no,” if science objectifies in the sense of *Objekt*; he is silent in public if science objectifies in the sense of *Gegenstand*. (In private, however, he says “no” in the second case as well.) Examples of non-objectifying modes of the presencing of Being are given in the PAT Appendix: the blooming rose, the redness of the blooming rose, and poetry. I suggest that these are implicit, but public, “invitations” by Heidegger for theology to explore in clarifying its own essential nature. (See Sections 3.3, 4.2, and 5.1 below.)

Chapter 3: Truth and the RST Relation

Heidegger regarded the question of truth as compelling, urgent, and fundamental. In the late 1930s, he described this question as “the most questionable of our previous history and the most worthy of questioning of our future history.”⁹³ He also challenged the conventional view that truth is an intellectual abstraction, a topic reserved for logical analysis:

The essence of truth is not a mere concept, carried about in the head. On the contrary, truth is alive; in the momentary form of its essence it is the power that determines everything true and untrue; it is what is sought after, what is fought for, what is suffered for. (*BQP*, 41)

For Heidegger, the question of truth is inseparable from the question of Being. In his view, the goal of philosophy and the seeking of that goal are the same. And both the goal of philosophy and the seeking of that goal entail the question of truth and the question of Being. “To posit the very seeking as a goal means to anchor the beginning and the end of all reflection in the question of the truth—not of this or that being or even of all beings, but of Being itself” (*BQP*, 6-7). Thus for Heidegger, to seek the essence of truth is to seek the truth of Being.

This chapter will examine some of Heidegger’s engagements with the question of truth in view of the RST relation. The first section (3.1 Truth, Untruth, and Dasein)

93. Heidegger, *Basic Questions of Philosophy (BQP)*, 23. This work is based upon his lecture course of the same title during winter semester 1937-38 at the University of Freiburg.

focuses primarily upon Heidegger's explication of truth as *disclosedness* and the intertwining of truth and untruth in light of the existential analytic of Dasein presented in *Being and Time*. In the second section (3.2 The Essence of Truth and the Truth of Being), I examine Heidegger's treatment of these claims ten years later in *Basic Questions of Philosophy* without tethering them to the existential analytic of Dasein. In this work, he raises the question of whether the "intertwining of opposites" that he discerned with respect to truth and untruth in *Being and Time* is, in some sense, constitutive of Being itself. I shall give special attention to implications for thinking the RST relation in view Heidegger's claim that Plato's explication of *idea* has been "disastrous" for Western thought. In the third section (3.3 Truth, Rationality, and Reason), I shall examine theologian J. Wentzel van Huyssteen's thesis that theology and science share common resources of rationality, rooted in biological evolution, which can provide a basis for meaningful and fruitful dialogue. I shall argue that Heidegger and van Huyssteen agree that "intelligibility" plays a critical role in coming to terms with understanding and rationality, respectively, but that their views differ profoundly with respect to the ubiquitous practice of seeking and giving of reasons.

In the final section (3.4 Truth and Reflection), I shall examine anew the widely-used definition of theology as "reflection on religious experience and belief" (introduced in Chapter 1) in light of Heidegger's distinction between two modes of reflection: *Reflexion* and *Besinnung*. Each of these terms is commonly translated as "reflection." My guiding questions are: In light of Heidegger's explication of truth, which understanding of "reflection" is more fruitful for thinking the essence of theology in general and

thinking the RST relation specifically? Or, are both senses of “reflection” important—and possibly necessary—in these matters?

3.1 Truth, Untruth, and Dasein

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explicates the relation of truth and Being via the existential analytic of Dasein. In what follows, I shall examine Heidegger’s recovery of the early Greek understanding of truth as disclosedness and his critique of the customary formulation of truth as agreement (or correspondence) between assertions or judgments and their referents. Next, I shall explicate his “primordial appropriation” of this early Greek understanding of truth in terms of the existential analytic of Dasein. Specifically, I shall examine his claim of the inescapable intertwining of truth and untruth in connection with his treatment of authenticity/inauthenticity, fallenness, and temporality as fundamental modes of Dasein. And finally, I shall examine Heidegger’s inversion of the Kantian view that privileges knowledge over understanding and its implications for thinking the essence of truth.

Truth as disclosedness. Heidegger’s defense of the “truth as disclosedness” thesis against traditional interpretations of truth hinges on three arguments. First, “truth as disclosedness” may be derived etymologically from the Greek. The Greek word for truth, *aletheia*, is compounded from the prefix *a-* (a privative, meaning “not”) and a stem that means “to be concealed” (*BT*, 33, n. 1; 222). Second, Heidegger cites several references from Aristotle and the pre-Socratics that support this formulation of truth (213). And

third, traditional characterizations of truth can be derived from Heidegger's interpretation of truth as disclosedness.

Heidegger bases his third argument upon an etymological analysis of *logos*, coupled with the fundamental ontology of Dasein. He argues that the customary understanding of truth fails to acknowledge the ontological relationship between "an ideal entity [i.e., a judgment] and something that is Real and present-at-hand" (216). The result is a separation into two different levels, or ways, of Being that renders any rigorous notion of "agreement" impossible. In sum, he contends that such misconceptions arise because of the derivative character of the phenomenon of *agreement*.

In brief, here is Heidegger's explanation of how truth as disclosedness becomes truth as agreement with its referent. First, *logos* and *legein* ("to talk" or "to hold discourse") share the same etymological root (25, n. 3). As discourse, *logos* is talking, speech, assertion—ways "to make manifest what one is 'talking about' in one's discourse" (32). More precisely, *logos* "lets what the discourse is about" be seen: i.e., *logos* "discloses" or uncovers what the discourse is about. *Assertion* points to the "how" of that which is uncovered. "What is expressed becomes . . . something ready-to-hand within-the-world which can be taken up and spoken again" (224). The entities referenced in the assertion are either ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. "[T]he relation itself now acquires the character of presence-at-hand by getting switched over to a relationship between things which are present-at-hand" (ibid.). That is, the comportment of Dasein toward these entities becomes one of scientific detachment and analysis. In sum: "Truth as disclosedness and as a Being-towards uncovered entities . . . has become truth as

agreement between things which are present-at-hand within-the-world” (225). The ontological has become ontic.

In *Being and Time*, truth as disclosure is, more precisely, disclosure *as* and *in* Dasein. Truth and Dasein are inextricably linked. Dasein’s basic state as Being-in-the-world and, in particular, Being alongside entities-in-the-world, imply that (i) “truth” in the *primary* sense is Dasein’s comportment as “Being-uncovering (uncovering)”, and (ii) “truth” in the *secondary* sense is entities as “Beings-uncovered (uncoveredness)” (220). Disclosure of a phenomenon is necessarily a disclosure *in* Dasein, namely, in the *there* (the *Da*) that Dasein is given *to be (sein)*.⁹⁴ Thus, the occurrence of truth rests upon the existence of Dasein; no Dasein means no disclosure, and hence no possibility of truth in Heidegger’s framework (226). In sum, “The Being of truth is connected primordially with Dasein. . . . Being and truth ‘are’ equiprimordially” (230).

From his analysis of the worldhood of the world and of Dasein’s mode of Being-in-the-world, Heidegger identifies the constituents of disclosedness as *state-of-mind*, *understanding*, and *discourse*. These three constituents are equiprimordial ways of Being-there, existential structures for its maintenance. “State-of-mind” is revealed ontically in our moods, but ontologically is expressed in modes (such as fear, anxiety, etc.) that disclose our submission to the world and encounter with what matters to us (136-39). “Understanding” points ontically to comprehension, manageability, etc., but points ontologically to possibility—to Dasein’s potentiality-for-Being (143). “Discourse” is the

94. I thank Frank Seeburger for this clarification.

ontological foundation of language, interpretation, and assertion, which is integral to understanding (160-61).

Truth and untruth. The relationship between truth and untruth in Heidegger's thought can be initially grasped as a relationship of opposites, but fundamentally is one of *complementary intertwining*--a "yin-yang" relationship, so to speak. Both levels involve the interplay between disclosure and disguise (i.e., covering up). In what follows, I examine Heidegger's analysis of the truth/untruth duality in relation to authenticity/inauthenticity, fallenness, and temporality as basic modes of Dasein. But first, two general observations.

Heidegger's treatment of the *logos* illustrates a mapping of true/false onto disclosure/covering up, but with a twist. Since the *logos* functions merely as letting-something-be-seen, it can be either true or false (33). The "Being-true" of the *logos* is the discoveredness of that which has been hidden via disclosure; the "Being-false" of the *logos* is also still disclosure—but one in which something like a distortion occurs that *covers over* or *conceals* the very thing the discourse is about, rather than letting it be seen just as it shows itself from itself. Thus truth and falsity are both results of disclosure, but in different senses.⁹⁵

The relationship between truth and untruth in Heidegger's thought is intimately connected with Dasein: "Dasein is equiprimordially both in the truth and in untruth" (223). Consider the first half of this claim. Dasein is that being "in" and "as" which the

95. For Heidegger, the primordially true is *noien*—taken in the sense of "perception," sheer "apprehending," rather than of rational thought or mentation, as it comes to be predominantly taken in the philosophical tradition—as it merely discloses and never covers up (*BT*, 33). *Logos* does not have this characteristic. I thank Frank Seeburger for this clarification.

Being of entities, including other Dasein, disclose themselves. Thus, the ontological character of Dasein is *truth*—truth as disclosedness, in the sense of truth as that which makes it possible for any beings, whether Dasein itself or other beings, to disclose themselves. Otherwise said, Dasein is the “clearing” within which such disclosure is possible (133). In this sense, then, Dasein is always “in the truth.”

To establish the second half of his claim, Heidegger draws upon his notions of authenticity vs. inauthenticity and fallenness. Heidegger introduces the authentic/inauthentic binary early in *Being and Time*. The distinction between these two modes of the Being of Dasein is grounded in two fundamental characteristics of Dasein: its “essence” (which lies in its existence), and its “mineness” (*Jemeinigkeit*). The former points to the range of possibilities for Dasein to be; Dasein “comports itself towards its Being as its ownmost possibility” (42). The latter acknowledges Dasein’s inescapable mode of Being as, so to speak, “Being-as-having-to-decide-over-itself.” That is, “Dasein has always made some sort of decision as to the way in which it is in each case mine [*je meines*]” (ibid.). The inescapability of Dasein’s having to decide over the “how” of its own Being-itself is reflected, for one example, in the familiar statement, “Not to decide is to decide.” *Authenticity* for Dasein is to “‘choose’ itself to win itself”; *inauthenticity* is to “lose itself and never win itself” (ibid.). Authentic Dasein chooses to choose itself, to make itself “mine,” whereas inauthentic Dasein fails to choose itself in such a manner,

choosing instead not to choose, without ever even seeing or saying that is has so chosen.⁹⁶

Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, is necessarily immersed in the “everydayness” of the world. Heidegger characterizes this ontological state of Dasein’s Being as one of *falling* and *thrownness*. “Falling” points to the Dasein’s inordinate fascination with its on-going relationships as Being-in-the-world, to the domination of prevailing public opinion, and to a mode of tranquilized, groundless floating. “Thrownness” reflects the turbulence and ceaseless movement of Dasein within “the groundlessness of nullity of inauthentic everydayness” (178). The inauthenticity of everyday Dasein is factual for Heidegger; “fallenness” does not imply deviation from some earlier pristine condition of wholeness nor any moralistic judgments regarding Dasein’s “corruptibility.” Yet authenticity is a possible mode of Being for Dasein within such everydayness—not as a “floating above” such fallenness, but as “a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon” (179).

How, then, is Dasein “in untruth”? In Heidegger’s analysis, the falling thrownness of everyday Dasein is reflected in its everyday, inauthentic modes of discourse, state of mind, and understanding, idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity. Each of these modes of Being of Dasein serves to cover up that which is hidden—but in ways analogous to that of the “Being false” of the *logos* discussed earlier.

Idle talk discloses to Dasein a Being towards its world, towards Others, and towards itself—a Being in which these are understood, but in a mode of groundless floating. *Curiosity* discloses everything and anything, yet in

96. The authentic self and the inauthentic self are not two different selves but, rather, two different ways of being one and the same self, the self Dasein is given to be—or has to be. I thank Frank Seeburger for this clarification.

such a way that Being-In is everywhere and nowhere. *Ambiguity* hides nothing from Dasein's understanding, but only in order that Being-in-the-world should be suppressed in this uprooted 'everywhere and nowhere'. (BT, 177; emphasis added)

In sum, insofar as Dasein's mode of Being as discourse always tends toward taking such a "fallen" form—that of idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity—Dasein is inescapably "in untruth."

Division Two of *Being and Time* deepens Heidegger's analysis of the authentic/inauthentic dualism, falling, the everydayness of Dasein as Being-in-the-world, and truth/untruth by reformulating them through the lenses of temporality and death. Given the indubitable inauthenticity of everyday Dasein, these lenses sharpen the rather general characterizations of authenticity found in Division One.

The inevitability of death is a given for all human beings. Heidegger posits Dasein as "Being-towards-death" in the sense that Dasein lives each moment with this facticity, yet without certainty of the ontic time of its occurrence. Given such, Heidegger locates authenticity in *resoluteness*—a mode of Dasein's disclosedness that is "ready for anxiety" and that self-projects upon its ownmost Being-guilty. "In resoluteness we have now arrived at that *truth* of Dasein which is most primordial because it is authentic" (297; emphasis added). "Resoluteness" means intentionally accepting the call of conscience to be who I am. Authentic Dasein is everyday Dasein as Being-in-resoluteness.

On Heidegger's view, Dasein is not "in" time; rather, Dasein *is* time in the sense of temporality, or more precisely, in the sense of Dasein as a mode of temporalizing temporality. Moreover, Dasein embodies this tri-partite dimensionality of temporality—

not sequentially or linearly, but integrally. Heidegger fleshes out the three-fold conceptualization of temporality via two of the components of disclosedness, plus falling. “Understanding” is *futural*, in the sense of opening up a horizon of possibilities via projection; “state-of-mind” is primarily *past*-oriented, expressed via moods that reflect my thrownness; and “falling” (especially as manifested as curiosity) is temporalized, via Dasein’s fascination with Being-in-the-world, as the *present*. The third component of disclosedness—discourse—cuts across all three temporal dimensions as the self-articulation of Dasein, expressed as silence as well as “talk.”⁹⁷

Understanding and Interpretation. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explicates the relation between knowledge and truth from out of the existential analytic of Dasein as Being-in-the-world. Heidegger inverts the customary primacy of knowledge over understanding. For Heidegger, “understanding” is not merely one sort of cognizing among others (such as “explaining”), but rather is a fundamental mode of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world (143). As such, “understanding” is grounded in *possibility*, “the most primordial and ultimate positive way in which Dasein is characterized ontologically” (ibid.). Compactly stated, Dasein is “Being-possible”—always more than any factual inventory of its qualities or characteristics. It is not that Dasein *has* possibilities, but that it *is* its possibilities. “Understanding” has the existential structure of *projection*, and so is always pressing forth into possibilities. This projection is a “throwing” (*Entwurf*) of Dasein into its possibilities without grasping them in a systematic and reflective manner.

97. The three elements of disclosedness plus “falling” are the constituents of “care” as Dasein’s primordial totality (*BT*, 335).

As one of three equiprimordial elements of disclosedness, understanding discloses Dasein's possibilities to "Become what you are" (145).

In turn, *interpretation* is the development of the understanding in the sense of "working- out of possibilities [of/for Dasein] projected in understanding" (148). Interpretation does not depend upon knowledge or information about what is understood; rather, it is the articulation of that which lies before us *as* something—for example, *as* a table, *as* a bridge, etc. Interpretation precedes assertion or characterization of that which has come into sight. "The 'as' makes up the structure of the explicitness of something that is understood" (149). Guided by his explication of equipment as the "ready-to-hand," Heidegger grounds the "as" structure of interpretation upon the "fore-structure" of understanding: fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception. That is, understanding entails the having in advance of a totality of involvements; the sighting-in-advance—a "first-cut," so to speak—of that totality; and a preliminary grasping or conceptualizing of that totality (150). Thus, understanding and interpretation operate hand-in-hand; neither has primacy over the other. Indeed, Heidegger says, they operate within a "virtuous circle," so to speak: "Any interpretation which is to contribute to understanding, must already have understood what is to be interpreted" (152).

Truth and knowledge. Recall the primary and secondary senses in which Heidegger has primordially appropriated the tradition: namely, "truth" as "Being-uncovering" and as "Being-uncovered," respectively (220, also cited above). "Being-uncovering" (aka "Being-true") is a mode of Being for Dasein. "Understanding" is also

such a mode. (143) and so is “knowing” (62). Entities, or beings, are “that which has been uncovered” (20).

Conventionally understood, “knowledge” is what is true (216). This can be affirmed, if we take “truth” in the secondary sense of “Being-uncovered.” Knowledge, roughly speaking, is that which gets demonstrated or uncovered. This is consistent with the earlier claim in this section that “knowledge” is a derivative of “understanding.” In more detail:

When does truth become *phenomenologically* explicit in knowledge itself? It does so when such knowing demonstrates itself as true. By demonstrating itself it is assured of its truth. . . . What gets demonstrated is the Being-uncovering of the assertion. In carrying out such a demonstration, the knowing remains related solely to the entity itself. . . This uncoveredness is confirmed when that which is put forward in the assertion (namely the entity itself) shows itself *as that very same thing*. . . . Thus truth has by no means the structure of an agreement between knowing and the object in the sense of a likening of one entity (the subject) to another (the Object). (*BT*, 217-18; original emphasis)

I have concentrated in this section on highlighting Heidegger’s formulation of truth as disclosedness (*aletheia*) and how the traditional conception of truth as agreement of an assertion with its object is derivative of this primordial formulation. Heidegger establishes these claims from the existential analytic of *Dasein*. I have also highlighted his arguments for the inseparable intertwining of truth and untruth. In the next section, I shall draw upon Heidegger’s later work that retains the two in their inextricable interweaving, but does not repeat the analysis explicitly linking them to the existential analytic of *Dasein*.

3.2 The Essence of Truth and the Truth of Being

The primary purpose of this section is to explicate Heidegger's critique of the customary formulation of the essence of truth as the correctness of an assertion in favor of a more originary explication of truth from the standpoint of the question of the truth of Being. Here, his explication of truth is no longer dependent upon the existential analytic of Dasein. I shall focus upon three questions with an eye toward their relevance in thinking the RST relation: First, why is the statement that "truth is the correctness of an assertion" problematic in itself, as well as derivative from the pre-Socratic understanding of truth as unconcealedness? Second, how are we to understand Heidegger's claim that "to seek the essence of truth is to seek the truth of Being"? And third, what is the connection between the truth-Being relation and the question of what it means to be human?

In *Basic Questions of Philosophy*, Heidegger takes the question of truth—understood as the truth of Being—as his basic question. Once again, he begins his inquiry by interrogating the customary view of truth, compactly expressed as "the correctness of an assertion" (*BQP*, 9). Traditionally, he says, the question of truth, expressed in this form, has been regarded as a problem or question of logic. Correspondence, he says, is customarily taken as the standard of correctness. For example, "Truth is correctness, or in the more usual formula: truth is the correspondence of knowledge (representation, thought, judgment, assertion) with the object" (16); and ". . . truth is the correctness of a representation, the correspondence of an assertion (a proposition) with a thing" (22).

Heidegger problematizes the customary understanding of truth in several ways. First, what does *correspondence* mean? How are we to understand a correspondence between a being or entity (such as an object or thing) and a string of words referencing such? In discussing Aristotle's understanding of correspondence as the *assimilation* of the assertion to the thing via Aristotle's example, "The stone is hard," Heidegger asks: ". . . how is the representation [i.e., the proposition itself] supposed to assimilate itself to the stone? The representation is not supposed to, and cannot, become stone-like . . ." (15). Second, he points out that the centuries-old debate between realism and idealism lies completely within the orbit of this customary understanding of truth. That is, both positions start from the premise that "truth is the correctness of a representation . . ." The basic difference between them lies in the extent, or "reach," of such representations. For realism, representations "reach the things themselves," whereas for idealism, representations "relate only to the represented" (17). Thus the essence of truth must lie at a deeper level. And third, Heidegger argues that the question of the essence of truth cannot be divorced from the question of the essence of what it means to be human. For Heidegger, conceiving of truth as the correctness of an assertion is equivalent to thinking "man" as the *animal rationale*, the animal "endowed with reason" (20). Thus, his critique of the customary understanding of truth necessitates a rethinking of the essence of being human—an issue that I shall address more fully in the final chapter of this inquiry.

Despite these flaws in the customary understanding of truth as the correctness of an assertion, Heidegger intends to show that this understanding "already in some way contains, even if not originally, the essence of truth" (42). He proceeds to do so by

examining in detail Aristotle's multi-faceted understanding of *essence*. To comprehend the essence of truth, we must first ask, what do we mean by "essence" itself? That is, what is the *essentiality* (i.e., the *truth*) of the essence? Thus, Heidegger inverts the question of the essence of truth to the question of the truth (essentiality) of the essence.

Heidegger justifies his engagement with Aristotle's thought in several ways. First, Aristotle was the first to posit the customary understanding of truth (ibid.). Second, examples such as "The stone is hard," merely provide *occurrences* of correctness but do not suffice to provide a ground, or foundation, for this understanding of truth (43). By engaging Aristotle's explication of essence, Heidegger seeks to discern the origin and founding of the formulation of truth as the correctness of an assertion. And third, while Heidegger's inquiry is pertinent because of the dominance of the traditional understanding of truth in contemporary thought, he fundamentally aims for "awakening the question of truth for the future as a—or perhaps *the*—basic question of philosophy" (41). That is, Heidegger frames his analysis of Aristotle's thought as a *historical reflection* oriented toward the future rather than a *historiographical consideration* that "turns the past into an object" (32-40).

Aristotle thought the essentiality of the essence in several different ways (53-58). Among them, Heidegger selects *whatness* for special analysis. "The essence is the *ti einai*—the whatness [*Wasssein*] of a being. . . . What something is is its essence" (56). At this point, Heidegger turns to Plato's fateful characterization of whatness and describes it as "an answer which became henceforth perhaps the most consequential, influential, and *disastrous* philosophical definition in Western thinking: the essence is what something is,

and we encounter it *as that which we constantly have in sight in all our comportment to the thing*” (58, emphasis added). In what follows, I shall examine why Heidegger thinks that Plato’s characterization of whatness as *constant presence* is disastrous and its implications for thinking the RST relation. Plato’s characterization follows:

. . . what the thing is, the constantly present, must be sighted in advance and indeed necessarily so. “To see,” is in Greek *idein*; what is in sight, precisely as sighted, is *idea*. . . . The “what it is,” the whatness, is the *idea*; and conversely, the “idea” is the whatness, and the latter is the essence. More precisely, and more in the Greek vein, the *idea* is the look something offers, the aspect it has and, as it were, shows of itself, the *eidōs*. (*BQP*, 56)

In sum, the essence of something for Plato is *idea*—the look, or aspect, that it shows in its constant presencing, yet always sighted in advance.

For example, consider “house-ness”—i.e., the *idea* of a house. Heidegger writes:

When we enter a house and live in it, we constantly have “house” in sight, i.e., house-ness. If this were not seen, we could never experience and enter stairs, hall, room, attic, or cellar. But this house-ness, which stands in view, is not thereby considered and observed the way the individual window is, toward which we walk in order to close it. House-ness is not even observed incidentally. It is not observed at all; yet it is in sight, and precisely in an eminent way: it is sighted in advance. (*BQP*, 58-59)

We see the window in the house but we do not—and cannot—see “house-ness.”

Nonetheless, the essence of the house is always in sight and always sighted in advance;

however, this essence is never noticed or observed. Yet each individual thing that we see is decisively shaped by what is sighted in advance.⁹⁸

98. This strikes me as comparable to Thomas Kuhn’s fundamental distinction between *normal science* and *science in a crisis state* (see Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 77-91). Under the former, scientists go about their everyday tasks of exploration and explanation within the operating paradigms of their specific disciplines. From Kuhn’s standpoint, Heidegger’s claim that “science does not think” is perfectly understandable—if thinking includes examination of the presuppositions under which

But whence does Plato's interpretations of whatness as *idea*—and *idea* as constant presence—come? And why is this characterization deemed disastrous? In response to the first question, Heidegger states:

The reason the Greeks understand essence as whatness is that they in general understand the Being of beings (*ousia*) as what is constant and in its constancy is always present, and as present always shows itself, and as self-showing offers its look—in short, as look, as *idea*. (*BQP*, 61)

Here, Heidegger links the truth (essentiality) of essence to the question of Being, as understood by the Platonic Greeks. Essence as whatness, he says, flows from the beingness of beings (*ousia*), understood as constant presence, i.e., as *idea*. Heidegger, however, contends that the pre-Socratics held to a more originary notion of Being, expressed as *being as such*. For them, this expression was understood as *physis*, fundamentally characterized by *emergence* (86). That is, beings as such emerge from concealment into unconcealedness. Thus the truth, or essence, of beings as such was characterized as unconcealedness, expressed as *aletheia* in Greek. Briefly stated, for the pre-Socratic Greeks, unconcealedness (*aletheia*) is the truth of beings as such (*physis*); equivalently, unconcealedness (*aletheia*) was understood by them as the truth (essence) of Being as the beingness of beings (*ousia*). *Aletheia* (unconcealedness), then, is the bridge for the equivalence of the essence of truth and the truth of Being, as understood by the pre-Socratic Greeks. On this view, truth *belongs* to beings—not to assertions about them. Plato and Aristotle reformulated this primordial formulation of truth as unconcealedness to truth as the correctness of an assertion (97-8). Thus, *both* formulations of truth have

scientific inquiries are made. That is, normal science employs “paradigm” as “*idea*” in Plato's sense as the view in advance, the “look” that something offers.

been in play since Aristotle. Plato's fateful contribution is the conflation of unconcealedness and constant presence as *idea*.

Heidegger explicates the connections between these two formulations of truth in a twofold movement. First, he traces the origin of the traditional understanding of truth back to the early Greek understanding of truth as unconcealedness. Then he briefly traces the trajectory from its understanding as *aletheia* to truth as the correctness of an assertion. In so doing, he illuminates the consequences for our understanding of what it means to be human and defends his claim that Plato's conflation of essence and constant presence as *idea* has been disastrous.

Heidegger begins by asking: Is there a foundation, or grounding, for such claims involving essences—and in particular, the essence of the truth taken customarily (and by Aristotle) as correctness of an assertion or judgment? He tells us that Aristotle did not provide any foundation in his extant writings for this claim; he simply declared it to be so (64). Indeed, Heidegger argues that founding *any* essence upon factual knowledge is impossible, for the purported essence would have to be posited to generate the factual knowledge employed to establish it:

Every time we attempt to prove an essential determination through single, or even all, actual and possible facts, there results the remarkable statement of affairs that we have already presupposed the legitimacy of the essential determination, indeed must presuppose it, just in order to grasp and produce the facts that are supposed to serve as proof.⁹⁹ (*BQP*, 71)

99. Note that Heidegger does *not* appeal to the argument of infinite regress—a form of argument that lies within the orbit of causality.

How, then, is the essence of truth to be grasped? Returning to his conviction that “truth as correctness of an assertion” is “on the way” to understanding the essence of truth, Heidegger re-examines more closely Plato’s explication of the essence of whatness as constant presence—i.e., *idea*. He provides a detailed argument to hold that the seeing in advance that characterizes *idea* is a grasping of the essence in the sense that it is a *productive seeing* and a *bringing forth* from concealment into the light, i.e., into unconcealedness (74-87). In this sense, truth as unconcealedness is a *founding* of truth as the correctness of an assertion.

What accounts, then, for this transmutation of truth as the determinant of beings as such to truth as the correctness of an assertion? Heidegger offers two accounts. The first employs his understanding of the Greek notion of *techne*. On his view, *techne* means “to grasp beings as emerging out of themselves in the way they show themselves, in their outward look, *eidōs*, *idea*, and, in accord with this, to care for beings themselves and to let them grow . . .” (155). *Techne* “maintains the holding sway of *physis* (emergence) in unconcealedness (*aletheia*)” (153). Otherwise said, *techne* acknowledges beings in their unconcealedness without calculation and utilitarian motives. Heidegger contends, however, that, over time, the grasping of beings in the noninstrumental manner of *techne* inevitably leads, in effect, to the conflation of beings with their representations (i.e., their ideas):

While the grasping of beings, the acknowledgment of them in their unconcealedness, unfolds into *techne*, inevitably and increasingly the aspects of beings, the ‘ideas,’ which are brought into view in such grasping, become the only standard. The grasping becomes a sort of know-how with regards to the ideas, and that requires a constant assimilation to them. . . . Beings become, to exaggerate somewhat, objects of representations conforming to them. Now *aletheia* itself is

also interrogated, but henceforth from the point of view of *techne*, and *aletheia* becomes the correctness of representations and procedures. (*BQP*, 156)

Heidegger's deconstruction of the history of the essence of truth illuminates the history of the transmutation of the essence of humankind and of reason itself. On his view, humankind was once the perceiver and preserver of beings in their beingness, but for centuries has been conceived instead as the *animal rationale* (121). Reason (*logos*) was once "the taking together and gathering of beings in view of the one which they are as beings," but has become reason that "assumes for itself the planning, constructing, and making of the world" (122). He continues: "Beings are no longer *physis* in the Greek sense [i.e., of emergence] but 'nature,' i.e., that which is captured in the planning and projects of calculation and placed in the chains of anticipatory reckonings."

Heidegger's second account of these transmutations of the essences of truth, humankind, and reason is based upon his interrogation of unconcealedness as the truth of beings as such. His interrogation of *aletheia* prompts the question of why the early Greeks did not conduct such an investigation. Heidegger argues as follows. First, the founding of *any* essence—including the essence of truth—must arise from the *necessity* of the question of the essence itself (104ff). Second, for the early Greeks, the question of the essence of truth *was* necessary, because their destiny and task "was to begin thinking itself and to establish it on its ground" (112). Third, they did so by interrogating and grounding *aletheia* as the unconcealedness of *beings*, but did not interrogate "the essence of *aletheia*, of unconcealedness *as such*" (105; emphasis added). They did not interrogate *aletheia* as such, since that was not their destiny and task. Heidegger takes up this task out

of the necessity of doing so in light of the abandonment of Being, heralded by Nietzsche and Hölderlin:

What if this withdrawal itself belonged to the essence of Being? What if . . . Being in its essence is self-concealing? What if the openness were first and foremost the clearing in the midst of beings, in which clearing the self-concealment of Being would be manifest? (*BQP*, 163)

Thus the pre-Socratic notion of the essence of truth as unconcealedness—equivalently, the truth of beings as such—is giving way to understanding the truth of Being itself as self-concealing unconcealedness, an inseparable concurrence of disclosing and withdrawing. This emerging understanding of the essence (truth) of Being reaffirms the claim in *Being and Time* that truth and untruth are similarly intertwined.

An inversion of sorts is taking place. The first sentence of the Introduction of *Being and Time* reads: “The question has today been forgotten” (*BT*, 2). That is, we, as Dasein, have forgotten the question of Being. Heidegger now writes in a more ominous key:

The forgottenness of Being dominates, i.e., it determines our relation to beings, so that even beings, that they are and what they are, remain a matter of indifference. It is almost as if beings have been abandoned by Being, and we are heedless of it, . . . (*BQP*, 159)

For Heidegger, the withdrawal of Being possibly heralds our abandonment by Being. It is as though Being itself has “turned the tables” on us.

Thus far in this section, we have sketched Heidegger’s telling of the transmutation of the meaning of truth as disclosedness to truth as the correctness of the assertion, which

eventually comes to rely upon representational thinking. In a later essay,¹⁰⁰ he traces the further transmutation of the meaning of truth to the *certainty* of representational thinking and locates its beginning at the start of what is commonly called *the modern period* (*EOP*, 22). That is to say, representational thinking becomes the means by which truth, certainty, and reality itself are interlinked. Quoting a passage from Descartes’

Meditations, Heidegger states:

Something true is that which man of himself clearly and distinctly brings before himself and confronts as what is thus brought before him (re-presented) in order to guarantee what is represented in such a confrontation. The assurance of such representation is certainty. What is true in the sense of being certain is what is real. (*EOP*, 25)

Hence, knowledge is confined to that which can be produced (by man) with certainty (26). Certainty is not something *added to* knowledge; rather certainty *constitutes* knowledge (20).

On Heidegger’s view, understanding truth as certainty has its roots in the ubiquitous, frenetic search for the certainty of personal salvation as mediated by the “cultural Christianity” of the Middle Ages. “Before all, the creator god, and with him the institution of the offering and management of his gifts of grace (the church), is in sole possession of the sole and eternal truth” (21). By faith, medieval mankind sought the certainty of salvation. But even if that faith were lost, “modern culture is [still] Christian” (24), he says, in the sense that certainty is the essence of truth—whether certainty is

100. Martin Heidegger, “Metaphysics as a History of Being,” in *The End of Philosophy*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 1-54. (*The End of Philosophy* is hereafter cited as *EOP*.)

realized through faith or by following Descartes' dictum to accept as true only those "things which I perceive very clearly and very distinctly."¹⁰¹

3.3 Truth, Rationality, and Reason

In this section and the next, I shall examine the possible relationship—even if it is that of mutual exclusion—between Heidegger's reflection on truth and theologian J. Wentzel van Huyssteen's two-part thesis that the question of the nature or character of *rationality* is decisive for thinking the RST relation and, in turn, that the nature or character of the RST relation itself is decisive for thinking the nature or character of theological reflection in general. In *The Shaping of Rationality*, he writes:

. . . the problem of rationality thus emerges as at the heart of the current dialogue between theology and the sciences. . . . The current theology and science dialogue, then, will turn out to be at the heart of the debate on the interdisciplinary nature and location of theological reflection . . . (*Shaping*, 7)

Van Huyssteen frames his investigation of rationality by developing what he calls a *postfoundationalist* model of rationality, which draws heavily from postmodern epistemology and the philosophy of science. On his view, theologians can legitimately participate in interdisciplinary public discourse with their truth claims because theological statements can be considered to be rationally credible. Van Huyssteen's postfoundationalist model emphasizes the seeking and giving of the best reasons possible for one's claims or beliefs about the way things are, one's actions, and one's values. In contrast, I shall highlight key elements from Heidegger's critique of Leibniz' Principle of

101. René Descartes, *Meditatio III*, quoted in *EOP*, 25, n. 4..

Reason, compactly (but not strictly) stated as *nihil est sine ratione* (nothing is without reason).

Van Huyssteen's postfoundationalist model of rationality is centered on the universal human quest for *intelligibility*—the drive to “make sense” of the world around us and our relationship to it. He contends that religion as well as science manifests this quest. “As many scientists and theologians today will acknowledge, the quest of intelligibility or optimal understanding will be incomplete if it does not include within itself the religious quest for ultimate meaning, purpose, and significance” (*Shaping*, 7). In *Duet or Duel?*, van Huyssteen locates the origin of this quest in evolutionary biology and its subsequent interplay with cultural evolution.¹⁰² In this work, he draws heavily upon the work of evolutionary biologist Franz Wuketits, but challenges Wuketits' naturalistic explanation of the origin of religious and metaphysical beliefs. Appealing to the implications of Wuketits' own analysis, he writes:

If metaphysical beliefs, on this naturalistic view at least, do not tell us anything about ‘first causes’ or ‘last purposes’ (God), but rather about our own propensity for such beliefs, why then did these evolve on such a massive scale in the history of our species? And why should we distrust our phylogenetic memories only on this point? (*Duet or Duel?*, 155)

In sum, van Huyssteen contends that the notion of intelligibility extends beyond naturalistic explanations to include religious and metaphysical beliefs as well. This is a

102. Van Huyssteen refers to the investigation of the implications for philosophical epistemology of the interrelationships between biological and cultural forces shaping human evolution as *evolutionary epistemology* (*Duet or Duel?*, 134). Cf. Philip Hefner's claim that the religion-science relation is grounded in the beginnings of human history and the primordial search for both order and meaning (Hefner, “Religion-and-Science,” 563). Also see Subsection 1.2.1 below.

key step toward his broader claim that theological statements can be considered “rational.”

Based upon this evolutionary account of intelligibility, intelligence—and its close relation, rationality—emerge together as primary survival strategies. By virtue of their common evolutionary heritage in the quest for intelligibility, van Huyssteen contends that theology—understood as “critical reflection upon religious experience” (*Shaping*, 201)—and science together share in “the rich resources of rationality.” More specifically, van Huyssteen contends that the common thread in rationality across theology, science, and the demands of daily living is providing the best available reasons for our beliefs, actions, and values:

In both theology and the sciences, then, rationality and the quest for intelligibility pivot on the deployment of good reasons: believing, doing, judging, and choosing the right things for the right reasons. Being rational is therefore not just a matter of having some reasons for what one believes in and argues for, but having the best or strongest reasons available to support the comparative rationality of one’s beliefs within a concrete sociohistorical context. (*Shaping*, 129)

In what follows, I shall examine key elements of van Huyssteen’s postfoundationalist model of rationality and his case for theological rationality.

First, the deployment of rationality is always contextual and local, yet need not remain isolated within its own domain. This reflects van Huyssteen’s characterization of his postfoundationalist model of rationality as “splitting the difference” between supporting universalist epistemological claims of modernity and extreme relativist views of knowledge, reason, and truth in postmodern thought.

Second, rationality is multi-dimensional and includes noncognitive as well as cognitive elements. Van Huyssteen cites the work of Nicholas Rescher, who posits three primary dimensions of rationality: the cognitive, the pragmatic, and the evaluative (ibid., 128). As Rescher explains, these dimensions reflect three domains in which human choices and decisions are required: *belief* (What claims regarding “states of affairs” should I believe or accept?), *action* (What “overt deeds” should I perform?), and *evaluation* (What ends and goals should I “prefer or prize”?).¹⁰³ The common denominator across these domains of thought and action is the requirement to seek out and act upon the strongest reasons available to a person in making choices. Moreover, on van Huyssteen’s view, rationality entails “aligning one’s beliefs, actions, and evaluations with the best available reasons within specific contexts” (*Shaping*, 134). Thus, in some sense, reasons for our beliefs, actions, and value judgments must be congruent or consistent—at least at the local or contextual level. In sum, postfoundationalist rationality depends upon the seeking and giving of the best available reasons for our beliefs, actions, and values in order to align them in all areas of human life and thought within specific contexts.

On van Huyssteen’s view, value judgments are integral to rationality. Drawing upon the work of Harold Brown and Bruce Wavel, van Huyssteen points to the undeniable role of values and value judgments in science: “In science the acceptance and rejection of hypotheses, and finally also theory choice, are indeed based on evaluation and deliberation. This places the making of certain kinds of value judgments at the heart

103. Nicholas Rescher, *Rationality: A Philosophical Inquiry into the Nature and the Rationale of Reason* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 5.

of the scientific method itself” (141). Since science itself is unquestionably taken as the primary exemplar of rationality, it follows that values and value judgments are indispensable elements of rationality. Van Huyssteen then moves to declare that the employment of values and value judgments *in theology* is also rational:

Because of the breakdown of the stark opposition between scientific and other forms of rationality in a postfoundationalism, it can now also be argued that there is no essential difference between the epistemic function of values and value judgments in science and their function in other modes of rational inquiry like the humanities, ethics, and theology. *If the use of value judgments in science is therefore rational, so is the use of value judgments in the humanities, ethics, and in theology* (*Shaping*, 142-43; emphasis added).

Third, consonant with the thinking of Harold Brown and others, van Huyssteen argues for locating rationality primarily in rational *persons*. Rational beliefs are “derivative” in the sense that they are “arrived at” by rational individuals (145). On this postfoundationalist view of rationality, the absence of universally applicable norms and rules requires *responsible judgment*, exercised by the rational person, or agent, in discernment and sensitivity to the context and particulars of the matter at hand. This view entails one caveat and one consequence of great significance. A rational person necessarily engages in appropriate (roughly speaking, a “good faith”) dialogue with the epistemic community (or communities) that is (are) pertinent to the matter at hand. However, the rational agent has the final say. Consequently, on this view, consensus is not—and cannot be—a requirement for rationality.

Fourth, our beliefs are embedded in “evolving, developing traditions” in science, art, theology and other domains. Van Huyssteen cites the work of philosopher of science Larry Laudan, who has proposed a criterion of “progressive problem-solving” to

adjudicate among competing theories and research traditions in science.¹⁰⁴ Van

Huyssteen employs this criterion to express the heart of postfoundationalist rationality:

[W]e make what we believe to be a responsible judgment in favor of a theory, a viewpoint, or a research tradition, of which we are convinced—with good reasons—that is has the highest problem-solving ability for a specific problem within a specific context. (*Shaping*, 172)

In turn, he combines problem-solving with rational agency to recast the quest for intelligibility:

In our attempts to cope with our world on different levels, the universal intent of this quest for intelligibility is definitively expressed in our ability to solve problems through an ongoing process of personal judgment and intersubjective accountability. (*Shaping*, 174)

And fifth, actions, beliefs, and value judgments can be rational without necessarily being true. Thinking with Rescher, van Huyssteen argues for “a weaker but vital” connection between rationality and truth. “[W]e proceed rationally in attempting to ‘discover’ truth, and we take those conclusions that are rationally acceptable as our best estimates of the truth” (158). However, having better *estimates* of the truth does not imply having better *approximations* of the truth. That is, having better reasons for our beliefs, actions, and value judgments does not imply moving closer to the truth. In effect, on this view, truth serves a *functional* role as a kind of ideal, or imaginary, point which at best serves to orient our fallible efforts to discover or craft reasons for optimal understanding but forever lies beyond our reach.

104. Larry Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems: Toward a Theory of Scientific Growth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

However, van Huyssteen does not take up the converse claim that beliefs, actions, and value judgments can be true, in some sense, without being rational, in the sense of seeking and giving of the best reasons available to one. Thinking, with Heidegger, I address this matter in what follows.

Circumscribing rationality within a framework of reason-seeking and giving can be traced back to the Greeks, as attested by Heidegger's various critiques of the traditional understanding of truth briefly described in sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this inquiry. In *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger explicates Leibniz' comprehensive and decisive reformulation of the principle of reason as "the fundamental principle of rendering sufficient reasons" (*POR*, 33). Operating within the long shadow cast by Descartes' *cogito*, the reformulated principle of reason not only governs cognition but its reach extends to all that is, in Leibniz' system. Heidegger contends that the reformulated, "strict," or "grand" principle of reason characterizes modern science, the modern era itself, and the still prevalent understanding of humankind in terms of the *animal rationale*. Moreover, on his view, the increasing hegemony of the reformulated principle of reason calls into question the destiny of the earth and human existence (129). By "inverting" the customary hearing of the principle of reason and by engaging poetry, Heidegger points to a path ahead for resisting the suffocating dominance of reason-seeking and giving. I proceed to unpack these claims.

For Leibniz, the principle of reason is one of the supreme fundamental principles of reason—possibly the most supreme one—because it founds all principles *as* principles (118). That is, it provides the basis, or ground, for principles, including such fundamental

principles as the principle of identity and the principle of non-contradiction (8). Yet, paradoxically, the principle of reason itself does not satisfy the very claim that the principle makes: namely (in an equivalent form), *everything* has a reason. For, if an underlying reason for the principle of reason were given, such a reason would have to have itself an underlying reason and so on, leading to an infinite regress (11-12). Leibniz resolves this conundrum by regarding the principle of reason as an *axiom*, understood by him as a principle “held by everyone as being obvious . . .” Heidegger signals his intention of critiquing the “grand” principle of reason by way of early Greek thinking by recovering the meaning of the Greek verb *axiom* as “I find something worthy” (15). Thought in a Greek way with respect to the relation of being human to what is, this declaration, according to Heidegger, means “to bring something to shine forth in that countenance in which it finds its repose, and to preserve it therein” (16).

On Heidegger’s view, Leibniz’ genius was to bring to the forefront the precise role, or function, of reason within the principle of reason that had been operating without clarity for centuries. Namely, the principle of reason is a principle of *rendering* reasons, in which reason *demand*s that reasons be rendered, in the sense of “giving back.” But given back to whom? As Leibniz was operating under the long shadow of Descartes’ subject-object binary, the principle of rendering reason was understood (and still is widely understood in modern thought) as a demand to give reasons back in representational form to the cognizing subject:

After Descartes, followed by Leibniz and all of modern thinking, humans are experienced as an I that relates to the world such that it renders this world to itself in the form of connections correctly established between its representations--that means judgments--and thus sets itself over against this world as to an object.

Judgments and statements are correct, that means true, only if the reason for the connection of subject and predicate is rendered, given back to the representing I. (*POR*, 119)

As this excerpt indicates, Leibniz is operating within the traditional understanding of truth as the correctness of assertions—expressed here grammatically as the agreement between the subject and predicate of a judgment or proposition. By coupling this understanding of truth with Descartes’ subject-object binary and reason as the rendering of reasons, the knowable, the objectifiable, and “the real” are all conflated. Reason demands that that which purports to be real be brought before the skeptical, cognizing subject. To be real, any thing which lies before the subject must be re-represented and brought before (*vorgestellt*) the subject, and brought to a stand there as an object (*Gegenstand*). Thus the “grand” principle of reason is not only a principle of cognition via representation (*Vorstellung*); it is also a principle of the *objects* of cognition, and hence a principle of all that exists in a world for those who operate within the Cartesian subject-object binary (27).¹⁰⁵

Heidegger brings to attention the growing pervasiveness in the present age of the reformulated principle of reason in *all areas of life*. On his view, the demand to render reasons—the hallmark of science—is now ubiquitous. The danger is that

. . . the unique unleashing of the demand to render reasons threatens everything of humans’ being-at-home and robs them of the root of their subsistence, the roots from out of which every great human age, every world-opening spirit, every molding of the human form has thus far grown. (*POR*, 30)

105. As Heidegger notes later in this essay, the subject-object binary is itself disappearing in the final stages of modernity. He speaks of a world “where what is objective [*Gegenständliche*] must yield to a status [*Ständigen*] of a different sort. . . . Modernity is not at an end. It only begins its completion in directing itself to the complete availability of everything that is and can be” (*POR*, 34). I discuss this theme in Chapter 4 of this inquiry.

Heidegger challenges the hegemony of the principle of reason by turning to poetry and to an alternate hearing of the *tonality* of the principle of reason. He begins by explicating an equivalent form of the strict principle of reason as: nothing is without a why (35). He contends that the rose—a symbol of plants and all growing things—lies outside, but also within, the orbit of the why and the reach of the demand to render reasons (35-36):

The rose is without why, it blooms because it blooms,
It pays no attention to itself, asks not whether it is seen.

The incessant “why” is trumped by the “because” which stops the ceaseless striving for a complete reckoning. The rose lies *outside* the why because it is “without the seeking, peering-round rendering of the grounds on the basis of which it blooms” (38). On the other hand, when the rose becomes an object of our analysis and knowledge, it is *within* the orbit of reason and the why.¹⁰⁶

Next, Heidegger observes that the principle of reason tells us nothing directly about the *essence* of reason (39ff). He then invites us to hear two tonalities in the principle of reason: first, the customary hearing as *nothing is without* reason, and, second, *nothing is without reason*. He contends that, in the second tonality, a response can be heard to the question of the essence of reason. On his view, the verb *is* always connotes *being* in the sense of the being of beings, whereas *reason* is the English translate of

106. This “double-seeing” of the rose is echoed by Heidegger’s claim that the scientist is capable of reflective thinking as well as the calculative thinking characteristic of science. See “Science and Reflection” in *QCT*, 181-82. This poetic couplet also resonates with Heidegger’s example of the blooming rose to illustrate non-objectifying “thinking and saying” in the Appendix to his lecture, “Phenomenology and Theology.” (See Section 2.4 above.) The couplet is also quoted in section 3.4 below.

Grund (*ratio*, in Latin), which connotes the double meaning of ground and reason. Mindful that only beings *exist* and not Being itself—equivalently, the Being of beings—the second tonality can be expressed as: being and ground/reason: the same. Otherwise expressed, being and ground/reason “belong together” (104-5, 125).

Heidegger supports the hearing of this second tonality by tracing the etymological roots of *weil*—the German equivalent of “because.” In earlier times, its cognate, *desweilen* (whereas) meant “during”; another cognate, *weilen* (to while) means “to tarry,” “to remain still,” or “to pause and keep to oneself” (127). “Whiling” also names being and ground. On the one hand, “whiling” connotes an old meaning of *sein* (being). On the other hand: “The while . . . names the simple, plain presence that is without why—the presence upon which everything depends . . .”—that is, ground (ibid.).

Heard in this second tonality, the “why” disappears from the principle of reason as Leibniz formulated it. In this second tonality, “The word of being says: being—itsself ground/reason—remains without a ground/reason, which now means, without why” (126). Thus, the second tonality grounds the first tonality. The *demand* of rendering reasons has rested thus far upon the *appeal* to “Western humanity” of the word of being as “the word of ground/reason” (128). But that appeal is unheard in the cacophony of the current age.

The second tonality illuminates the moves by van Huyssteen and others beyond foundationalism. “. . . every foundation—even and especially self-founded ones—remain inappropriate to being as ground/reason. Every founding and even every appearance of foundability has inevitably degraded being to some sort of a being” (111).

Finally, on Heidegger's view, the tonality in which we hear the principle of reason decisively challenges our basic understanding of who we are as human beings. But also, the second tonality itself is problematic as we face the future. He asks: "Does the . . . determination that humans are the *animal rationale* exhaust the essence of humanity? Does the last word that can be said about being run thus: being means ground/reason?" (129, italics added). Heidegger has already responded many times to these rhetorical questions with an unequivocal "No," as, for example, our engagements with *Being and Time* and *Basic Questions of Philosophy* have indicated. On his view, the fate of the earth and human existence hinge upon seeking other paths for non-calculative thinking (129).

3.4 Truth and Reflection

In this section, I shall examine Heidegger's explication of the relation of *reflection* in relation to truth and bring his insights to bear upon the themes of truth, untruth, and rationality as discussed in the first three sections of this chapter. Heidegger's analysis distinguishes sharply between *Reflexion* and *Besinnung*, which are both rendered in English as "reflection." I shall take as our guiding question the following: If theology is taken to be "reflection upon religious experience and belief" or some close variant, which sense of "reflection" is appropriate for the theological enterprise itself and for its meaningful engagement in the RST relation? Or, are both senses important—and perhaps necessary?

What accounts, then, for this transmutation of truth (i.e., aletheia as unconcealment) as the determinant of beings as such to truth as the correctness of an assertion?

As we have seen in Section 3.2 above, Heidegger has traced the transmutation of truth as the determinant of beings as such to truth as the correctness of an assertion. On Heidegger's view, representational thinking is a hallmark of the latter formulation of truth, in which "[b]eings become . . . objects of representations conforming to them" (*BQP*, 156) In "Sketches for a History of Being as Metaphysics,"¹⁰⁷ Heidegger explicates Reflexion as a basic characteristic of representational, conceptual, objectifying thought:

Reflexion is bending-back, and as such it is the explicitly accomplished presentation of what is present; explicitly, that is, in such a way that what is present is represented to the representer. . . . reflexion strives for the identical, and for this reason reflexion is a fundamental characteristic of concept formation. (*EOP*, 60-61)

Repraesentatio is grounded in *reflexio* in accordance with its essence. Hence the essence of objectivity as such first becomes evident where the essence of thinking is recognized and explicitly enacted as "I think something," that is, as reflexion. (*EOP*, 62)

Heidegger devoted an entire work to the topic of "reflection" in the sense of *Besinnung*: namely, Volume 66 of the Gesamtausgabe. The translators of this volume render the title as *Mindfulness*¹⁰⁸ and offer this introductory commentary on the basic distinction between *Besinnung* and Reflexion:

. . . *Besinnung* is nothing but an inquiry into the self-disclosure of being . . . It differs from reflection [i.e., *Reflexion*] in that, as *Besinnung*, this inquiry is not

107. Martin Heidegger, "Sketches for a History of Being as Metaphysics," in *EOP*, 55-74.

108. Martin Heidegger, *Mindfulness*, trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary (New York: Continuum, 2006).

entirely and exhaustively in human discretion. What distinguishes this inquiry as *Besinnung* is that it is basically determined and shaped by the truth of being. (*Mindfulness*, xxiii-xxiv)

In his lecture, “Science and Reflection,”¹⁰⁹ Heidegger describes “reflection” in the sense of *Besinnung* as follows:

To follow a direction that is the way that something has, of itself, already taken is called, in our language, *sinnan*, *sinnen* (to sense). To venture after sense or meaning (*Sinn*) is the essence of reflecting (*Besinnung*). This means more than the mere making conscious of something. We do not yet have reflection when we have only consciousness. Reflection [*Besinnung*] is more. It is calm, self-possessed surrender [*Gelassenheit*] to that which is worthy of questioning. (*QCT*, 180; *GA7*, 63; my insertions are in square brackets)

Roughly speaking, then, Reflexion objectifies that which it encounters, whereas *Besinnung* is guided by the truth of Being—understood (since *Basic Questions of Philosophy*) as self-concealing disclosure. Moreover, Reflexion is “in control,” so to speak, of the enterprise. Its mode of comportment is objectifying, and its mode of thinking is calculative. In contrast, *Besinnung*, guided by the truth of Being, is not merely a human enterprise; and, what is more, it is fundamentally *responsive*, rather than dominating, controlling, or even “directing.”¹¹⁰ What is worthy of questioning today is the marginalizing—and even outright dismissal—of ways of thinking other than the representational, calculative modes of thought that characterize science.

In “Science and Reflection,” Heidegger differentiates *Besinnung* from science and what he calls “intellectual cultivation.” Such cultivation, he says, functions by means of rules, models, and forms—all under a guiding image and informed by reason. In this

109. Heidegger, “Science and Reflection,” in *QCT*, 155-82.

110. I thank Frank Seeburger for these clarifications.

work, he explicates modern science as the *theory of the real* (*QCT*, 157). He conducts a detailed, etymologically-based analysis¹¹¹ of the root meanings of “theory” and “real” and their subsequent transformations in the present. On his view, the essence of the real and theory are characterized in terms of *presencing*. This differs markedly from their current meanings as “that which has followed from a consequence” (i.e., the real, 161) and that which is based upon observation, understood as “an entrapping and securing refining of the real” (i.e., theory, 167). Consequently, instead of presencing as “self-exhibiting,” the real now presences as object via modern scientific representation.

However, “objectness” is *only one way* in which what presences reveals itself: “. . . in principle the objectness in which at any given time nature, man, history, language, exhibit themselves always itself remains only *one* kind of presencing, in which indeed that which presences can appear, but never absolutely must appear” (176). Thus thinking “in the fashion of science” cannot be the *only* mode of thinking. Other ways of seeking sense or meaning (Sinn) are essential; reflection (Besinnung) is necessary.

Our two guiding questions can now be restated in threefold form as: (1) With which sense of reflection does van Huyssteen’s construal of theology as reason-seeking and giving most strongly resonate? (2) In what sense of reflection is theology best formulated as reflection upon religious experience and belief? And (3) which sense of reflection as applied to theology is most fruitful for thinking the RST relation?

111. Heidegger defends this approach as follows: “The mere identifying of old and often obsolete meanings of terms, the snatching up of these meanings with the aim of using them in some new way, leads to nothing if not arbitrariness. What counts, rather, is for us, in reliance of the early meaning of a word and its changes, to catch sight of the realm pertaining to the matter in question into which the word speaks. What counts is to ponder that essential realm as the one in which the matter named through the word moves” (*QCT*, 159).

With respect to the first question, I have already suggested that van Huyssteen's model of rationality seems to favor Reflexion over Besinnung. Furthermore, he writes:

The cognitive dimension of religion . . . is indeed the dimension of religion most interesting for and relevant to the sciences. . . . this dimension of religion presents itself to us forcibly in theological reflection and as such remains the aspect of religion most relevant for an interdisciplinary conversation with other reasoning strategies. (*Shaping*, 181)

As I see it, centering the theological enterprise upon reason-seeking and giving—despite the inclusion of noncognitive dimensions of rationality—privileges coherence and the norms of academic discourse. It does so at the expense of marginalizing—and even covering over—the inexplicable, the contradictory, and the numinal dimensions of religious experience and belief. Consider the subtitle of *The Shaping of Rationality*: namely, *Toward Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science*. By its subtitle, the book frames—better, enframes—theology within academic discourse. In such discourse, can there be noncalculative theological thinking beyond the why? If not, in what other forums and settings can such thinking be expressed?

As for the second and third questions, I “tipped my hand” in my preceding discussion of the rose that is both within and beyond the why. I am suggesting that the incorporation of *both* senses of reflection is essential for a rethinking of the essence of theology in general and particularly so in thinking the RST relation. This claim is central to my entire inquiry and can only be addressed here in a preliminary way. As a beginning, consider the following as a starting point:

In one of the last paragraphs of his lecture, “Science and Reflection,” Heidegger writes:

Even if the sciences, precisely in following their way and using their means, can never press forward to the essence of science, still every researcher and teacher of the sciences, every man pursuing a way through a science, can move, as a thinking being, on various levels of reflection [*Besinnung*] and can keep reflection vigilant. (*QCT*, 181-82)

I hear in these words an invitation for all who employ calculative approaches in their thinking—and this includes those who center rationality upon reason-seeking and giving—to complement (or perhaps better, preface) such thinking with reflection as the “calm, self-possessed surrender to what is worthy of questioning.” With regard to the rose, Heidegger says that Leibniz’ strict principle of reason “holds *in the case of* the rose, but not for the rose; in the case of the rose, insofar as it is the object of our cognition; not for the rose, insofar as this rose stands alone, simply as a rose” (*POR*, 38; original italics, my underlining). *Analogously, can we envision theology as, on the one hand, appropriately employing reason-seeking and giving as it reflects upon religious belief and experience “objectively”—but also giving itself with equal Gelassenheit to what is worthy of questioning in religious experience and belief as its simply stands?*

Notice also that Heidegger sets aside for a moment the abstract noun of “science” in favor of speaking to persons who *do* science: “. . . every researcher and teacher of the sciences, every man pursuing a way through a science” These persons, he says, can move in various levels of thinking. I hear that as his affirmation of the possibility that all those who employ calculative thinking can embrace noncalculative thinking, and can move from within the why to outside the why, and back again. I daresay he would endorse the converse path of noncalculative to calculative back to noncalculative thinking as well. Indeed, isn’t this the practice of the effective and compassionate physician, who

moves seamlessly from encountering the patient as person needing care to applying the skills and techniques of medicine in diagnosis and treatment in an “objectified” manner, and back again to patient as person?¹¹²

Analogously, can we envision persons *doing* theology and persons *doing* science addressing the issue of global climate change and its consequences¹¹³—on the one hand, within the realm of reason-seeking and giving and its causal chains, and on the other hand, beyond it in the realm of wonder and enchantment of that which is, as it simply stands? And in so doing, what might the distinctive contribution of theology be, as contrasted with, say, poetry and art? I shall touch on this possibility in Chapter 4 by examining Heidegger’s treatment of the relation of art and poetry to technology. This can be expressed as a guiding question: What can theology learn from Heidegger’s explication of the relation of art and poetry to technology?

3.5 Chapter Summary

What is truth? This chapter examines Heidegger’s deconstruction of this question as it stands, in light of thinking the question of truth out of thinking the question of Being. On the face of it, the question, What is truth?, seems to imply that truth is something “out there,” and that our task is to find it, represent or otherwise conceptualize it, and justify the results. Instead, recovering the pre-Socratic understanding of truth as disclosedness, Heidegger declares instead that “Dasein is already both in the truth and in

112. My father, Dr. C. E. Carlson, general practitioner in Minnesota for more than 40 years, was such a physician.

113. See Section 5.4 below.

untruth” (*BT*, 223; also see Section 3.1). In *Being and Time*, this follows from positing *Dasein* as the *clearing*, or site, that makes it possible for entities to show themselves. In *Basic Questions of Philosophy*, the truth/untruth duality is thought out of the disclosing/self-concealing essence (presencing) of Being itself, untethered from *Dasein*.

In these two works, Heidegger critiques the customary understanding of truth as the correctness of assertions—more precisely, the agreement, or correspondence, of an assertion about something with that thing itself. (Here, “thing” means any entity or being that *is*.) Moreover, he traces the trajectory from the pre-Socratic notion of truth as disclosedness to its transmutation over time to truth as correctness. In so doing, Heidegger explicates Plato’s “disastrous philosophical definition” of the essence of something as its *whatness*. (This illuminates a portion of the trajectory we are following in this inquiry of comportment to things.)

Contemporary theologian J. Wentzel van Huyssteen works with a *functional* definition of truth that subordinates *truth* to *rationality*. Based upon his postfoundationalist model of rationality, theology is characterized in terms of seeking the best reasons available for one’s beliefs, values, and actions. On his view, this characterization of theology significantly strengthens the basis for genuine and fruitful interdisciplinary activity between theology and science. Heidegger’s extensive critique of Leibniz’ Principle of Reason brings to light that the disclosure of Being happens outside the orbit of reason-seeking and giving, beyond the reach of the why.

The customary formulation of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief is illuminated by Heidegger’s distinction between two very different modes of

reflection: Reflexion and Besinnung. The former is based upon representational, conceptual thought—calculative thinking, for short; the latter, translated as *mindfulness*, is “nothing but an inquiry into the self-disclosure of being” and is “basically determined and shaped by the truth of being” (*Mindfulness*, xxiii-xxiv). I contend that, despite van Huyssteen’s laudable extension of the notion of rationality beyond propositional language, construing the essence of theology in terms of reason-seeking and giving appears to confine theology as a reflective activity to Reflexion.

Chapter 4: Technology and the RST Relation

Weeks before his death on May 26, 1976, Heidegger addressed the issue of the relationship between modern technology and modern science in the form of a question:

Is modern natural science the foundation of modern technology—as is supposed—or is it, for its part, already the basic form of technological thinking, the determining foreconception and incessant incursion of technological representation into the realized and organized machinations of modern technology?¹¹⁴

This question arises for Heidegger from the forgottenness of Being in “the age of a world civilization stamped by technology” (ibid.) In his view, taking up the question of the essences of modern natural science and modern technology and their interrelation could become a compelling way to engage the question of Being and thereby “prepare the possibility of a transformed abode of man in the world” (ibid., 4).

This chapter will examine Heidegger’s analysis of the essences of modern technology and modern empirical science and their interrelation, together with his explication of the relationships of art and poetry to technology and to the holy and

114 Martin Heidegger, “Neuzeitliche Naturwissenschaft und Moderne Technik” (“Modern Natural Science and Technology”),” in *Research in Phenomenology* 7 (1977): 3, http://0-gateway.proquest.com.bianca.penlib.du.edu/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004&res_dat=xri:pao-us:&rft_dat=xri:pao:article:h148-1977-007-00-000001:1. These words are part of Heidegger’s written greetings to those attending the 10th annual Heidegger Conference. For more information about this colloquium and subsequent conferences, see www.heideggercircle.org.

divine.¹¹⁵ In the first two sections, I shall examine Heidegger’s twin claims that the common essence of modern technology and modern empirical science is beyond the control and mastery of humankind—and yet heralds the source for the “saving power” in the face of the extreme danger posed by this common essence. These claims are examined in relation to the nature of art and poetry in the first two sections, respectively (4.1 Art and the Essence of Modern Technology and 4.2 Poetry, Technology, and the Holy/Divine). The third section (4.3 The Thing, Science, and the Fourfold) explicates Heidegger’s contrasting analyses of scientific objectification and *thingness* as thought out of the fourfold of earth and sky, gods and mortals. In the fourth section (4.4 Modern Science, Technology, and Thinking), I shall engage the interrelation of the essences of modern science and modern technology with respect to Heidegger’s explication of thinking. This will entail examining the profound differences that Heidegger draws between calculative thinking—which characterizes modern science and technology—and reflective, meditative thinking. With regard to the RST relation, our primary guiding question throughout the chapter is: What can theology learn from Heidegger’s treatment of these themes in its own thinking and speaking of, and with, religion and science?

115. In Section 5.2, I shall highlight key elements of Ian Barbour’s analysis of ethics in relation to technology.

4.1 Art and the Essence of Modern Technology

Heidegger's essay, "The Question Concerning Technology,"¹¹⁶ is taken by some commentators to be the most important single expression of his thinking regarding the essence of technology.¹¹⁷ Most of the main themes of this essay are prefigured in the four lectures that Heidegger initially delivered in December 1949 (and subsequently revised) under the overall title of "Insight into That Which Is" ("Einblick in das was ist," hereafter "Einblick").¹¹⁸ Heidegger describes the QCT essay as "an expanded version" of the second Einblick lecture, "Das Gestell," (*QCT*, x), which I find somewhat misleading.¹¹⁹ These lectures also develop in detail Heidegger's notion of the *fourfold* of earth and sky, mortals and divinities—a theme absent from the QCT essay but one that I shall take up in Section 4.3.

116. In Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays (QCT)*, 3-35 (see chap. 1, n. 51). The QCT essay ("The Question Concerning Technology") was first published in 1954 and subsequently presented as a lecture in 1955 in the series "The Arts in the Technological Age" sponsored by the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts (*QCT*, x).

117. See, for example, Richard Rojcewicz, *The Gods and Technology: A Reading of Heidegger* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), and Carl Mitcham, *Thinking through Technology: The Path between Engineering and Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 49-55, 257.

118. The four Einblick lectures are: "Das Ding" ("The Thing"), "Das Gestell" ("The Enframing"), "Die Gefahr" ("The Danger"), and "Die Kehre" ("The Turning"). These four lectures, as subsequently revised, are presented together in German in the first half of *GA79* and presented together for the first time in English translation in the first half of Martin Heidegger, *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures: Insight Into That Which Is and Basic Principles of Thinking*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2012). Partial information about earlier publications of these lectures in German and in English translation may be found in *QCT*, ix-x.

119. On the one hand, "das Gestell" does provide Heidegger's detailed explication of the essence of modern technology. On the other hand, several main themes in the QCT essay are not found in "Das Gestell" but are prefigured in one of the other three Einblick lectures: for example, "causality" in "Das Ding," "Hervorbringen" in "Die Gefahr," and Hölderlin's couplet in "Die Kehre." Thus I suggest that the QCT essay could be described more accurately as a stand-alone, creative re-weaving of key notions and themes from each of the earlier Einblick lectures, together with some new material that identifies "art" as possibly confronting the essence of modern technology.

In the QCT essay, Heidegger thinks the essence of technology out of his critique of causality. In his view, causality—and technology—are modes of *revealing*. This is the basis for his claims that technology is “never a human handiwork,” nor something neutral or “merely technical,” but rather a force beyond humankind’s ability to control and master. He distinguishes modern technology from technology as understood by the ancient Greeks and argues that the essence of the former poses an extreme danger to humankind. Surprisingly, he also contends that a *saving power* is heralded by this very danger. Furthermore, he claims that, while humankind cannot control the essence of technology, we nonetheless participate in the revealing of this essence and thereby influence its impact upon our future. Finally, Heidegger defends the possibility that art may confront the extreme danger posed by the essence of modern technology. The purpose of this section is to unpack these claims.

Heidegger begins his analysis of the question of the essence of technology by critiquing the widespread understanding of technology as a means for achieving some end through human activity. Heidegger does not dismiss this instrumental, anthropological interpretation of technology out of hand; indeed, in his view, such an interpretation is correct, as far as it goes. On the one hand, the correct “always fixes upon something pertinent in whatever is under consideration” (*QCT*, 6). However, “the merely correct is not yet the true,” he says, because only the latter can “uncover the thing in question in its essence” (*ibid.*).¹²⁰

120. Once again, Heidegger seeks to probe the essence of something by starting with its customary meaning. Cf. Section 3.2 above, in which I show that Heidegger approaches the question of truth by analyzing the widely-held understanding of truth as correspondence of statements with things.

Heidegger locates the means-ends binary that characterizes the instrumental view of technology within *causality*. The traditional philosophical presentation of causality posits four causes—material, formal, efficient, and final—which together connote the bringing about of effects, or results. Thought phenomenologically, however, these four causes are “four ways of being responsible [that] bring something into presence” (9). “Causality” is therefore a revealing, or unconcealment, expressed in Greek as *aletheia*. Heidegger notes that its Latin translate is *veritas*—“truth” in English—which “we . . . usually understand as the correctness of an idea” (12). I shall show that Heidegger’s understanding of technology—in both its modern and ancient forms—depends in a central way upon his critique of the customary understanding of causality.

To recap: the conventional, instrumental understanding of technology is a way of revealing or unconcealment, when thought phenomenologically. As for “revealing” itself, Heidegger posits two primary modes: revealing as a “bringing-forth” (*Hervorbringen*) that allows that which is before us to appear without coercion, and revealing as a “challenging forth” (*Herausfordern*) that demands or provokes such appearance.¹²¹ In his view, technology may manifest itself in either mode: modern technology as *Herausfordern*, and *Hervorbringen* (*poiesis*, in Greek) as the mode of the ancient Greek understanding of technology as *techne*. *Techne* encompasses “not only the activities and skills of the craftsman, but also . . . the arts of the mind and the fine arts” (13). *Techne* does not exhaust *Hervorbringen* as a mode of revealing, however, since the former requires human activity. Indeed, Heidegger regards *physis* as “*poiēsis* (*Hervorbringen*) in

121. Literally, *Her-vor-bringen* (hither-forth-bringing) (*QCT*, 10, n. 9) and *Her-aus-fordern* (hither-out-challenging) (*QCT*, 14, n. 13).

the highest sense,” since it is “the arising of something out of itself” and needs no human intermediary (10). (The blooming of a rose, and Nature itself—often, but misleadingly, according to Heidegger, equated with *physis*—are manifestations of *physis*.)

The “challenging forth” mode of revealing (*Herausfordern*) does not in itself completely characterize modern technology, however. In order to enfold other aspects of modern technology within a unifying essence, Heidegger employs a constellation of verbs and their cognates, based upon the German infinitive, *stellen*. *Stellen* has several meanings, including “to put into place, to order, to arrange, to furnish or supply, and, in a military context, to challenge or engage.” Heidegger gathers together these various senses of *stellen* and its cognates under the rubric of *Ge-stell* (*Enframing*) in order to name the essence of modern technology.¹²²

Expressed compactly, *Ge-stell* names “that challenging claim which gathers man thither to order the self-revealing as standing reserve [*Bestand*]” (19).¹²³ A few pages later, the essence of modern technology is characterized as “the way in which the real reveals itself as standing-reserve” (23). All that is stands ready for further employment at the beck and call of others: “Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering” (17). Moreover, *Enframing* is not a framework or structure but rather, in

122. See Lovitt’s detailed explication of *Ge-stell* from *stellen* and its cognates (*QCT*, 15, n. 14).

123. Other translators prefer to translate *Bestand* as “supply,” “stock,” or “reserve” (as in “coal reserves”).

Lovitt's translation, "a calling forth, a demanding summons" (19, n. 17).¹²⁴ Ge-stell is manifested in the ceaseless activity of producing, assembling, and ordering. In its essence, modern technology is not a noun but a verb of aggression.¹²⁵

What is the relationship of humankind to the essence of modern technology? Clearly, Heidegger does not see humankind as able to control this essence, for this essence is the revealing of being itself in our time. Is the essence of modern technology something completely independent of humankind? On the contrary. He asks and answers: "Does this revealing happen somewhere beyond all human doing? No. But neither does it happen exclusively *in* man, or decisively *through* man" (24). How so? Humankind participates in this revealing through modern science, the character of which is epitomized by mathematical physics (21-23).¹²⁶ Thus, Heidegger rules out human passivity. We are active participants via modern science in the essence of modern technology as the revealing of being itself in this era. But the question remains: Is our

124. Andrew Mitchell defends translating *Ge-stell* as *positionality* rather than *Enframing*: "Heidegger explicitly and painstakingly distinguishes what he means by positionality from any sense of 'enframing' as the term has previously been translated. . . . Heidegger marks the difference himself when he explicitly distinguishes between positionality, *das Ge-Stell*, and framework, *die Gestelle* (GA79: 65/61). The spread of positionality is thus not a framework that surrounds from without, but, in part, a process of conscription (*Gestellung*) that adopts and compels whatever it encounters into the order of standing reserve" (Heidegger, *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, trans. Mitchell, xi).

125. "*Ge-stell*" did not always have this sinister connotation in Heidegger's work. In 1936, he presented three lectures, now available to us as a single essay, "On the Origin of the Work of Art" in Martin Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, trans. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1-56. (Hereafter *Off the Beaten Track* is cited as *OBT*.) In this essay, Heidegger employs "*Ge-stell*" simply as "placement" in order to explicate the notion of *figure*: "What we here call 'figure' is always to be thought out of *that particular* placing [*stellen*] and placement [*Ge-stell*] as which the *work* comes to presence when it sets itself up and sets itself forth" (OBT, 38). As Heidegger explains in the essay's Appendix, the understanding of *Ge-stell* as *placement* is to be taken in the sense of "the gathering of the bringing forth" (OBT, 54)—i.e., in the spirit of *Hervorbringen*. He asserts, however, that the "derivation" of *Ge-stell* as the essence of modern technology "is the more essential one since it corresponds to the destiny of being" (ibid.).

126. In Section 2.2 above, I briefly discussed Heidegger's explication of mathematical physics in *Being and Time*.

participation in the essence of modern technology via modern science our destiny, our fate?

From the characterization of the essence of modern technology as Ge-stell, Heidegger moves to establish three primary claims: first, Ge-stell is the supreme danger facing humankind in this era; second, yet Ge-stell heralds a saving power in the face of such extreme danger; and third, while humankind cannot control Ge-stell nor the saving power to which it points, we necessarily participate in its revealing and thereby participate in shaping our future. I now unpack these claims—and in the process reply—to those who see Heidegger as a fatalist.

Heidegger draws upon his earlier critique of the customary analysis of causality to examine the danger posed by Ge-stell. Earlier, he stated that “[t]echnology is a mode of revealing” (13) and contrasted ancient and modern technology in terms of their modes of revealing as *Hervorbringen* and *Herausfordern*, respectively. Now he characterizes the mode of revealing of *modern* technology more specifically: “The essence of [modern] technology, as *a destining of revealing*, is the danger” (28, my emphasis). Let us unpack this claim in three steps to understand the following: “destining of revealing,” the danger inherent in such destining, and Ge-stell itself as the *supreme* danger.

First, what does Heidegger mean by *destining* (*Geschick*)? Heidegger gives this name to the “sending-that-gathers [*versammelnde Schicken*] which first starts man upon a way of revealing” (24).¹²⁷ The destining-sending link is perhaps clear, but how is destining also a gathering, a starting, and a revealing? These general characteristics of

127. I shall examine Heidegger’s explication of *Geschick* in *The Principle of Reason* in Section 5.4 below.

destining can be heard in Heidegger's reformulation of the customary understanding of causality as a *revealing*:

The four ways of being responsible bring something into appearance. They let it come forth into presencing [*An-wesen*]. They set it free to that place and so *start it on its way*, namely, into complete arrival. The principal characteristic of being responsible is this starting something on its way to arrival. (*QCT*, 9; my emphasis)

Heidegger reads destining into his earlier reinscribing of the four causes by pointing out that “[t]o start upon a way” ordinarily means “to send” (24). Thus, destining (*Geschick*), he says, is a “sending” (*Schicken*) that is a “starting.” The gathering aspect of destining resonates with Heidegger's rethinking of “efficient cause” in the standard example of the silver chalice for differentiating among the four causes. Heidegger contends that the silversmith is not the efficient cause as the maker or producer of the chalice. Rather, the silversmith “considers carefully and *gathers together* the three aforementioned ways of being responsible and indebted” (8, my emphasis). Also, recall that Heidegger views causality as a unified co-responsibility within bringing-forth, which “brings hither out of concealment into unconcealment” (11). Thus, causality—and destining, by association—is embedded within “revealing.”

Second, Heidegger contends that destining of revealing is itself danger as such. That is, “danger” is not merely one of the qualities or characteristics (among many) of destining, but is *constitutive* of the destining of revealing. Furthermore, it is danger as such for *any mode of revealing* and for *any period*: “*In whatever way* the destining of revealing may hold sway, the unconcealment in which everything that is shows itself *at any given time* harbors the danger that man may quail at the unconcealed and may

misinterpret it” (26, my emphasis). Thus, Heidegger’s analysis implies that Hervorbringen—as *techne* and, more generally, as *poiesis*—entails danger, as well as Herausfordern in the guise of Ge-stell. For example, when the unconcealed is everywhere embedded in a “cause-effect coherence,” theology faces the danger of reducing the mystery of God to the “causality of making” (ibid.). Similarly, when nature presents itself as a matrix of calculable matter and forces, “correct” results may obtain, he says, but “the true will withdraw” (ibid.).

Thus, Heidegger’s critique of the customary understanding of causality paves the way for introducing the notion of “destining” and his claim of the danger inherent in the destining of revealing *in all of its various modes*, including—but not limited to—the essence of modern technology. Indeed, the central importance of destining in Heidegger’s thought extends well beyond his analysis of technology in its ancient and modern forms: “It is out of this destining that *the essence of all history (Geschichte)* is determined” (ibid., my emphasis).

Third, in Heidegger’s view, the destining of revealing in our time as Ge-stell is the *supreme* danger in two senses. In the first instance, humankind itself is in danger of becoming mere standing-reserve (as discussed earlier). The very essence of what it means to be human is at stake. This danger is masked, Heidegger points out, by the delusion that the equipment, systems, and processes of modern technology can provide a path toward mastery of the earth. In the second, and more important, instance, Ge-stell not only conceals, but threatens to banish, all other modes of revealing. “When Enframing holds sway, regulating and securing of the standing reserve marks all revealing” (27). In sum,

the extreme danger posed by Ge-stell is its totalizing character as a mode of revealing and its threat to the essential nature of mankind:

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 affects 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. Thus, where Enframing reigns, there is *danger* in the highest sense. (*QCT*, 28)

Is Heidegger, then, a fatalist in the face of the essence of modern technology as Enframing? As a mode of revealing, Heidegger understands Enframing as a sending-that-gathers, a sending forth that starts humankind on a way, or path, of revealing. Is Ge-stell, then, as such a sending/starting, also a fatalistic, doom-laden determining? Some have thought so.¹²⁸ In what follows, I shall argue otherwise by a close reading of Heidegger's engagement with Hölderlin's lines,

But where danger is, grows
The saving power also.
(*QCT*, 28)

Heidegger hears in these words of Hölderlin that “. . . the coming to presence of technology harbors in itself what we least suspect, the possible arising of the saving

128. See, for example, Andrew Feenberg's threefold critique of Heidegger's analysis of the essence of technology as ahistoricism, substantivism (equivalently, "fatalism"), and "one-dimensionalism" in Andrew Feenberg, *Questioning Technology* (New York: Routledge, 1999) and *Heidegger and Marcuse: The Catastrophe and Redemption of History* (New York: Routledge, 2003). His critique is challenged by Iain Thomson in Iain Thomson, *Heidegger on Ontotheology: Technology and the Politics of Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

power” (32).¹²⁹ His defense of Hölderlin’s claim hinges upon examining the nature of “essence” itself.

Heidegger begins by acknowledging that, up to this point in the lecture, he has used the term *essence* in its customary sense as the *whatness* of something. But limiting the meaning of essence to whatness with respect to modern technology runs the risk of mistakenly regarding Enframing as a genus within which *Hervorbringen* and *Herausfordern* are regarded as two “species” of revealing. Enframing would then mistakenly be regarded as a means of classifying equipment, processes, and people. Interpreting essence merely as whatness entails imputing to the merely technological the essence of modern technology itself. From such a mistaken perspective, “the steam turbine, the radio transmitter, and the cyclotron . . . [and] the man at the switchboard and the engineer in the drafting room” (29) exemplify the challenging forth of all that is in terms of standing-reserve. Instead of such demonizing, Heidegger asserts that such equipment, processes, and people are *within* Enframing but are not *themselves* instantiations of the essence of modern technology.

Probing more deeply into the nature of essence itself, Heidegger turns from its customary understanding as a noun (*Wesen*) to its original form as a verb (*wesen*). In verbal form, *wesen*, like *währen*, means “to last or endure” (30)—but not in a permanent sense, as Plato and Aristotle thought. With this deeper understanding of essence at hand, Heidegger re-engages Hölderlin’s couplet to probe for the saving power associated with the extreme danger of Enframing. As an essence (better yet, as an “essencing” [31]),

129. Here, Heidegger understands “to save” to mean “to fetch something home into its essence, in order to bring the essence for the first time into its appearing” (*QCT*, 28).

Enframing is an *enduring*. Heidegger now hears in *währen* (to endure) the associated words, *wahren* (to watch over, to keep safe, to preserve) and *gewähren* (to warrant, to vouchsafe, to grant) (31, n. 24).

From these resonances, Heidegger explores whether, in some sense, Enframing itself might be a *granting*—despite its fundamental characterization as a challenging forth. He asks: What actually, and perhaps alone, endures? His twofold answer: “*Only what is granted endures. That which endures primally out of the earliest beginning is what grants*” (31). In a restricted sense, then, the enduring-granting relation is reciprocal. Heidegger subsequently removes the restriction and expands the scope of this claim:

Every destining of revealing comes to pass from out of a granting and [comes to pass] as such a granting. . . . The granting that sends in one way or another into revealing is as such the saving power. (QCT, 32; my emphasis and insertion)

Here, Heidegger is saying that, without exception, *every* destining of revealing comes to pass as a granting, and therefore is *as such* the saving power—despite the danger inherent in destining itself. That is, every destining of revealing—Enframing included (28)—not only *harbors* the saving power but, in a sense, *is thereby itself* the saving power.

These remarkable claims illuminate a deep ambiguity within the essence of modern technology. On the one hand, Ge-stell blocks revealing in the sense of *Hervorbringen*, and its totalizing character threatens to conceal revealing itself. On the other hand, Ge-stell “first starts man upon a way of revealing” (24). Indeed, Heidegger says that “[t]he challenging revealing has its origin as a destining in bringing-forth [*Hervorbringen*]” (29-30). But destining is not consigning to a predetermined outcome.

As a destining of revealing, Ge-stell does entail the possibility of revealing as an “outcome,” so to speak. However, revealing itself cannot be domesticated. “Revealing is that destining which, ever suddenly and inexplicably to all thinking, apportions itself into the revealing that brings forth and that also challenges, and which allots itself to man” (29).

Given this deep ambiguity within the essence of modern technology,¹³⁰ Heidegger points to the essential role of humankind:

On the one hand, Enframing challenges forth into the frenziedness of ordering that blocks every view into the coming-to-pass of revealing and so radically endangers the relation to the essence of truth. On the other hand, Enframing comes to pass for its part in the granting that lets man endure—as yet unexperienced, but perhaps more experienced in the future—that he may be the one who is needed and used for the safekeeping of the coming to presence of truth. Thus does the arising of the saving power appear. (*QCT*, 33)

But how are we to act upon this appeal for safekeeping? Heidegger’s response:

Everything, then, depends upon this: that we ponder this arising [of the saving power] and that, recollecting, we watch over it. How can this happen? Above all through our catching sight of what comes to presence in technology, instead of merely staring at the technological. (*QCT*, 32)

In sum, Heidegger has argued for the possibility—and the urgency—of human responsiveness in fostering the saving power paradoxically heralded by the extreme danger of the essence of modern technology. On his view, however, “essential reflection” upon technology is insufficient; “decisive confrontation” is needed as well (35).

Heidegger looks to art—as expressed in “all the fine arts, in poetry, and in everything

130. I shall discuss Ian Barbour’s characterization of technology as the “ambiguous exercise of power” in Section 5.2 below.

poetical”—for the possibility of such a confrontation. “On the one hand,” he says, such art is “akin to the essence of technology and, on the other, fundamentally different from it” (ibid.). Yet such a possibility can only be realized if “reflection on art . . . does not shut its eyes to the constellation of truth after which we are *questioning*” (ibid.).¹³¹ In the next section, I shall examine Heidegger’s engagement of art, as poetry, with technology.

4.2 Poetry, Technology, and the Holy/Divine

Several years before composing the QCT essay, Heidegger engaged the question of the essence of technology through the lens of poetry rather than art in general.

Heidegger’s essay, “Why Poets?,”¹³² is based upon a lecture that he delivered in 1946 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the death of the German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke.

In both essays, Heidegger engages the question of the essence of technology in relation to Hölderlin’s couplet,

But where the danger lies, there also grows
that which saves.¹³³

Unlike the appeal to art in the QCT lecture as a means for fostering the presencing of the saving power, Heidegger lifts up poetry in “Why Poets?” as a pathway to the holy and divine in relation to the saving power. As he does in the QCT lecture, Heidegger in this essay regards poetry and art as closely related, if not synonymous. `

131. Heidegger explicates the relation of art and truth in a much earlier essay, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” in *OBT*, 1-56.

132. Martin Heidegger, “Why Poets?,” in *OBT*, 200-241.

133. Note the slight differences between Young and Haynes’ translation here (*OBT*, 222) and Lovitt’s translation (*QCT*, 28), which is included in Section 4.1 above

In this essay, Heidegger takes a free relation to Rilke's poetry in the service of Heidegger's own compelling project, the question of Being—here thought in relation to the question concerning technology. Heidegger does so by thinking with, as well as against, Rilke, through a close engagement with several of Rilke's poems. For Heidegger, the guiding question in "Why Poets?"—in addition to the title itself—is his adaptation of a poetic line by Hölderlin: Is Rainer Maria Rilke a poet in a desolate time? (202, 204). Our guiding questions are rather different: What can we learn from this essay concerning the essence of technology as *the* danger and the possibility of nurturing the saving power therein? More broadly, how might the interplay between poetry and technology in this essay illuminate possibilities for genuine, meaningful interaction among religion, technology, and theology?

In "Why Poets?," Heidegger thinks the danger of the essence of technology as *the* danger in terms of the absoluteness of the will to will, rather than from the interpretation of causality presented in the QCT essay. Nonetheless, many statements in "Why Poets?" that name this danger clearly anticipate those found in the later essay. For example:

What has long threatened man with death, indeed with the death of his essence, is the absoluteness of his sheer willing in the sense of his deliberate self-assertion in everything. . . . What threatens man in his essence is the opinion that technological production would bring the world into order, when it is exactly this ordering that flattens out each *ordo*, that is, each rank, into the uniformity of production and so destroys in advance the realm that is the perennial source from which rank and appreciation originate out of being. (*OBT*, 221)

Heidegger quotes from several of Rilke's poems in this essay, but he devotes by far most of his attention to the following untitled "poem" (published posthumously), in

order to engage Hölderlin's couplet directly and thereby offer his own reflection on the vital role of poetry in relation to technology.

As nature gives the creatures over
to the risk of dull desire and shelters
none in particular, in soil or bough,
so we too are not more dear to the utmost depth

of our being; it risks us. Only that we,
still more than plant or animal,
go *with* the risk, will it, sometimes even risk more (and not from
self-interest), than life itself does, by a breath

risk more . . . This fashions us, outside of all defense,
a safebeing, there where the gravity
of the pure forces takes effect; what saves us at last
is our defenselessness and that seeing it threaten
we turned it into the open

in order, somewhere, in the widest compass,
where law touches us, to say yes to it.
(*OBT*, 206-7; original italics, my underlining)

In the remainder of this section, I want to focus upon three things: Heidegger's reading of Rilke's employment of "risk" in relation to the essence of technology as *the* danger; Heidegger's reading of lines 12-16 (underlined above) in relation to Hölderlin's claim regarding the "saving power"; and Heidegger's characterization of poetry itself as a path to the holy and divine.

In lines 1-5, Rilke tells us that Nature gives all living beings, including human beings, over to risk and shelters "none in particular." Heidegger says more: "The being of beings [i.e., Nature itself, in Rilke's terminology] *is* the risk" (209; my italics). Heidegger understands the "giving over to risk" as a "double movement" of a *casting off* by being/risk and a *casting into* being/risk. Such danger-laden riskiness characterizes the

very existence of all creatures, he says: “Beings *are* so long as they remain what is continually being risked” (ibid.; my emphasis).

What is cast off by the being of beings (as the risk) is cast into the being of beings (as the risk); so, despite the riskiness involved all round, beings are evidently “retained,” in some sense. Heidegger puts it thus: “Although the unsheltered are risked, they are nevertheless not abandoned” (210). Heidegger illustrates this claim by means of a scale balance used to weigh items in the marketplace and by a reflection upon the notion of “gravity,” which is contained in line 10. Based upon the etymological similarities among the words in German for “to risk” (*wagen*), “balance” (*Wage*), “to weigh” (*wiegen*), and other cognates Heidegger contends that, although the object on the balance is in “danger” (in the sense of the uncertain outcome of the weighing), the object is nevertheless sustained by the balance itself. “Thereby what is risked [by being placed on the balance] is indeed unsheltered, but since it lies on the balance, it is retained by the balance” (ibid.).

He subsequently engages Rilke’s poem, “Gravity,” to characterize *gravity* as “the center of beings in their entirety” (211). Gravity engages that which is cast off or let loose by the risk by means of a tugging, a “pull or traction (*Zug*), toward the center” (ibid.). Figuratively speaking, the “centrifugal force” acting on what is cast off is counter-balanced by the “centripetal force” that attracts it to the center. Consequently, Heidegger establishes several equivalent expressions: “The gravity of the pure forces, the unheard center, the pure *Bezug* (attraction), the whole *Bezug*, full Nature, life, the risk are all the same,” and what they all name is “beings as such in their entirety” (212). By Heidegger’s

lights, risk entails the retaining, and sustaining, by the being of beings (as risk itself) of that which is risked.

In Heidegger's reading of Rilke, the two differ diametrically in their view of "the open." As Heidegger sees it, Rilke characterizes the open in terms of the *absence of barriers* (ibid.), whereas Heidegger thinks of "openness in the sense of the unhiddenness of beings, an unhiddenness that lets beings as such come to presence" (213).

Furthermore, on Heidegger's view, Rilke's characterization of the open in terms of the absence of all barriers implies that humankind is excluded from the open, as "encounter" is inevitable with the presence of humankind but impossible without the arising of barriers. Thus, plants and animals are *in* the world, but humankind is *before* the world—and hence not *in* the world. But for Heidegger, humankind (as Dasein) is definitely *in* the world—indeed, as being-in-the world. For Heidegger, this exclusion of humankind from the open is another indication of Rilke's metaphysical thinking (214).

From this explication of "the open," Heidegger re-examines the relationship between humankind and risk as expressed by Rilke in lines 5-10. These lines tell us that we, unlike animal and plants, "go *with* this risk, will it, sometimes risk even more . . . than life itself does"—and do "by a breath." Heidegger ties his exegesis of these lines primarily to his articulation of the essence of technology.¹³⁴ For Heidegger, to go *with* the risk does not imply going *along* with the risk, in the sense of doing so out of free choice. Rather, it means that the risk "for man . . . is specifically represented . . . as something set before him" (215). Yet humankind is not passive in this process. As that risk,

134. In this essay, Heidegger does not name the essence of modern technology as Ge-stell. However, he does refer to its cognate, das Gestellte, as "that which is set up" (*OBT*, 215).

Nature is brought before man by human re-presentation [*Vor-stellen*]. Man sets upon the world as the entirety of objectiveness before himself and himself before the world. Man delivers [*stellt zu*] the world unto himself and produces [*stellt her*] Nature for himself. (*OBT*, 215; bracketed material in original)

We can hear in these words Heidegger's earlier critique of science as the epitome of representational, objectifying thinking. Rilke tells us that humankind wills this risk (aka Nature).¹³⁵ Heidegger tells us that this will "is the self-assertion whose intention *has already* posited the world as the entirety of objects that can be produced" (216). Humankind is in a closed loop: to "know" nature, humankind objectifies it and "re-presents" it to itself as nature.

Yet, Rilke tells us, we "sometimes risk even more . . . than life itself does." Who are these people that risk in such a way? Rilke offers no specific response, nor does Heidegger . . . yet. Nonetheless, Heidegger asserts that something can be said about the character of these persons. If the essence of the being of beings is the will (thinking with Rilke), they must be persons who will *even more*, but in a different sense. They ". . . stay more in keeping with will as the being of beings. They accord rather with being that shows itself as will" (223).

Next, Heidegger turns to Rilke's remarkable claims that, first, this "risking more" "fashions outside of all defense, a safebeing"; and second, that "what saves us at last is our defenselessness . . ." (lines 12-13). Here, Rilke invites us to consider how *safebeing* can be realized, outside of all defense. But how is it that we are defenseless, and in what sense does defenselessness "save" us? For Heidegger, we are blind—and therefore

135. Heidegger contends that Rilke's representation of Nature as risk binds him to thinking Nature "metaphysically in terms of the essence of the will" (*OBT*, 209).

defenseless—before the threat to our essence as human beings from the essence of technology, in that we mistakenly regard technology as something neutral, something merely cultural, and something within humanity’s power to control and master. Our blind defenselessness, he says, is centered in the growing hegemony of technological thinking: “So long as man is set fast in deliberate self-assertion and establishes himself by the absolute objectification in departure against the open, he himself promotes his own defenselessness” (223).

In what way, and in what sense, then, does our defenselessness before the essence of technology save us? For Rilke, “. . . seeing it [defenselessness] threaten we turned it into the open in order, somewhere, . . . , to say yes to it” (lines 13-16). Heidegger expresses this turning into the open as a *reversal*: “. . . defenselessness in reverse is that which saves us” (224). The reversal spoken of here is the step of turning around from our customary human tendency to flee danger in whatever form in order to seek security by looking for and constructing a defense. In this sense, Heidegger says, defenselessness—as occasioned by the essence of modern technology (*Ge-stell*)—“sends us a safebeing” (225).¹³⁶ I suggest that these claims are consonant with Heidegger’s later claim in the QCT essay that *Ge-stell* not only harbors the “saving power” but, in a sense, *is* the saving power.¹³⁷

136. Heidegger articulated this claim earlier in his explication of risk in relation to the scale balance: “Only so long as what is risked rests safely in the risk, can it follow the risk, follow it, that is, into the unshelteredness of what is risked. What is risked is unsheltered; but not only does this not exclude a safebeing in its ground, *it necessarily implies it.*” (*OBT*, 210; my emphasis)

137. Cf. “It is precisely in Enframing. . . in this extreme danger that the innermost indestructible belongingness of man within granting may come to light, , , ,” (*QCT*, 32).

But who are those people who can point the way to such a reversal—to the seemingly impossible possibility of saying “yes” to our defenselessness in the face of the essence of technology as the absolute will to will?

Heidegger begins this essay by describing the “desolate time” to which humankind—and poetry itself—are called to respond. He characterizes the current age as “the world’s night,” and “determined by God’s keeping himself afar, by ‘God’s default’” (200).¹³⁸ There is a loss of enchantment, of wonder, in our time. “Not only have the gods and God fled, but the radiance of divinity is extinguished in world-history” (ibid.). By “desolation,” Heidegger means that “the essential realm in which pain and death and love belong together is withdrawn” (205). Heidegger understands this desolation, this default of God, as a total loss of ground, an abyss. He describes the fundamental human imperative in our time in terms of responding to this condition:

Assuming that a turning point in any way still awaits this desolate time, it can only come one day if the world turns radically around, which now plainly means if it turns away from the abyss. In the age of the world’s night, the abyss of the world must be experienced and must be endured. However, for this it is necessary that there are those who reach into the abyss. (*OBT*, 200-201)

“Why Poets?” poses two fundamental questions: First, are poets in general—and specifically, Rilke himself—capable of “reaching into the abyss”? Second, are poets especially, or even uniquely, qualified to reach into the abyss of the world’s dark night? (Why poets and not, for example, scientists or theologians?) Heidegger provides an important marker: “To be a poet in a desolate time means: singing, to attend to the track

138. On Heidegger’s view, this default of God does not affect the possibility of authentic Christian faith and life. “However, the default of God . . . does not contradict the fact that a Christian relationship to God continues among individuals and in the churches, and it certainly does not disparage this relationship to God” (*OBT*, 200; my emphasis).

of the fugitive gods. This is why the poet, at the time of the world's night, utters the sacred" (202). Heidegger returns to his understanding of poetry as "song" in the last few pages of the essay by way of reflecting upon the "breath" that enables those who risk to "even risk more" (lines 7-9).

In these lines, Rilke tells us that those who risk more than life do so by a breath. Customarily, we would read this as risking such by only a little bit more, e.g., "by a hair" more. Rather, Heidegger invites us to link "breath" directly with "language." He writes:

The breath by which those who risk more risk more does not only or primarily mean the hardly noticeable (because fleeting) measure of a difference; rather, it signifies directly the word and the essence of language. The ones who by a breath risk more risk it with language. (*OBT*, 238)

The riskiness of reversing defenselessness by turning into the open can only take place, if at all, within the realm of language.

But not just any sort of talk or speech will do. To be language for a desolate time, it must be language uttered without self-interest (line 7), without objectification, without seeking to produce anything. It must be language that faces the world's dark night unflinchingly, language which nevertheless moves us from ever-present unwholeness toward wholeness. Such language is *song*, he says, because it says more.¹³⁹ Who utters such language? Heidegger writes: "The ones who risk more are the poets, but poets whose song turns our defenselessness into the open" (239). Such poetry can be a pathway to the divine and holy:

139. Heidegger notes that Rilke writes in his "Sonnets to Orpheus," "Song is existence" (*OBT*, 237). Heidegger cites this same three-word claim by Rilke in the closing section of his "letter" to the participants of the Second Consultation on Hermeneutics at Drew University in April 1964. (See *Pathmarks*, 62, and Section 2.4 above.)

Only in the widest compass of the whole [line 15], is the holy able to appear. Because they experience unwholeness as such, poets of the kind who risk more are underway on the track of the holy. Their song sanctifies over the land. Their song celebrates the unbrokenness of the globe of being. The unwhole, as the unwhole, traces for us what is whole. What is whole beckons and calls us to the holy. The holy binds the divine. The divine brings God closer. (*OBT*, 240)

I close this section by suggesting that Heidegger's explication of Rilke's poetry—and poetry in general—illuminates common ground for poets and theologians.

First, Heidegger explicates “safebeing” in part by reflecting upon “security” as “without care” (*sine cura*)—that is, without resorting to “deliberate self-assertion” through technological thinking, production, and utilization (223). He and Rilke both think against the customary meaning of “security” as that (unattainable) state in which the risks of disease, death, and other misfortunes are successfully held at bay. Surely this resonates with the generally widespread impulse in religion to challenge egoic-centeredness (as well as, for example, tribal- and nationalistic-centeredness). *Can theologians join poets in inviting reflection upon what truly constitutes “security,” and what “turning into the open” where it lies (if it is not in a crucial sense identical to such “turning”), might look like?*

Second, Heidegger insists that poets illuminate the wholeness (i.e., “the unbrokenness of the globe of being”) within the unwholeness that co-constitutes existence itself. Otherwise said, poets see the enchantment of the earth as it is now, in the midst of its unwholeness. Heidegger expresses this stance in the midst of desolation in terms of *song*—song as *existence*. I hear in “song” the human—and theological—notion of *hope*. Heidegger declares: “This era is neither decay nor decline. As destiny it lies in

being and lays claim to man” (240). *Can theologians join poets in giving expression to the wholeness within unwholeness in ways that can be heard today?*¹⁴⁰

4.3 The Thing, Science, and the Fourfold

In this section I shall engage Heidegger’s thinking of “the thing” in relation to science and to the holy/divine as expressed by the *fourfold* of earth and sky, mortals and divinities. To do so, I draw primarily upon the first of his four Einblick lectures, “The Thing” (“Das Ding”).¹⁴¹ This section is an attempt to think the RST relation in terms of science and the holy/divine, “mediated,” in a sense, by their mutual connectivity with what Heidegger calls *thingness* (*das Dinghafte*)--that is, that which makes something a thing rather than an object.

“The Thing” is curious in a number of aspects. This work contains no overt mention of “technology”—much less any discussion of its essence and the danger and saving power to be found therein. Nor does this initial lecture explicate the primal notion of “revealing”—much less Heidegger’s basic distinction between the revealing modes of “bringing-forth” (*Hervorbringen*) and “challenging-forth” (*Herausfordern*), as in the QCT essay.¹⁴² That is to say, Heidegger does not lay out a thesis or provide a plan of analysis in this first lecture. Instead, the notions of nearness and distance, causality and thing,

140. See, for example, John Chryssavgis, *Beyond the Shattered Image* (Minneapolis: Light & Life Publishing, 1999), and contrast the immediacy of enchantment that he expresses with Thomas Berry, *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future* (New York: Bell Tower, 1999), in which re-enchantment of the earth is projected into the future.

141. Martin Heidegger, “The Thing,” in *PLT*, 161-84.

142. “Herausfordern” is first introduced in “Das Gestell” and then contrasted with “Hervorbringen” in “Die Gefahr.”

world and worlding, and the fourfold and thinking evidently provide the appropriate context, in Heidegger's view, for engaging the question of technology fruitfully.

Heidegger provided a brief introduction (*Hinweise*) for the original Einblick lecture series in which he reflects upon the notion of *nearness* in relation to *distance*.¹⁴³ Heidegger gives no definition for “nearness” in these opening paragraphs, but asserts that it has nothing to do with “distance” in the sense of quantification: “Short distance is not in itself nearness. Nor is great distance remoteness” (*PLT*, 163). In order to reach this elusive nearness, in the essay on “the thing” Heidegger interrogates the notion of *jug* as something “near to us” and asks, “What makes the jug a thing?”

Once again, Heidegger approaches the central theme before him by rethinking the customary explication of *causality*. As I discussed in Section 4.1 above, his critique of causality in the QCT essay led to a thinking of causality as a unified “co-responsibility” of bringing forth (*QCT*, 9-11). In “The Thing,” however, his analysis of causality—and of thingliness itself—hinges upon the crucial distinction between *thing* and *object*. Here, Heidegger characterizes “object” in the sense of *Gegenstand*: i.e., that which lies before us, opposite us, or stands over against us.

He engages the question, What makes the jug a thing?, by critiquing the application to this question of the customary framework of the four senses of causality:

143. The *Hinweise* (*GA79*, 3-4) consists of seven paragraphs that precede the four Einblick lectures; “Das Ding” is found in pp. 5-23. However, in Hofstadter's translation of the stand-alone, expanded 1950 version of “Das Ding” (*GA7*, 167-87), these paragraphs (now eight in number) have been incorporated into “The Thing” (*PLT*, 163-64). Heidegger subsequently engages “nearness” in each of the individual Einblick lectures, as well as in the QCT essay itself.

i.e., material cause, formal cause, efficient cause, final cause.¹⁴⁴ In Heidegger's view, each of the four senses of causality, when understood conventionally, fails to illuminate the thingliness of the jug.

Heidegger begins his analysis by positing a working characterization of the jug as a "vessel . . . that holds something else within it" (*PLT*, 164). Then he applies the four senses of causality to the example of the jug, using conventional language such as the following: "The jug's holding is done by its base and sides" (*ibid.*) (formal cause); "The jug consists of that earth . . ." (165) (material cause); "Self-support is what the making aims at" (*ibid.*) (final cause); and "its being made by the potter . . ." (166) (efficient cause). He does not say that such statements are incorrect, but rather that they obscure the nature, or essence, of the jug as a jug. The statements pointing to formal and material causes of the jug miss the mark because Heidegger argues that it is *the void* that holds (167). The statements indicating final and efficient causes are misleading, he says, because they are based upon the implicit assumption that the jug as something made constitutes its essence: "The jug is not a vessel because it was made; rather, the jug had to be made because it is this holding vessel" (166).¹⁴⁵ He concludes that the traditional understanding of causality cannot "reach" the nature, or essence, of the thing as thing.

Scientific attempts completely miss the thingly character of the jug, according to Heidegger. Scientifically speaking, the jug is filled with air; filling the jug with wine

144. However, these different senses of causality are never explicitly named as such in "The Thing."

145. Heidegger has critiqued the notion that the "madness" of something constitutes its essence in a number of earlier works. See, for example, his critique of the dominant interpretation of the "thingness of the thing" in terms of Aristotle's matter-form binary in "The Origin of the Work of Art" (*OBT*, 8-12).

simply displaces the air by a liquid. To a scientist, talk of the jug's "void" is merely "semipoetic," Heidegger says (167). He does not deny the correctness of these scientific statements, and he acknowledges that, by such statements, "science represents something real . . ." (168). Heidegger's objection, however, is this: "Science always encounters only what *its* kind of representation has admitted beforehand as an object possible for science" (ibid.). In so doing, he says, scientific knowledge "annihilates" things as things in the following sense: ". . . not only are things no longer admitted as things, but they have *never yet at all* been able to appear to thinking as things" (ibid.; my emphasis).¹⁴⁶ In the language of "nearness," viewing the jug through the lens of science prevents it from coming near to us. The reality of the jug remains distant, opaque.

Yet, for Heidegger, the difference between thing and object apparently is not an *absolute* difference, nor is representation a determining criterion for distinguishing between them. It is possible, he says, for a thing to become an object without losing its thingliness "if we place it before us, whether in immediate perception or by bringing it to mind in a recollective re-presentation" (165). As he says shortly thereafter, "The jug remains a vessel [i.e., a thing] whether we represent it in our minds or not" (ibid.). Nonetheless, we cannot *derive* the thingness of the jug from its independent standing forth nor from such representation or objectification.

To sum up, the thingliness of the jug is not necessarily lost when it appears to us as object in its independence as standing-forth in immediate perception or represented

146. Heidegger locates the origin of this annihilating characteristic of science in Plato's conception of the "presence of what is present in terms of the outward appearance" (*PLT*, 166). Cf., for example, Heidegger's critique of Plato's fateful conceptualization of the essence of that which is in terms of its "whatness," taken to be its look, or aspect, that is, its *idea* or *eidos* (*BQP*, 56); also discussed above in Section 3.2).

recollectively in our minds. Rather, the thingliness of the jug disappears when science enframes the standing forth of the jug in a manner predetermined by its conceptual assumptions. It is not our encounter *per se* with the thing as object that annihilates the thing, but rather the *objectification* of the thing as mere object, via the prevailing paradigm of the specific science employed at the moment.

Speaking affirmatively, Heidegger declares: “The jug’s thingness resides in its being *qua* vessel” (167). Heidegger proceeds to articulate a “fourfold” understanding of the jug in a manner very different from the customary “fourfold” senses of causality. As a vessel, the void of the jug takes in what is poured in and retains it, thence to give it as a gift in the outpouring. “The jug’s jug-character consists in the poured gift of the pouring out” (170). As water or wine, the gift in the outpouring may slake thirst or be part of an act of consecration. In the outpoured water or wine for mortals, whether from rock-spring or sun-drenched vineyard, “sky and earth dwell” (*ibid.*). If outpoured for consecration, the water or wine “is the libation for the immortal gods” (*ibid.*). Thus, the fourfold of earth and sky, mortals and divinities—each in its own way, yet enfolded together—dwells in the “gift of the outpouring” (171). The jug, as thing rather than scientifically grasped object, brings together the four elements of the fourfold in nearness to one another.

Moreover, the jug gathers the fourfold together in a way that *stays* [*weilt*] the fourfold—not as a mere persistence but a staying that “brings the four into the light of their mutual belonging” (*ibid.*). This light of mutual belonging is a *mirroring* that “sets each of the four free into its own, but it binds these free ones into the simplicity of their

essential being toward one another” (177). This “binding” in freedom is in the sense of mutual betrothing, entrusting (171). This is how things bring the elements of the fourfold together in nearness.¹⁴⁷ Heidegger calls this mirror-play “the world,” which presences as “worlding”—a primal term for Heidegger, unexplainable by other notions: “As soon a human cognition here calls for an explanation [of the world’s worlding], it fails to transcend the world’s nature, and falls short of it” (177).

In what way and when do things as things come about? And what is the human-thing connection? By Heidegger’s lights, just as human beings cannot command the saving power within the essence of modern technology to appear, neither can they make things appear. Yet just as vigilance is required by mortals for the saving power to appear in the face of the extreme danger of *Ge-stell*, vigilance is required for things to appear (179). Such vigilance requires “stepping back” from representational, explanatory thinking to “a thinking that responds and recalls” (*ibid.*). Such vigilance is all of a piece with *dwelling* in the world as world (180)—a theme I shall engage in Section 5.1 below.

On Heidegger’s view, do *holy* and *divine* allude merely—or even primarily—to anti-Christian, even pagan, manifestations of the religious impulse? Some have thought so.¹⁴⁸ Less than two weeks following his delivery of an expanded version of “The Thing” on June 6, 1950, Heidegger wrote a letter to a young student—presumably someone who attended his lecture. (The letter is appended to the lecture as an “Epilogue.”) Heidegger formulates the student’s inquiry as follows: “[W]hence does thinking about Being receive

147. For another example, see Heidegger’s analysis of George Trakl’s poem, “A Winter Evening,” in Martin Heidegger, “Language,” in *PLT*, 192-208.

148. See, for example, Hans Jonas, “Heidegger and Theology,” in Drew University, *Consultation on Hermeneutics*, 2nd (see chap. 2, n. 87).

(to speak concisely) its directive?” (181). Heidegger’s reply illuminates connections among thinking, responding, and erring, as well as the scope of the “divine” in his thinking. In view of this second theme in his letter, recall that Heidegger begins “Why Poets?” with references to the “default of God” and the flight of God and the gods (*OBT*, 200; cited above in Section 4.2). Heidegger indicates in this letter that, for him, the “divine” extends beyond Athens to Jerusalem. Resonances may also be heard with the classical Christian doctrine of *Deus absconditus*, in which absence does not imply abandonment.

The default of God and the divinities is absence. But absence is not nothing; rather, it is precisely the presence, which must first be fully appropriated, of the hidden fullness and wealth of what has been and what, thus gathered, is presencing of the divine in the world of the Greeks, in prophetic Judaism, in the preaching of Jesus. (*PLT*, 182)

In closing this section, I want to raise a few questions for further thought prompted by “The Thing” that bear on thinking the RST relation. First, in some significant sense, can religion, science, and theology be said to be *near* each other—despite their obvious differences? (I shall engage this question in Section 5.1 below and in the Epilogue.)

Second, is the “border” between object and thing open, closed, or “semipermeable,” figuratively speaking? On the one hand,

An independent, self-supporting thing [such as a jug] may become an object if we place it before us, whether in immediate perception or by bringing it to mind in a recollective representation. . . . [Nevertheless] the jug remains a vessel whether we represent it in our minds or not. (*PLT*, 164-65)

On the other hand, however, Heidegger writes: “A mere shift of attitude is powerless to bring about the advent of the thing as thing, just as nothing that stands today as an object in the distanceless can ever be switched over into a thing” (*PLT*, 179).

And third, in “Why Poets?,” Heidegger includes and reflects upon a letter of Rilke’s in which Rilke laments the loss of the “thingness” of things. He contrasts the “empty indifferent things, sham things” coming from America, produced by modern technology, with the things of his grandparents (house, spring, clothes)—each “a vessel in which they found the human, and preserved and added the human to it” (*OBT*, 218). Does the practice of religious rites, and the use of things therein, nurture the “thingness of things” whose loss Rilke laments? More generally, in hierophany, in which “profane” objects (*Gegenstände*) become signifiers of the “sacred,” do objects become things?

4.4 Modern Science, Technology, and Thinking

Let us return to Heidegger’s recurring question weeks before his death regarding the science-technology relation, quoted in full in the first paragraph of this chapter: “Is modern natural science the foundation of modern technology . . . or is it . . . already the basic form of technological thinking . . . ?” On the face of it, Heidegger’s view seems clear enough in the QCT essay: “Because the essence of modern technology lies in Enframing, modern technology must employ exact physical science. Through its so doing, the deceptive illusion arises that modern technology is applied physical science”

(*QCT*, 23). A tilt toward the primacy of technology over the sciences also seems apparent in the following lines by Heidegger from *What Is Called Thinking?*¹⁴⁹ a few years earlier:

However, their essence [i.e., the essence of the sciences] is frankly of a different sort from what our universities today still fondly imagine it to be. In any case, we still seem afraid of facing the exciting fact that today's sciences belong in the realm of the essence of modern technology, and nowhere else. . . . A fog still surrounds the essence of modern science . . . It arises from the region of what is most thought-provoking—that we are still not thinking; (*WCT*, 14)

On Heidegger's view, then, engaging the question of the essence of thinking may disclose the essence of modern science and, possibly, its relation to the essence of modern technology. (One might also ask whether it is meaningful to speak of “the essence of modern science and modern technology.”) The purpose of this section is to unfold Heidegger's analysis of the nature of thinking in view of our questions concerning these essences and their interrelation and to suggest some insights for thinking the RST relation.

We begin with Heidegger's startling claim, “Science does not think” (*WCT*, 8). Heidegger does not intend to disparage science, for he immediately follows this assertion with another: “. . . nonetheless science always and in its own fashion has to do with thinking” (*ibid.*). Moreover: “When we speak of the sciences as we pursue our way, we shall be speaking not against but for them, for clarity concerning their essential nature. This alone implies our conviction that the sciences are in themselves positively essential” (14). Nonetheless, on Heidegger's view, there is an “unbridgeable gulf” between thinking and the sciences; only a “leap” can link them (8). These statements support our attempt to

149. This work is a compendium of 21 lectures on thinking that Heidegger delivered in 1951-52 before his retirement from the University of Freiburg (*WCT*, v).

engage the question of the essence of modern science by examining Heidegger's explication of the essence of thinking.

How is it, then, that science fails to think? Heidegger characterizes "science" as *one-sided*, despite the unarguable fact that each science typically engages the entities in its domain of analysis from several perspectives. In his view, the one-sidedness of science stems from its inherent inability to examine its own essence. "The essence of their sphere—history, art, poetry, language, nature, man, God—remains inaccessible to the sciences. . . . The essence of the spheres I have named is the concern of thinking" (33).

Heidegger does not consider the inability of science to examine its own essence to be any sort of defect, however. "The sciences are fully entitled to their name, which means fields of knowledge, because they have infinitely more knowledge than thinking does" (ibid.). But what *is* at issue for him is ignoring the "other side" of science—namely, its essence. For Heidegger, the "covering up" of the gap between the two sides leads to a "leveling" of views: "Everything is leveled to one level. Our minds hold views on all and everything, and views all things in the identical way" (ibid.).

As for modern technology, Heidegger contends that its essence is manifested in what he calls "one-track thinking." As Heidegger tells us, the word "track" is chosen intentionally to evoke "rails" and "technology" (26). Tracks and rails connote a sense of single-mindedness at the core of technology that brooks no ambiguity:

This one-track thinking, which is becoming even more widespread in various shapes, is one of those unsuspected and inconspicuous forms, mentioned earlier,

in which the essence of technology assumes dominion—because that essence wills and therefore needs absolute univocity.¹⁵⁰ (*WCT*, 26)

Heidegger links “one-track thinking” and “one-sided view” in a way that, I suggest, begins to illuminate the relation between the essences of modern science and modern technology:

For it is only on the plane of the one-sided uniform view that one-track thinking takes its start. It reduces everything to a univocity of concepts and specifications the precision of which not only corresponds to, but has the same essential origin as, the precision of technological process. . . . one-track thinking is not co-extensive with the one-sided view, but rather is building on it even while transforming it. (WCT, 34; my emphasis)

I hear in these words a mutual interdependence between one-track thinking (that, for Heidegger, manifests the essence of modern technology) and the one-sided view (that, for Heidegger, is characteristic of modern science). As Heidegger says, the two are “not co-extensive,” but one-track thinking requires the one-sided view as a basis while subsequently transforming that base.

Heidegger locates the essence of scientific and technological thinking in “idea-forming”—i.e., the forming of ideas and their representations.¹⁵¹ To illustrate, Heidegger reflects upon the human experience of simply standing before and beholding a tree in bloom. This reflection is informed by recalling that the Greek word, *eido*, is the origin of the word “idea” and means “to see, to face, meet, be face-to-face” (41). Heidegger traces

150. As Heidegger sees it, the aim of modern physics is to provide that univocity with regard to nature. Despite the increasing inscrutability of its representations of that which is, modern physics “is challenged forth by the rule of Enframing, which demands that nature be orderable as standing-reserve” (*QCT*, 23).

151. Cf. Heidegger’s treatment of “idea-forming” and “representation” in *BQP* (56, 156) and discussed above in Section 3.2.

the back-and-forth beholding of the blossoming tree “in the head” and “outside the head” as scientifically analyzed, yet directly encountered. He asks:

. . . while science records the brain currents, what becomes of the tree in bloom? . . . What becomes of the man—not of the brain but of the man, who may die under our hands tomorrow and be lost to us, and who at one time came to our encounter? What becomes of the face-to-face, the meeting, the seeing, the forming of the idea, in which the tree presents itself and man comes to stand face-to-face with the tree? (*WCT*, 42)

Heidegger’s purpose is to call into question the presumed superiority of the scientific comprehension of the human encounter of a blooming tree. “Whence do the sciences derive the right to decide what man’s place is, and to offer themselves as the standard that justifies such decisions?” (*ibid.*). In Heidegger’s view, the blooming tree, in effect, *disappears* under the scrutiny of science; the tree no longer can “stand where it stands” (44). In the language of the previous section, scientific analysis has “annihilated” the thingness of the tree.

Heidegger is pointing to a “split-screen” seeing, or visioning, of that which is. The sciences “explain to us that what we see and accept is properly not a tree but in reality a void, thinly sprinkled with electric charges here and there that race hither and yon at enormous speeds” (43). Otherwise said, when we simply behold the blooming tree, we behold it as a *thing*—not as a scientifically scrutinized object. Heidegger appears to be saying that it is not the scientific “seeing” of the tree *per se* that he finds problematic, but rather it is the widespread view that labeling other ways of seeing are less valid—or even invalid. A question for this inquiry, raised at the close of the previous section, continues

to linger: *Can we hold both ways of “seeing” the blooming tree without privileging—or patronizing--either one?*

Let us examine more closely the role of “representation” in idea-forming. On Heidegger’s view, it arises from the customary understanding of truth as “correctness” as determined by the correspondence, or conformance, of statements (i.e., propositions) to “facts.” Briefly put, “An idea is called correct when it conforms to its object” (38). Holding this traditional view of truth entails bringing before us (i.e., presenting) in a comprehensible manner (thus, re-presenting) such objects, or “facts” about them, in order to determine if they conform to our statements about them.¹⁵²

In a much earlier essay, “The Age of the World Picture,” Heidegger examines the notion of “representation” in some detail.¹⁵³ He does so in order to clarify his claim that the essence of modern science (*Wissenschaft*) is *research* (*OBT*, 59)—comprised of “[p]rojection and rigor, method and constant activity” (65). He contrasts *representing* in the modern (i.e., “scientific”) sense with *apprehending* in the Greek sense. Apprehending is the opening of oneself to “that which rises up and opens itself; that which, as what is present, comes upon man” (68). Thus, that which is apprehended does not depend upon a “first look” from humankind; “[r]ather, man is the one who is looked upon by beings” (*ibid.*). In apprehending, we behold a revealing in the spirit of *Hervorbringen*, a bringing forth, without coercion. In modern science, however, “representation” means “to bring the present-at-hand before one as something standing over-and-against, to relate it to oneself, the representer, and, in this relation, *to force it back to oneself as the norm-giving*

152. See my earlier discussion of this in Section 3.2.

153. Martin Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture,” in *OBT*, 57-85.

domain” (69, my emphasis). Otherwise said, the employment of representing by modern science places representing in the service of Herausfordern—the coercive, challenging forth mode of revealing.¹⁵⁴

On Heidegger’s view, however, representation *per se* is not inherently coercive (i.e., forcing). Recall that he states in “The Thing” that things may become objects (Gegenstände) without losing their thingness—even in representation. “An independent, self-supporting thing may become an object if we place it before us, whether in immediate perception or by bringing it to mind in a recollective re-presentation” (*PLT*, 167). A few lines later, he adds: “The jug remains a vessel [i.e., a thing] whether we represent it in our minds or not” (*ibid.*).

However, in modern scientific representing, the projection plans and methodologies of research that hold sway at any given point in time determine the manner by which objects are brought before us. In the language of Thomas Kuhn, the prevailing paradigms in “normal science” circumscribe the realm of the knowable. These paradigms are *forcing* in the sense that they provide the norms, enforceable in “normal science,” for adjudicating between science and non-science. But what is the origin of this forcing? Does it rest in modern scientific representing as such, or elsewhere?

Modern science progresses because the fruits of scientific research drive the constant search for additional results. By means of such constant activity, science autonomously establishes its own “coherence and unity” (*OBT*, 64). Modern science—unlike science before the modern era—is able to “take possession of its own complete

154. I thank Frank Seeburger for this formulation of the “forcing” nature of modern science.

essence” (ibid.). These words-point to *an autonomous, dominating dynamism* within modern scientific research. I suggest that this same dynamism is expressed in describing the extreme danger posed by Ge-stell:

But Enframing does not simply endanger man in his relationship to himself and everything that is. As a destining, it banishes man into that kind of revealing which is an ordering. Where this ordering holds sway, *it drives out every other possibility of revealing.* (*QCT*, 27; my emphasis)

That is, modern science and modern technology both derive from, so to speak, the same essence—an autonomous, dominating dynamism.

As the title of this work indicates, the notion of *call* is central to Heidegger’s explication of thinking. Heidegger explicates the multiplicity of meanings in this word in connection with parsing the primary question of his inquiry as four interrelated questions¹⁵⁵ that point to a single meaning: What is it that calls on us to think? That is, what makes a call upon us that we should think and, by thinking, be who we are? (121).¹⁵⁶ This fourth question is decisive because it puts *us* into question. It is also decisive, he says, because it “does not just give us something to think about, . . . [but] it *entrusts thought to us as our essential destiny . . .*” (ibid.; emphasis added).¹⁵⁷

155. Each of the four questions is rendered in several ways as a question. For example: (1) “What is it to which we give the name ‘thinking’? (2) [H]ow does traditional doctrine conceive and define what we have named thinking? (3) What is called for on our part in order that we may each time achieve good thinking? (4) [W]hat is it that calls us, as it were, commands us to think? (*WCT*, 113-14). The fourth question is restated extensively in (ibid., 114-21).

156. In *WCT*, the question of Being is linked to the question of thinking. Heidegger devotes several chapters in Part II to parsing a fragment of Parmenides that he penultimately renders as “Useful is the letting-lie-before-us, so (the) taking-to-heart too: beings in being” (228). He concludes that what is to be thought about, what calls us, is the “presence of what is present” (240), i.e., the Being of beings (244).

157. I shall examine the thinking-destiny relation in Section 5.4 below.

Heidegger employs etymology to recover multiple meanings in “to call” and “to think.” In addition to the customary meaning of “to call” in the sense of “to signify” or “to name,” “to call” also means “to commend, entrust, give into safekeeping . . . to call into arrival and presence; to address commandingly” (118). By including these meanings, Heidegger hears the decisive question in *What Is Called Thinking?* as “What is that which appeals us to think? What is it that enjoins our nature to think, and thus lets our nature reach thought, arrive in thinking, there to keep it safe?” (ibid.).

Heidegger then examines the close relation among thinking, thought, thanks, and memory from the “decisively and originally telling word . . . *thanc* [Gedanc]” (139).¹⁵⁸ *Thanc*, he says, “is the gathered, all-gathering thinking that recalls” (139). Thus, according to Heidegger, thinking is rooted in memory. Yet “memory” means more than recollection of the past. Rather, its root meaning is “a concentrated abiding with something,” a “devotion” to that something, which encompasses past, present, and future (140). Furthermore, he says, the *thanc* is pervaded by this original memory and what is designated by the word “thanks” (141).

If thinking is grounded in thanks, what are we giving thanks for? Heidegger writes: “But the highest and really most lasting gift given to us is always our essential nature . . .” (142). And if thinking is a thanking for this “endowment,” what does it mean for us to thank? He replies: “Pure thanks is . . . that we simply think—think what is really and solely given, what is there to be thought” (143). This appears to be another way of saying that “thinking is our essential destiny.”

158. The etymological connections at play among *thanc* with thinking, thought, thanks, and memory are evident from the German equivalents of the latter: namely, Denken, Gedachtes, Dank, and Gedächtnis, respectively (GA8, 143).

I turn now to describe briefly Heidegger's characterization of *meditative thinking* as the antithesis of modern scientific thinking. In his 1955 "Memorial Address"¹⁵⁹ to the people of Messkirch, his home town, Heidegger continues with his thesis in *What Is Called Thinking?* that "[m]ost thought-provoking in our thought-provoking time is that we are still not thinking" (WCT, 6). Despite the extensive planning, research, and inquiries everywhere, Heidegger insists that "man today is in *flight from thinking* (DOT, 45). Yet, despite the thoughtlessness that springs from such flight, "we do not give up our capacity to think" (ibid.). He examines the apparent paradox of the absence of thinking with the presence of planning, etc. by contrasting what he calls *meditative thinking* (*besinnliche Denken, Nachdenken*) with *calculative thinking* (*rechnenden Denken*)¹⁶⁰ — another hallmark of modern scientific thinking, along with representing. Calculative thinking resonates with the determining characteristic of modern scientific research as constant activity:

. . . calculation is the mark of all thinking that plans and investigates. Such thinking remains calculation even if it neither works with numbers nor uses an adding machine or computer. Calculative thinking computes. It computes ever new, ever more promising and at the same time more economical possibilities. Calculative thinking races from one prospect to the next. Calculative thinking never stops, never collects itself. Calculative thinking is not meditative thinking, not thinking which contemplates the meaning which reigns in everything that is. (DOT, 46)

159. Martin Heidegger, "Memorial Address," in Martin Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 43-57. (Hereafter, *Discourse on Thinking* is cited as DOT.)

160. GA16, 525-26. English translations of *Nackdenken* include: to meditate, contemplate, ponder, ruminate, reflect. English translations of *rechnen* include: to calculate, compute, count, reckon. *Beolinguus—Your Online Dictionary*, s.v.v. "Nachdenken" and "rechnen," accessed October 26, 2012, <http://dict.tuchemnitz.de/dings.cgi?lang=en&service=deen&opterrors=0&optpro=0&query=Nachdenken&iservice=&comment=&email=>, and <http://dict.tuchemnitz.de/dings.cgi?lang=en&service=deen&opterrors=0&optpro=0&query=rechnen&iservice=&comment=&email=>.

Meditative thinking is thinking that dwells on the meaning of events and trends, thinking that ponders the threat of rootlessness in our time (46-48). Such thinking, he says, is the essence of being human. Meditative thinking makes possible *comportment* toward technology that would enable us to use technical devices, but to freely let go of them at any time (54).¹⁶¹ (Heidegger is not anti-science, as both modes of thinking are necessary: “. . . each [is] justified and needed in its own way” [46].) Heidegger calls this comportment “releasement toward things” (*die Gelassenheit zu den Dingen*) (54) and “*openness to the mystery*” (55); such comportment, he says, keeps us open to the hidden meaning in technology.¹⁶²

By Heidegger’s lights, meditative thinking is essential for such comportment; releasement toward things will not happen on its own. Furthermore, *mankind’s essential nature* is at stake. If calculative thought comes to reign someday as the singular way of thinking, “man would have denied and thrown away his own special nature—that he is a meditative being” (56). That is why the threat that calculative thinking, the hallmark of Ge-stell, may come to dominate all modes of thinking is a *supreme* threat. “Therefore,” Heidegger says, “the issue is the saving of man’s nature. Therefore, the issue is keeping meditative thinking alive” (ibid.)

161. Recall that Heidegger characterizes the enactment-sense of Christian life experience in terms of “comportment” as discussed earlier in Section 2.1. Also, in this passage, “comportment” is the translate of *die Haltung* (GA16, 528), which also means “attitude,” “posture,” and “approach.” *Online Dictionary English-German*, s.v. “Haltung,” accessed October 26, 2012, <http://www.dict.cc/?s=Haltung>. Cf. “comportment” as a translation of *Verhalten* (see chap. 2, n. 66).

162. These descriptions of meditative thinking resonate with the characterization of *reflection*, in the sense of *Besinnung*, and *Besinnung* in the spirit of *Gelassenheit*, as discussed earlier in Section 3.4.

4.5 Chapter Summary

Broadly speaking, this chapter engages the RST relation *indirectly* by bringing modern science and technology into relation with the holy and divine through poetry and art. The chapter offers Heidegger's explication of the common essence that is served by modern science and technology that threatens to extinguish all other ways of thinking and comportment to all that is. In so doing, the essential nature of what it means to be human is fundamentally threatened.

Briefly stated, this common essence is an autonomous, aggressive dynamism that purports to fashion its own essence. That essence is manifested in the essence of modern technology in its mode of the revealing of Being as "challenging forth." It is manifested in the essence of modern science in *calculative thinking*. In contrast, Heidegger posits *revealing forth* as the primal mode of the revealing of Being, and *meditative thinking* as the essence of humankind. In turn, the calculative thinking of science manifests itself in *objectification*, which reduces all things to objects (Gegenstände). In contrast, things gather the elements of the fourfold of earth and sky, mortals and divinities, in a "mirror-play" that fashions the "worlding" of the world.

Paradoxically, Heidegger holds that a *saving power* grows where the supreme danger of modern technology resides. Vigilance on the part of humankind is essential to fostering this growing saving power; art, poetry, the nurturing of the fourfold, and meditative, reflective thinking are seen by Heidegger as vital in service of such vigilance. Meditative, reflective thinking is rooted in *thanking* for the gift of our essential nature

and in *memory*, as devotion to the task of thinking “what is really and solely given, what there is to be thought” (*WCT*, 143).

By Heidegger’s lights, poetry (inclusive of art) heralds the growing saving power in the face of the extreme danger posed by the essence of modern technology and science as *song*—understood as language that points to the wholeness within the unwholeness of the world’s “dark night.” Poetry locates the “saving power” in *defenselessness* that foregoes ultimately futile attempts to build walls to ward off the extreme danger posed by modern technology and science. Such poetry, Heidegger says, can be a pathway to the holy and divine.

With regard to the formulation of theology as “reflection on religious experience and belief,” this chapter raises questions and possible opportunities: At the end of Section 3.4, we asked, what sense(s) of *reflection*—*Reflexion*, *Besinnung*, or both—appropriately characterize(s) theology? Here, we ask the same question differently: *What form(s) of thinking—calculative, meditative-mindful, or both—appropriately characterize theology?*

Heidegger regards poetry as a pathway to the holy and divine. Taking for a moment that theology regards itself similarly, in some sense, does “reflection on religious experience and belief” incorporate the sense of “reaching into the abyss occasioned by the world’s dark night”? *Does this formulation of theology include pointing to the growing saving power in the midst of the extreme danger of the essence of modern technology? More specifically, can theology so understood articulate the paradox that such saving power is located in defenselessness?*

To sum up, poetry and meditative, mindful thinking, each in their own way, are paths for confronting the essence of modern technology. Are these paths completely separate, or do thinking and poetry “belong together,” in some sense? We take up this question in the next and final chapter.

Chapter 5: Ethics and the RST Relation

Heidegger never wrote an “Ethics” in the form of a separate publication by that title. On his view, the question of ethics must be thought from the question of the truth of Being. Such thinking, he says in “Letter on ‘Humanism’,”¹⁶³ departs from regarding ethics and ontology as disciplines within the field of philosophy (*P*, 269). Instead, thinking the truth of being leads Heidegger back to the Greek term, *ethos*, which means *abode* or *dwelling*. On his view, the truth of being and the essence of what it means to be human are inseparable from “ethics”—understood in its originary meaning:

If the name “ethics,” in keeping with the basic meaning of the word *ethos*, should now say that ethics ponders the abode of the human being, then that thinking which thinks the truth of being as the primordial element of the human being, as one who eksists, is in itself originary ethics. (*P*, 271)

This chapter examines Heidegger’s explication of ethics in terms of abode or dwelling, thought out of the question of the truth of being, with an eye toward thinking the RST relation. Briefly put, the “arc” of the chapter is the linking of *dwelling* and *destiny* in light of the thinking-poetry relation. In the first section (5.1 Ethics and the Place of Being), I shall examine Heidegger’s treatment of the dwelling-building duality in relation to thinking and the poetic. In the second section (5.2 Ethics, Technology, and Values), I shall discuss Ian Barbour’s analysis of the role of values in ethics and its relation to technology, in light of Heidegger’s critique of the notion of “value” itself. The

163. Martin Heidegger, “Letter on ‘Humanism’,” in *Pathmarks* (*P*), 239-76.

third section (5.3 Ethics and Nihilism) focuses upon Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche's explication of nihilism, in terms of "value" and "the will to power." In the final section of this chapter (5.4 Ethics and Destiny), I shall examine Heidegger's explication of "destiny" as the *Geschick* of Being, in contrast to its customary interpretation as something determined by fate. Finally, I shall conclude this entire inquiry with a brief Epilogue (The Question of Being and the RST Relation).

5.1 Ethics and the Place of Being

For Heidegger, ethics, as *ethos*, is abode, or dwelling. More precisely, as quoted above, he says that ethics "ponders the abode of the human being." Hence, *ethics* is the link between thinking, or pondering, and abode, or dwelling. Furthermore, dwelling clearly involves building, in some sense. In this section I shall draw primarily upon two works of Heidegger that engage the dwelling-building duality—first, from the perspective of thinking, "Building Dwelling Thinking,"¹⁶⁴ and second, from the perspective of poetry, ". . . Poetically Man Dwells . . ." ¹⁶⁵

On Heidegger's view, *dwelling* "is the manner in which mortals are on the earth" (*PLT*, 146). Furthermore, *building*, in its ordinary sense, is dwelling. These claims are based primarily upon his explications of the verb, *bauen* (to build), its older cognate, *buan* (to dwell), and *bin* (the first person form of the verb "to be").¹⁶⁶ He writes: "The

164. Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *PLT*, 141-59.

165. Martin Heidegger, ". . . Poetically Man Dwells . . .," in *PLT*, 209-28.

166. This move is consistent with his characterization of this work as a venture that "traces building back into that domain to which everything that *is* belongs" (*PLT*, 143).

way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans *are* on the earth, is *Buan*, dwelling” (145). Yet our ordinary understanding of “building” and “dwelling” suggests that the relation of the former to the latter is that of a means to an end, or goal. On Heidegger’s view, this is correct, in a sense, but also misleading, as “to build is in itself already to dwell” (144).

Heidegger notes that *bauen* also connotes the manner in which the building-dwelling link is manifested: “. . . to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for, specifically to till the soil, to cultivate the vine” (145). He extends this agriculturally-grounded understanding of “building”¹⁶⁷ beyond that of the cultivation of growing things to “building” in the sense of constructing edifices. Thus, he writes: “To dwell” means “to remain at peace within . . . the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature” (147). Its fundamental character is “sparing and preserving”—not only protecting from harm but leaving each thing “in its own nature.” More specifically, the sparing and preserving inherent in dwelling safeguards the “fourfold” of earth and sky, divinities and mortals.¹⁶⁸ It does so by “bringing the presencing of the fourfold into things” (149).

Heidegger illustrates the connection between dwelling and the fourfold by the example of a bridge:

The bridge is a thing; it gathers the fourfold,¹⁶⁹ but in such a way that it allows a site for the fourfold. By this site are determined the localities and ways by which

167. The German word for farmer is *Bauer*.

168. Cf. the earlier discussion of the fourfold in Section 4.3 above.

169. Here, Heidegger once again draws upon the ancient meaning of “thing” as a gathering or assembling. (He elicited this meaning in his earlier work, “The Thing.” See my discussion of this in Section 4.3 above.) This meaning is in contrast to the conventional representing of “thing” as “an unknown X to which perceptible properties are attached” (*PLT*, 151).

a space is provided for. . . . Space is in essence that for which room has been made, that which is let into its bounds. That for which room is made is always granted and hence is joined, that is, gathered, by virtue of a location, that is, by such a thing as the bridge. (*PLT*, 152)

On this view, the bridge is not built upon a pre-existing site or location; rather, the bridge provides a site for the fourfold and *is itself* a location (153, emphasis added). Moreover, as a location, the bridge makes room for and shelters the fourfold (156). From this explication of “space,” Heidegger proceeds to derive the customary understanding of “space” in terms of extension and its quantifiable formulation in terms of dimensions (153-54).

His analysis also illuminates the relation of space to humankind. Space is not something that lies above and over us. Rather, “space” in its primal sense is “always provided for already within the stay of mortals” (154). As mortals, we stay within things in the fourfold, even if they are beyond our immediate reach. We dwell with these things; that is who we are. “The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, strictly thought and spoken” (155).

Although building “produces things as locations,” the things produced, such as bridges, are *not* to be understood as a result or consequence of such building. Rather, such building is

. . . a producing that brings something forth. For building brings the fourfold *hither* into a thing, the bridge, and brings *forth* the thing as a location, out into what is already there, room for which is only now made *by* this location (*PLT*, 157; original emphasis)¹⁷⁰

170. Such building, he says, is “accomplished” (*PLT*, 157). In “Letter on ‘Humanism,’” he writes: “To accomplish means to unfold something into the fullness of its essence, to lead it forth into this fullness—*producere*” (*P*, 239).

Thus, he says, building is a “distinctive letting-dwell” (156).

Furthermore, building and thinking are essential for dwelling, but not necessarily sufficient:

Building and thinking are, each in its own way, inescapable for dwelling. The two, however, are also insufficient for dwelling so long as each busies itself with its own affairs in separation instead of listening to one another. They are able to listen if both—building and thinking—belong to dwelling, if they remain within their limits and realize that the one as much as the other comes from the workshop of long experience and incessant practice. (*PLT*, 158)

We shall see an analogous claim for thinking and poetry with respect to dwelling in his work, “. . . Poetically Man Dwells . . .,” to which we now turn. The title of this lecture is taken from a poem of Hölderlin’s that Heidegger engages throughout this work.

In this lecture, Heidegger argues that it is *poetry* that “first causes dwelling to be dwelling” (*PLT*, 213). He challenges widespread views of poetry as “a flight into dreamland” or “part of literature” (211). Poetry is not otherworldly, he says: “Poetry does not fly above and surmount the earth in order to escape it and hover over it. Poetry is what first brings man onto the earth, making him belong to it, and thus brings him into dwelling” (216).

So how is it that poetry is so “down to earth,” and what is its connection to the dwelling-building duality? Let us take this two-part question as our guide. With respect to the first half of our question, Heidegger declares that *language* is the gateway toward discerning the essence, or nature, of any thing: “Language beckons us, at first and then again at the end, toward a thing’s nature” (214). Moreover, human beings are not in control of language—quite the reverse. Heidegger regards the “unbridled yet clever

talking, writing, and broadcasting of spoken words” across the globe as an inversion of the true relationship of language to humankind.

Poetry has this “down-to-earth” character, Heidegger says, because, in a sense to be described, it “measures” dwelling. “Poetry is . . . measure-taking—its taking, indeed, for the dwelling of man” (221). Moreover, “poetry . . . is the primal form of building. Poetry first of all admits man’s dwelling into its very nature, its presencing being. Poetry is the original admission of dwelling” (224-25). In what follows, I sketch Heidegger’s defense of these claims.

As in “Building Dwelling Thinking,” Heidegger employs here the “fourfold” of earth and sky, divinities and mortals, in his analysis of the building-dwelling duality and of “measure-taking,” in particular. Here, poetry seeks to take the measure of the “between” of sky and earth. Heidegger calls this “between” the *dimension* (218). The measuring, or spanning, of this dimension, he says, is central to what it means to be human: “. . . man spans the dimension by measuring himself against the heavenly. Man does not undertake this spanning just now and then; rather, man is man at all only in such spanning” (ibid.).

But how does poetry take the measure of this “dimension”? Heidegger writes:

The measure consists in the way in which the god who remains unknown, is revealed *as* such by the sky. God’s appearance through the sky consists in a disclosing that lets us see what conceals itself, but lets us see it not by seeking to wrest what is concealed out of its concealedness, but only by guarding the concealed in its self-concealment. Thus the unknown god appears as the unknown by way of the sky’s manifestness. This appearance is the measure against which man measures himself. (*PLT*, 220-21)

Heidegger is saying that the sky, which is familiar to humankind, is alien to the unknown god but nonetheless a medium for that god to evince the very character of this god's unknownness to mankind.¹⁷¹ In Hölderlin's words, by such measuring, "man not unhappily measures himself against the Godhead" (217). Heidegger says more: such measuring is integral to the essential nature of humankind.

Like building and thinking, poetry and dwelling "belong together, each calling for the other" (225). Moreover, poetic measuring-taking is essential for building, Heidegger contends, in order for humankind to continue to be capable of cultivation and construction upon the earth:

Man does not dwell in that he merely establishes his stay on the earth beneath the sky by raising growing things and simultaneously raising buildings. Man is capable of such building only if he already builds in the sense of the poetic taking of measure. (*PLT*, 225)

Otherwise said, this poetic building "takes the measure" of the dimension between earth and sky that is shared by subsequent building and thinking as they belong together in dwelling.¹⁷²

In sum, ethics, as the pondering of dwelling (*ethos*), is a peaceful protecting and "letting be" of each thing in its own nature. Building, thinking, and—above all—poetry, are each indispensable for dwelling through their relationship to the fourfold of earth and sky, divinities and mortals. Building is primordially a gathering of the fourfold into things. Building is thus a producing, a bringing-forth, of things into dwelling. Poetry

171. In "Why Poets?," Heidegger identifies *poets* as those who are capable of reaching into the "abyss of the world's dark night" from which the gods have fled (*OBT*, 200-201); also see Section 4.2.

172. I thank Frank Seeburger for pointing out these interrelationships.

“first causes dwelling to be dwelling” (213) by taking the measure of the dimension between earth and sky. In such measure-taking, poetry discloses—and yet safeguards—the unknowableness of the self-concealing god against which, Heidegger says, mankind has always measured itself. By such poetic measure-taking, we manifest our essential nature as human beings. No lesser measure-taking quite measures up.

Three questions for Christian theology come to mind in light of Heidegger’s explication of thinking and poetry in relation to dwelling. *Does Christian theology, in its own way, attempt to take the measure of the between of earth and sky? Is such measure-taking consonant with formulating theology as reflection on religious experience and belief? Does Christian theology appropriately disclose the unknown god [here, *Deus absconditus*] in its self-concealing?*

I conclude this section by gathering some pointers from Heidegger regarding the relation between poetry and thinking—all with an eye toward thinking the RST relation. The discussion above in this section clearly indicates that, on Heidegger’s view, poetry and thinking each “belong together” with dwelling. Do they themselves also belong together, in some sense? In “The Nature of Language,”¹⁷³ Heidegger writes of the “neighborhood of poetry and thinking.” Expressed figuratively, this phrase means, he says, “that the two dwell face to face with each other, that the one has settled into facing the other, has drawn into the other’s nearness” (*OWL*, 82).¹⁷⁴ Compactly stated, the

173. In *OWL*, 57-108 (see chap. 1, n. 41).

174. Recall that Heidegger does not render “nearness” in spatio-temporal terms. He explicates this point in “The Nature of Language” (*OWL*, 101-5) as well as in “The Thing,” which I discussed above in Section 4.3.

neighborhood of poetry and thinking means “the encounter of the two facing each other” (ibid.).

For Heidegger, the heart of language itself occasions this neighborhood of thinking and poetry. Furthermore, *nearness*, as “Saying,” brings about this neighborhood, rather than the other way around:

Neighborhood means: dwelling in nearness. Poetry and thinking are modes of saying. The nearness that brings Poetry and thinking together into neighborhood we call Saying. Here, we assume, is the essential nature of language. (*OWL*, 93)

By “Saying,” Heidegger means “to show, to make appear, the lighting-concealing-releasing offer of world” (107). Poetry and thinking “Say” in divergent ways. For reflective thinking (*besinnliche denken*), “Saying” is the giving of Being by means of the gift of the word: “the word gives Being” (88). For poetry, “saying” is *song*: “In the poet’s song, the word appears as mysterious wonder” (89). The divergence of their Saying (the Same thing differently) is the encounter of thinking and poetry. Thinking and poetry draw near to each other in Saying the Same, albeit in divergent ways. The neighborhood occasioned by this nearness harbors the divergence of their Saying.¹⁷⁵ In sum, despite the divergent modes of their saying, poetry and thinking are brought together in nearness by Saying itself as that which illuminates as well as conceals the essential nature of all that is.

Three questions for thinking the RST relation: *Are religion, science, and theology “near” to each other, in some sense? Is their possibly a neighborhood in which their*

175. Heidegger expresses this similarly *In What Is Called Thinking?*: “The essential closeness of poesy and thinking is so far from excluding their difference that, on the contrary, it establishes that difference in an abysmal [*abgründigen*] manner” (*WCT*, 134; *GA8*, 139).

divergences can encounter each other? What Sameness, so to speak, might “occasion” such a neighborhood? These closing questions prepare us for thinking the *essence* of the RST relation in terms of *nearness* and *neighborhood*. But before addressing in the Epilogue this crucial matter for our inquiry, we shall proceed in the final three sections of this chapter to establish the connection between dwelling and destiny.

5.2 Ethics, Technology, and Values

In this section, I shall examine the central role of values in Ian Barbour’s analysis of the ethics-technology relation in light of Heidegger’s critique of the notion of “value” itself. In *Ethics in an Age of Technology*,¹⁷⁶ Barbour conducts his analysis of this relation through the lens of values that promote the well-being of human life (individually and socially) and the environment. In contrast, Heidegger contends that employing the notion of “value” leads to the objectification of that which is “valued” and paradoxically reduces its essential worth.

Barbour outlines and critiques three basic views of technology: technology as liberator, technology as threat, and technology as *ambiguous instrument of power*. Broadly speaking, the first two views are optimistic and pessimistic views of technology, respectively, while the third view—the view which Barbour defends—holds that technology’s “consequences depend upon its social context.” Barbour’s point is not that technology is inherently neutral, but rather that “[t]echnologies are social constructions,

176. Ian Barbour, *Ethics in an Age of Technology: The Gifford Lectures 1989-1991 Volume 2* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993). (Hereafter cited as *EIAT*.)

and they are seldom neutral because particular purposes are already built into their design” (*EIAT*, 15).

Barbour contrasts these three views of technology in terms of how the science-technology relation is understood. Compactly stated, technological optimists tend to regard technology as derived from science (“applied science”), whereas pessimists generally regard technology as “uncontrollable” and a driver of science itself. In each of these two cases, the technology-society relation is seen unilaterally as technology *shaping* society. The third view of technology as ambiguous instrument of power sees the science-technology relation *contextually*, with no universal pattern in terms of dominance. In this third view of technology, the combinations of science-society, technology-society, and science-technology are understood as *mutually influencing* (*EIAT*, Chapter 1).

Barbour bases his view of ethics upon a *functional* definition of “value.” He defines “value” as “a general characteristic of an object or state of affairs that a person views with favor, believes is beneficial, and is disposed to act to promote” (26). On this view, “values” are *subject-centered*—akin to the view held by J. Wentzel van Huyssteen and others that “rationality” is subject-centered.¹⁷⁷ As characteristics, values in effect, “sort” the class of all “objects and states of affairs” into two disjoint subclasses—those possessing the characteristic or value, and those that do not. Functionally speaking, “values” differentiate, partition. Barbour justified this definition several years earlier by noting that, since “values” so defined are held by persons, “values” are amenable to empirical investigation by social scientists:

177. See my earlier discussion of this point in Section 3.3 above.

Data on attitudes and beliefs can be obtained through verbal testimony, questionnaires, and interviews; data on patterns of behavior can be obtained from research on allocation of time and effort, and on actual choices among alternatives.¹⁷⁸

Typically, he says, reasons are given or principles cited to justify and promote specific values. For Barbour, “ethics” is the domain of “[p]rinciples of right and wrong in human actions, and good and evil in the consequences of actions” (*EIAT*, 27). Briefly put, ethics is the examination of the “justification of [one’s] value commitments” (26).

Barbour posits six human values (three individual, three social) and three environmental values with which to evaluate technology: In summary form, these values are:

Figure 1: Values Relevant to the Appraisal of Technology

Individual values	Social values	Environmental values
food and health meaningful work	social justice participatory freedom	resource sustainability environmental protection
personal fulfillment	economic development	respect for all forms of life

Source: Figure 2 in Barbour, *Ethics in an Age of Technology* (*EIAT*), 81.

His analysis of human values is conducted from three primary perspectives: science, philosophy, and religion. He argues that all three are interdependent and essential for responding to the challenges of an increasingly technological world. Barbour lists several

178. Ian Barbour, *Technology, Environment, and Human Values* (New York: Praeger, 1980), 60.

values purported to be intrinsic to science, such as disinterestedness, freedom of thought, and fidelity to truth. However, he holds that such characteristics—even if they were perfectly realized in practice—are insufficient to serve as a basis for “an adequate social ethic” (28-29). Nonetheless, science can contribute to ethics in at least three ways: by illuminating the biological, social, and psychological constraints upon human behavior; by providing “increasingly reliable estimates of *the consequences of our decisions*”; and by contributing to “*the worldview within which our decisions are made*” (32-33, original emphasis). Philosophy contributes to making ethically-based choices in a technological society in three primary ways: by clarifying ethical concepts, by examining the universality and consistency of ethical principles, and by providing metaphysical frameworks for understanding ultimate reality (33, 41). Specifically, Barbour holds that philosophically-framed approaches to ethics need to incorporate rights and duties (deontological) as well as results (teleological) to be effective. “I will use both a broad evaluation of consequences (going beyond Utilitarianism and cost-benefit analysis by including nonquantifiable values) and a defense of rights and duties that avoids absolutism” (36). Religion also plays an essential role in ethical decision-making, he contends, because ethical principles alone are insufficient to motivate ethical action, “which involves the will and the affections as well as the intellect” (41). He summarizes the interplay among these three perspectives regarding human values as follows:

In later chapters, then, I will frequently be drawing on science, especially for its estimates of the consequences of alternative technological policies and its understanding of the interdependence of humanity and the nonhuman world. I will be drawing on philosophy in referring to both the good of society and individual human rights. From the Christian tradition I will draw on distinctive insights concerning each of the six values discussed here (*EIAT*, 55)

With respect to the three primary environmental values listed above, Barbour similarly argues for indispensable contributions by science, philosophy, and religion. For example, environmental science, centered on the concepts of “ecosystem” and “ecological sustainability,” illuminates the physical and biological constraints within which ethical decisions are called for (60). He contends that process philosophy, as developed by Whitehead and his followers, values both human and nonhuman forms of life, yet “give priority to *human needs* without being anthropocentric” (70-71, original emphasis). Finally, Barbour holds that religious traditions can be sources for defending environmental values, although he acknowledges a mixed record in Christianity.

Barbour’s defends two primary claims in *Ethics in an Age of Technology*. First, technology can be controlled in a democratic society by the proper governance, assessment, and redirecting of technology (213 et seq.). Second, his nine posited human and environmental values can significantly influence each sphere of the control of technology. For example, he supports methods of technology assessment that attempt to analyze the direct and indirect effects of new technologies—or of major changes in existing technologies—upon the environment as well as the economy and such effects upon specific stakeholder groups (229-31). Barbour readily acknowledges that tradeoffs among these posited values—such as meaningful work and environmental protection—are frequently necessary. On his view, scientists have no privileged position on such tradeoffs. Indeed, “the basic decisions about technological policies are *value-laden and political*” (231, original emphasis). He concludes that fundamental judgments on

complex matters concerning technology that involve incommensurable values must ultimately be made by elected officials—albeit in view of the best scientific analysis available.

Barbour concludes his analysis of the technology-ethics relation by calling for a “reorientation of technology toward justice, participation, and sustainability” (258). On his view, education, political involvement, and “catalytic crises” can contribute to a “new social paradigm,” but a “vision of alternatives” is arguably most important (264-68). He contends that religion and theology can contribute in significant ways to such visions. The Biblical prophetic tradition of judgment, repentance, and hope can foster needed changes in attitudes and values. Process theology emphasizes the intrinsic value and interdependence of both human and nonhuman forms of life. For Barbour, values are embedded in alternative visions that can direct the appropriate employment of technology to serve the common good:

New visions can provide the motivation and direction for creative social change. . . . They summarize a set of values, using concrete images rather than abstract principles. . . . Let us keep before us that image of the spinning globe [as first seen by astronauts on the moon] with its natural environments and its social order. Let us imagine technology used in the service of a more just, participatory, and sustainable society on planet earth. (*EIAT*, 266-67)

On Barbour’s view, then, values provide standards that enable one to differentiate between the favorable and unfavorable, the beneficial and unbeneficial, and the worthwhile and worthless. Human and environmental values, expressed in scientific, philosophical, and religious terms, such as those presented here, can significantly

contribute to the appropriate governance, assessment, and redirecting of technology in democratic societies.

I now examine Heidegger's critique of the notion of "value" itself. Thinking from the standpoint of the question of the truth of being and of the nature of thinking itself, Heidegger contends that, in the very act of valuing, something quixotically leads to a paradoxical *de*-valuation, as it were, of that to which some value is assigned. He summarizes his argument in "Letter on 'Humanism'":

To think against "values" is not to maintain that everything interpreted as "a value"—"culture," "art," "science," "human dignity," "world," and "God"—is valueless. Rather, it is important to finally realize that *precisely through the characterization of something as a "value" what is so valued is robbed of its worth*. That is to say, by the assessment of something as a value what is valued is admitted only as an object for human estimation. But what a thing is in its being is not exhausted by its being an object, particularly when objectivity takes the form of value. Every valuing, even where it values positively, is a subjectivizing. It does not let beings: be. Rather, valuing lets beings: be valid—solely as the objects of its doing. . . . To think against values therefore does not mean to beat the drum for the valuelessness and nullity of beings. It means rather to bring the clearing of the truth of being before thinking, as against subjectivizing beings into mere objects. (*P*, 265; emphasis added)

Heidegger's claim that the very act of valuing a thing necessarily drains it of worth (*Würde*) rests upon his view that the very process of imputing value (*Wert*) to things amounts to "subjectivizing beings into mere objects." That is, *every* valuing is performed by someone (i.e., a human "subject") before whom the object or state of affairs is brought to a stand (*Gegenstand*): i.e., is objectified. Thus the process of valuing (i.e., evaluation) necessarily occurs within the orbit of human significance and meaning. Furthermore, he says, such objectification does not exhaust "what the thing is in its being." This statement

heralds the approach that unfolds in Heidegger's critique of value: namely, to think the question of value from the standpoint of the question of being.

Heidegger asks: "What does 'value' mean ontologically? How are we to categorize this 'investing' and Being-invested?" (*BT*, 68). For his responses to these questions, we shall turn first to *Introduction to Metaphysics*¹⁷⁹ and then to *Being and Time*, respectively. As we turn to these works, let us recall Barbour's definition of *value* as "a general characteristic of an object or state of affairs that a person views with favor, believes is beneficial, and is disposed to act to promote" (*EIAT*, 26).

In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger's discussion of "value" occurs in the context of his discussion of the distinction, traditional in the specific terms at issue at least since Hume and Kant, between "Being and the ought"—or between what *is* and what *should be*.¹⁸⁰ On Heidegger's view, the ultimate ground for the eventual opposition between Being and the ought arises in Plato's notion of the whatness of Being in terms of *idea* and Plato's claim that "the idea of the good" (i.e., the "highest idea") lies beyond Being so understood: ". . . the ought arises in opposition to Being as soon as Being determines itself as idea" (*IM*, 211). "This process is completed in Kant," Heidegger says, since the ought (in the form of the categorical imperative) is in total opposition to Being (taken by Kant as nature).

The notion of "value" arises as a response to the "chasm" between Being and the ought that is created by thinking Being reductively as the Being of beings, in various

179. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000). (Hereafter cited as *IM*.)

180. I thank Frank Seeburger for this clarification.

interpretations. Under these conditions, the role of the ought as the standard, or measure, of all that is, is endangered. “Value” arises to ground the ought, but “value” does not *exist*: “. . . because values stand opposed to the Being of beings, in the sense of facts, they themselves cannot *be*” (212). Therefore, although values provide “the measure for all domains of beings—that is, of what is present at hand”—one must settle for *validity*. In sum, perhaps we can say that “value” is the reductive expression of “the ought” that properly *belongs* to Being as something distinguished from it—and something that accordingly (and “nihilistically”) “is” not.

Heidegger addresses the second question regarding “investing with value” in his interpretation in *Being and Time* of Descartes’ characterization of *Thinghood*, understood ontologically in terms of *material nature*. In such an understanding of Thinghood, Heidegger claims that “values” such as “useful” or “useless,” “beautiful” or “ugly,” are, in effect, merely *labels* affixed to things; they tell us nothing new about the *essence* of the objects or states of affairs that are matters at hand. Every thing that is—and values themselves—turn out to be merely *present-at-hand*:

When we speak of material Thinghood, have we not tacitly posited a kind of Being—the constant presence-at-hand of Things—which is so far from having rounded out ontologically by subsequently endowing entities with value-predicates, that these value-characters themselves are rather just ontical characteristics of those entities which have the same kind of Being as Things? Adding on value-predicates cannot tell us anything at all new about the Being of goods, *but would merely presuppose again that goods have pure presence-at-hand as their kind of Being*. Values would then be determinate characteristics which a Thing possesses, and they would be *present-at-hand*. . . . (BT, 99; original emphasis)

Valuing reduces that which is valued to its *whatness*, to merely its content-sense.¹⁸¹ In other words, valuing reduces *things* to *objects*.¹⁸²

By Heidegger's lights, the process of valuing something amounts to "sticking" a label on it, but this fails to add anything significant to our understanding of the thing. Given Barbour's definition of "value" as a "characteristic," I suggest that his approach to "value" may be vulnerable to the same critique. I say "may" here, because Heidegger is critiquing Descartes' understanding of Being as *material nature*. On one hand, Barbour clearly views the metaphysical framework of process philosophy as superior to that of Descartes' "material nature" for understanding "reality." On the other hand, Barbour offers no explanation as to how the value "label" becomes affixed to the thing valued.¹⁸³

To sum up, Heidegger's critique of "value" makes no judgments concerning the *worthiness* of the things valued. Indeed, on his view, the very act of "valuing" something has the perverse effect of *de-valuing* it, in the sense of *diminishing* its worthiness. Viewed ontologically, the inherent belonging together of Being itself and the ought is shattered when Being is thought reductively as the Being of beings. Speaking figuratively, "valuing" vainly attempts to span the chasm separating the ought from all that is (i.e., everything that "is")—exposing the nonexistence of valuing itself. Viewed ontically, attempts to think "value" in terms of characteristics or labels sever the thing valued from its essence.

181. See Section 2.2 for an explication of *presence-at-hand* in contrast to readiness-to-hand.

182. See Section 3.3 on the *thingness* of the jug and the thing-object distinction.

183. To my mind, the challenge of explaining how values get affixed to things seems akin to the challenge of explaining how assertions correspond to things in the conventional understanding of truth as correctness.

5.3 Ethics and Nihilism

In this section, I shall examine portions of Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche's explication of "nihilism" in terms of "values," the "will to power," and the relation between the *last man* and the *overman*. In particular, I shall focus primarily on Heidegger's critique of Nietzsche's compact expression of nihilism as "God is dead" and Heidegger's analysis of the relation of nihilism to thinking.¹⁸⁴ Mindful of Heidegger's characterization of *ethics* in terms of "dwelling" (*ethos*), I shall take as a guiding question for this section, the following section, and the concluding Epilogue: Where are the "places" of religion, science, and theology in relation to ethics if nihilism characterizes our past, present, and possible future (or lack thereof, as the case may be)?

On the face of it, Nietzsche's claim would seem to be the death knell for religion (or, at any rate, for theistically-based religion) and, consequently, for theology, taken as reflection upon religious experience and belief. Indeed, Nietzsche's word *does* refer to the "death" of God, in the sense that ". . . faith in the Christian God is no longer tenable . . ." ¹⁸⁵ On Heidegger's view, however, Nietzsche understood "Christianity" as "the historical, secular-political phenomenon of the Church and its claim to power . . ." (164)—what today is referred to by many theologians and other scholars as

184. In this section, I shall draw primarily from Heidegger's works, "Nietzsche's Word: 'God Is Dead'", in *Off the Beaten Track (OBT)*, 157-99, and *What Is Called Thinking? (WCT)*.

185. Nietzsche's words are from the fifth book of *La Gaya Scienza*, cited in *OBT*, 162.

“Christendom.”¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, Heidegger maintains that “Christianity” in Nietzsche’s sense (i.e., Christendom) has nothing in common with what Heidegger calls “the Christian life of the New Testament”¹⁸⁷ nor with belief in “the Christian God of the biblical revelation” (164).

The significance of Nietzsche’s aphorism, taken to express the essence of the completion of nihilism, reaches far beyond matters of Christian belief/unbelief and the Christian life of the New Testament. “God is dead” also points to the loss of meaning in the entire realm of the supersensory:

If God—as the supersensory ground and as the goal of everything that is real—is dead, if the supersensory world of ideas is bereft of its binding and above all its inspiring and constructive power, then there is nothing left which man can rely on and by which he can orient himself. (*OBT*, 163)

In terms of Heidegger’s explication of the relation of poetry and dwelling in Section 5.1 above, poetically taking the measure of the dimension between earth and sky no longer is possible. But “man is man only in such spanning,”¹⁸⁸ Heidegger says, so the very essence of what it means to be human is at stake. Furthermore, seen in this light, the loss of meaning across the entire realm of ideas envelops scientific thought as well as theology.¹⁸⁹

186. See for example, Douglas John Hall, *The Cross in Our Context: Jesus and the Suffering World* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

187. More precisely, Heidegger has in mind “the Christian life that existed once for a short time before the Gospels set down in writing and before Paul disseminated his missionary propaganda” (*OBT*, 164).

188. In “. . . Poetically Man Dwells . . .” (*PLT*, 218) and cited above in Section 5.1.

189. In the inaugural issue of *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science*, the editors stated its purpose in terms of responding to the loss of the supersensory. The writings of its founding editor, Ralph Burhoe, reflect this basic purpose as well. See Section 1.2.2.

Thinking with Nietzsche, Heidegger identifies the arc of the loss of the supersensory with the history of Western thought. This history is the history of metaphysics—taken to be, since the time of Plato and Aristotle, “the truth of beings as such in their entirety” (157, 165). It is the destiny of metaphysics, Heidegger says, to end (i.e., complete itself) in the loss of the supersensory:

Metaphysics is the space of history in which it becomes destiny for the supersensory world, ideas, God, moral law, the authority of reason, progress, the happiness of the greatest number, culture, and civilization to forfeit their constructive power and to become void. (*OBT*, 165)

Nihilism, then, is a historical *movement*—not a “period of history.” As Heidegger puts it, “Nihilism, thought in its essence, is . . . the fundamental movement of the history of the West” (163). Moreover, he says, “Metaphysics is an epoch of the history of being itself. In its essence, however, metaphysics is nihilism” (198). Since the sciences are the “offspring” of metaphysics (159), they are well within the reach of the “tandem” critique of “metaphysics-as-nihilism” in this work. Let us keep before us, then, the question of whether religion and theology are also.

In this regard, consider Heidegger’s characterization of the role of theology in the loss of the supersensory that characterizes nihilism:

But when the pure faith in God as defined by the Church fades, when theology in particular, as the doctrine of the faith, finds itself curbed and forced to one side *in serving its role as the normative explanation of beings in their entirety*, . . . (*OBT*, 165, emphasis added).

The study of “beings—as beings—in their entirety” is another characterization of metaphysics. *If theology is regarded as the “normative explanation” of such, does theology itself, then, necessarily lie within the orbit of metaphysical thinking?*

The loss of the supersensory is a *consequence*, or manifestation, of nihilism, but not its cause. Instead, Nietzsche locates this cause in the dispensation¹⁹⁰ of “value” by the *will to power* (173). On Nietzsche’s view, the “death” of the supersensory is a *devaluation* of (and by) the highest values—such as beauty, goodness, and truth (166). In turn, this devaluation of the highest values by the highest values themselves, Nietzsche says, necessarily leads to a “revaluation of all values” and a seeking of “what is most alive” (ibid.).

Heidegger then examines Nietzsche’s definition of “value” in detail: “The viewpoint of ‘value’ is the viewpoint of the *conditions for preservation-increase* in regard to the complex structures, relatively enduring, of life in the midst of becoming” (170). Heidegger expresses this simply as “. . . life in its essence proves to be that which sets values” (171). By Nietzsche’s definition, the life-giving conditions of preservation-increase are for the sake of *becoming*, which, for Nietzsche, is equivalent to “the will to power” and “being in the broadest sense” (172). Thus, the setting and dispensation of values falls under the orbit of the will to power. “The will to power is the ground for the necessity of dispensing values and the origin of the possibility of value-estimation” (172). The relation of value and the will to power is *reciprocal*—in the sense that the will to power is fundamentally thought out of the notion of “value” itself.

190. I.e., distribution, administration, or management.

Nietzsche hyphenates the two conditions of life as “preservation-increase” to emphasize two claims: first, that preservation is necessary for the increase of life; and second, that preservation without increase inevitably leads to the decline of life (171). He holds that the posited condition of continued increase in order for life to flourish holds for the will to power as well: “*To will* at all amounts to the will to become *stronger*, the will to grow”¹⁹¹ Thus the essence of the will to power is to constantly overpower (i.e., overreach) itself.

On Nietzsche’s view, the essence of the will to power is the essence of beings in general. As Heidegger puts it, the essence of the will to power is “the fundamental trait of all reality” (176). For Nietzsche, this amounts to an “overcoming” of metaphysics. For, if the will to power establishes and dispenses *all* values, then all “values” posited by past, present, and future metaphysical systems (such as truth, justice, etc.) are “devalued”—i.e., deemed worthless, irrelevant. A new “value,” so to speak, has been established in their place: namely, the will to power whose essence is to will itself. For Heidegger, however, Nietzsche’s thought remains within the orbit of metaphysics because he conflates being itself with the being of beings, thought by Nietzsche as the will to power—fundamentally tied to the notion of “value”:

Because thinking in terms of values is grounded in the metaphysics of the will to power, Nietzsche’s interpretation of nihilism, as the process of devaluing the highest values and revaluing all values, is a metaphysical interpretation; it is metaphysical, in fact, in the sense of the metaphysics of the will to power. (*OBT*, 187)

191. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, no. 675, from 1887/8, quoted in *OBT*, 175.

Indeed, Nietzsche's thought itself is nihilistic, because the revaluation that occurs after the highest values are dethroned is, nevertheless, a value in itself. Nonetheless, both thinkers agree that metaphysics has reached its "end"—in the sense of completing the arc of its history from Plato and Aristotle to Nietzsche himself.

In Heidegger's eyes, the value-centered thinking in Nietzsche's treatment of nihilism is disastrous for thinking the question of being. Nietzsche's conflation of being itself with the being of beings, understood as the will to power, reduces being itself to a *value*. ". . . being has sunk down to a value in metaphysics" (193). Furthermore, in Nietzsche's value-centric metaphysical system, "God" is constituted as that which is of the highest value, i.e., God is the "highest being" (194). Heidegger excoriates the employment of this interpretation by

the faithful and their theologians who talk of the beingmost of all beings without ever letting it occur to them to think about being itself and thereby become aware that this thinking and that talking, from the perspective of the faith, is absolute blasphemy when it is mixed into the theology of the faith. (*OBT*, 194)

If there is to be a "place" for theology, then, by Heidegger's lights, it will have to break out of the confines of metaphysical thinking.¹⁹² Is there a place for a non-metaphysical, non-valuing theology?

Heidegger's antipathy for thinking in "values" is expressed vividly in connection with the Madman's claim that "*We've killed him* [i.e., God]—you and I. We are all his murderers."¹⁹³ (161, 194). Heidegger writes: ". . . to think in values is to kill radically"

192. Recall from my discussion in Section 2.4 above Heidegger's admonition to theologians (since at least the 1950s) to cease relying upon philosophy to shore up their theologizing.

193. Friedrich Nietzsche, *La Gaya Scienza*, section 125, quoted in *OBT*, 161.

(196). He interprets the Madman's exclamation and subsequent poetic explanations in terms of the history of Western metaphysics, starting with the subject-object split initiated by Descartes:

This killing means the elimination, through man, of the supersensory world that has its being in itself. This killing identifies the process in which beings as such are not absolutely annihilated, but rather become otherwise in their being. However, in this process, man too, and above all, becomes otherwise. He becomes the one who eliminates beings in the sense of beings in themselves. The human uprising into subjectivity makes beings into objects [*Gegenstand*]. However, what is objective is that which, through representation, has been brought to a stand. The elimination of beings in themselves, the killing of God, is accomplished in the securing of duration through which man secures bodily, material, spiritual, and intellectual durables; however, these are secured for the sake of man's own security, which wills the mastery over beings (as potentially objective), in order to conform to the being of beings, the will to power. (*OBT*, 195)

We can hear in the closing sentence a foregrounding of his characterization of the essence of modern technology as *Ge-stell*—the challenging forth of all that is as standing-reserve (*Bestand*). The “killing of God” is the forgetting of the question of being itself, the reduction of beings in themselves to our objectification of them through representational thinking, in an ultimately futile gesture to find security in certainty. In effect, Heidegger issues a warning to theology in light of this “killing” of God:

God ceases to be a living God if in our continuing attempts to master the real we fail to take his reality seriously beforehand and question it, if we fail to reflect whether man has so matured toward the essence into which he is forced from out of being that he withstands this destiny that sends him out of his essence, and does so without the false relief of mere expedients. (*OBT*, 190)

In the face of the ever-increasing, essentially unstoppable exercise of the will to power as the essence of the “real,” Nietzsche posits the *overman* (*Übermensch*) as “[t]he

man whose essence is the essence that is willing and willed out of the will to power” (188). The overman is the “successor” of the *last man (letzte Mensch)* in the sense that the overman *passes over*—and *overpasses*—the last man. Who is the “last man,” also named by Heidegger as the “erstwhile man”—that is, the former, one-time man?

According to Nietzsche’s metaphysics, erstwhile man is called erstwhile because although his essence is determined by the will to power as the fundamental trait of all beings, he nonetheless has not experienced and taken over the will to power as this fundamental trait. (*OBT*, 189)

Otherwise said, the last man has not yet come into his own essence and embraced it as his own.

Let us now turn to Heidegger’s examination of nihilism in *What Is Called Thinking?* In this work, two different paths of the analysis and possible “resolution,” so to speak, by Nietzsche and Heidegger, of the impasse reached by the “end” of metaphysics come together. Whereas Nietzsche personifies the impasse and possible resolution in the figures of the last man and overman, respectively, Heidegger expresses this impasse and possible resolution by contrasting calculative thought with meditative thinking. As the following two passages from this work clearly show, Heidegger draws these paths together by linking the figure of the last man with man as *animal rationale* and then with idea-forming, representational thinking:¹⁹⁴

The man [the last man] whom he who passes over [the overman] overpasses is man as he is so far. . . . Nietzsche calls him the as yet undetermined animal. This implies: *homo est animal rationale*. . . . Man is the beast endowed with reason. (*WCT*, 61)

194. Heidegger has previously linked the figure of humankind as *animal rationale* and calculative thought in, for example, *The Principle of Reason* (129).

In this species of last man, there, reason—the forming of representational ideas—will inevitably perish in a peculiar way and, as it were, become self-ensnared. Ideas then limit themselves to whatever happens to be provided at the moment—the kind of provisions that are supplied at the enterprise and pleasure of the human manner of forming ideas, and are pleased to be generally comprehensible and palatable. . . . *The last man—the final and definitive type of man so far—fixes himself, and generally all that is, by a specific way of representing ideas.*¹⁹⁵ (WCT, 62, emphasis added)

In sum, then, it can be said that nihilism, metaphysics, *animal rationale*, the last man, calculative thought, and idea-forming/representational thought—all say the same thing.¹⁹⁶

Heidegger expresses the crisis of nihilism and its equivalences in terms of the figure of the last man:

Is the man of today in his metaphysical nature prepared to assume dominion over the earth as a whole? . . . Is the nature of this man of today such that it is fit to manage those powers, and put to use those means of power, which are released as the nature of modern technology unfolds, forcing man to unfamiliar decisions? Nietzsche's answer to these questions is No. (WCT, 65; emphasis added)

This can be heard as a question of the essence of humankind as well as a question of *destiny*—a question to which we turn in the next and final section of this chapter.

195. On Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche, Nietzsche did not see the fundamental connection between idea-forming, representational thinking and the essential nature of the last man. Rather, on this reading, *revenge* characterizes this essential nature, and revenge itself is characterized by "the will's revulsion against time and its 'It was'" (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part II, "On Deliverance," quoted in WCT, 93).

196. For Heidegger, such a multiplicity of meanings "is the element in which all thought must move in order to be strict thought. . . . we always must seek out thinking, and its burden of thought, in the element of its multiple meanings, else everything will remain closed to us" (WCT, 71).

5.4 Ethics and Destiny

The meaning of *destiny* is customarily associated with one or more of the following interpretations: one's fortune lot, or outcome; the succession of events that led to the outcome; and/or that which predetermines such events and the resulting outcome.¹⁹⁷ This conventional meaning can be heard in the question Heidegger raises in the final sentence of his closing "Address" in *The Principle of Reason*: ". . . what will become of the earth and of human existence on this earth" (*POR*, 129). That is, what result or outcome might we expect in facing this question of the future of planet earth and its inhabitants?

Heidegger succinctly describes this customary interpretation of destiny as follows: "We usually understand *Geschick* [destiny] as being that which has been determined and imposed through fate: a sorrowful, an evil, a fortunate *Geschick*. This meaning is a derivative one" (61). Heidegger hears the word "destiny" differently, however. On his view, "*Geschick*" names a family of meanings derived from cognates of the verb, *schicken* ("to send"), and original meanings of this pivotal word. For him, *Geschick* is a nonfatalistic *Geschick* of Being.

The purpose of this section is to examine connections (if any) between *destiny*—heard in the customary sense as well as in Heidegger's interpretation of *Geschick*—and *ethics*, understood in terms of "dwelling" (*ethos*). I shall argue that the question of *destiny*—heard in either sense—is, at root, a question of dwelling. Thus, it could be said

197. Adapted from the definition of "destiny" from *TheFreeDictionary*, s.v. "destiny," accessed June 9, 2012, <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/destiny>.

that dwelling *is* destiny. To support this claim, I shall draw upon Heidegger's explication of thinking and poetry and their interrelation in earlier sections.

In "Building Dwelling Thinking" and ". . . Poetically Man Dwells . . .," Heidegger establishes that thinking and poetry, in effect, *belong together* in dwelling. Although neither by itself is sufficient for dwelling, they are each indispensable for dwelling. Heidegger's initially describes *dwelling* as "the manner in which mortals are on the earth" (*PLT*, 146). Given this rather general description, can we say that dwelling is destiny?

This increasingly seems to be the case, if we hear these words in their customary meaning. Robust evidence continues to accumulate, strongly indicating that the past and current manner of human activity across the globe is significantly affecting present and future conditions for life on earth. Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees are co-founders of *ecological footprint analysis*, "an accounting tool that enables us to estimate the resource consumption and waste assimilation requirements of a defined human population or economy in terms of a corresponding productive land area."¹⁹⁸ The worldwide per capita *demand* for productive land in 2001 was estimated to be 2.2 hectares per person, while the worldwide per capita *supply* to provide such productive land sustainably (aka, "carrying capacity") was only 1.8 hectares per person.¹⁹⁹ The difference is a worldwide unsustainable "ecological overshoot" of 0.4 hectares per

198. Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees, *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth* (Stony Creek, CT: 1996), 9.

199. Mathis Wackernagel, Dan Moran, Sahn White, and Michael Murray, "Ecological Footprint accounts for advancing sustainability: measuring human demands on nature," in *Sustainable Development Indicators in Ecological Economics*, ed. Philip Lawn (Northampton, MA: 2006), 251, 255.

person. Otherwise expressed, more than one “earth” is needed to maintain the current demand for land, water, minerals, and energy to support human life and activity across the planet. They describe “overshoot” and its consequences in stark terms:

The depletion of ecological assets systematically undermines the well-being of people. Livelihoods disappear; irreconcilable conflicts emerge; families are hurt; land becomes barren; and resources become more costly before eventually running out. . . . If humanity does not react in time, we will face the prospect of collapse.²⁰⁰

The growing ecological footprint of humankind is unmistakably impacting global climate patterns, primarily by increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere. The most recent comprehensive assessment of global climate change conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) includes these summary statements:

Warming of the climate system is unequivocal . . . Observational evidence from all continents and most oceans shows that many natural systems are being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases. . . . [Subsection 1]

Most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely [probability>90%] *due to the observed increase in anthropogenic GHG [greenhouse gas] concentrations*. . . . [Subsection 2]

Continued GHG emissions at or above current rates would cause further warming and induce many changes in the global climate system during the 21st century that would very likely [probability>90%] be larger than those observed during the 20th century. . . . [Subsection 3] (emphasis added)²⁰¹

200. Ibid., 248.

201. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Core Writing Team (R. K. Pachauri and A. Reisinger, eds.), “Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report: Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change” (Geneva, Switzerland: IPCC, 2007), 104 pp., https://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/syr/en/contents.html. The Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) involved “more than 500 Lead Authors and 2000 Expert Reviewers” (ibid., Foreward).

Indeed, the increasing impact of humanity upon the face of the earth has been recently recognized in a proposal to name the current geological epoch the “Anthropocene Age.”—that is, the “Age of Man.”²⁰²

In the general and everyday sense of these terms, then, dwelling (or the lack thereof) is unquestionably shaping our destiny.

Let us turn now to Heidegger’s understanding of destiny as the *Geschick* of being and investigate ways in which thinking and poetry inform that understanding. In *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger identifies the history of Western thought with the *history* of being, also understood as the *Geschick* of being. As we have seen in the previous section, Nietzsche identifies this history with *nihilism*: “Nihilism is the destiny of [our] own history” (*OBT*, 164). This history, Heidegger says, is marked by the self-revealing and withdrawing of being (*POR*, 75). Moreover, the *Geschick* of being is not a one-way “sending” of—or by—being to beings as passive recipients. Indeed, Heidegger contends that a sense of *reciprocity* obtains between being and human beings via the *Geschick* of being in a way that should put to rest any charges of fatalism in his construal of destiny:

As the ones bestowed by being in the *Geschick* of being we stand—and indeed do so in accordance with our essential nature—in a clearing and lighting of being. But we do not just stand around in this clearing and lighting without being addressed; rather we stand in it as those who are claimed by the being of beings. As the ones standing in the clearing and lighting of being we are the ones bestowed, the ones ushered into the time play-space. *This means we are the ones engaged in and for this play-space, engaged in building on and giving shape to the clearing and lighting of being—in the broadest and multiple sense, in preserving it.* (*POR*, 85, my emphasis)

202. See Paul J. Crutzen, “Geology of Mankind,” in *Nature* 415 (3 January 2002): 23, doi:10.1038/415023a, and Elizabeth Kolbert, “Enter the Anthropocene Age of Man,” in *National Geographic* 219, no. 3 (March 2011): 60-61, 64-65, 69-73, 75-77, 79, 81, 83, 85, <http://0-search.proquest.com.bianca.penlib.du.edu/docview/873247302?accountid=14608>.

This passage explicitly signals an *active* dimension in Heidegger's characterization of the essence of humankind.

Heidegger distinguishes between "the full *Geschick* of being" and the particular epochs in which the "clearing and lighting of being" is manifested. On the one hand, he declares that epochs cannot be derived from each other or tracked. On the other hand, however, he asserts that each epoch leaves a *legacy* for the next. The legacy "always comes from what is concealed in the *Geschick* . . ." (*POR*, 91). By Heidegger's lights, the legacy of each epoch since the pre-Socratics has been the forgotten question of Being itself.

In the QCT essay, Heidegger characterizes the current epoch of the *Geschick* of being as *Ge-stell* (Enframing), the essence of modern technology. In this work, examined closely in Section 4.1 above, *Geschick* is translated as *destining* and described as a "sending-that-gathers which first starts man upon a way of revealing" (*QCT*, 24). *Ge-stell* is a particular form, or mode, of *Geschick*. More precisely, just as Nietzsche declares that *nihilism* is the end, or completion, of Western history, so Heidegger regards *Ge-stell* as the end, or fulfillment, of this history, whose single destiny is the *Geschick* of Being. In contrast to destining of revealing as a *bringing forth* (*Hervorbringen*), *Ge-stell* is a destining of revealing in the guise of a *challenging forth* (*Herausfordern*) that reduces all that is to instrumental usefulness. Can we *dwell* in an epoch of *Ge-stell*?

Heidegger contends that, in *every* epoch, the *Geschick* of being poses a danger, but its particular manifestation as *Ge-stell* poses a *supreme* danger in two senses: the loss of humankind's own essence and the possible elimination of humankind *ever again*

entering into destining as revealing in a mode of *Hervorbringen*. Nevertheless, thinking with the poets, Friedrich Hölderlin and Rainer Maria Rilke, Heidegger refutes any sense of fatalism in facing the supreme danger of *Ge-stell*. He contends that poetry, inclusive of art, can herald the *saving power* which lies near—and possibly within—this supreme danger, as attested by Hölderlin:

But where danger is, grows
The saving power also.²⁰³

Despite *Ge-stell*'s characterization as challenging-forth, Heidegger contends that *Ge-stell* "has its origin as a destining in *bringing-forth*" (*QCT*, 29-30; emphasis added). Simply as a destining of revealing, *Ge-stell* comes to pass as a *granting* and consequently, he says, *is as such the saving power* (32; original emphasis). By thinking *Ge-stell* as the destining of revealing Being in our epoch, Heidegger has established that Hölderlin's dictum holds in the case of the supreme danger of the essence of modern technology. Otherwise said, the inherent riskiness in *Geschick*—understood as the destining of revealing Being in any epoch—is itself the door to the saving power to preserve and protect humankind in its essential nature as it confronts *Ge-stell*.

In "Why Poets?," Heidegger examines the relation between riskiness and the saving power primarily by pondering Rilke's remarkable claim that our defenselessness in the face of risk is that which saves us. In his unpublished poem, Rilke speaks of risk in three senses, which Heidegger interprets of thinking the question of Being. First, Nature—life itself (i.e., Being itself, for Heidegger)—risks us (*OBT*, 208-9). Second, we

203. This is the translated version that appears in the *QCT* essay (*QCT*, 28). A slightly different translation appears in "Why Poets?" "But where the danger lies, there also grows/that which saves" (*OBT*, 222). See Sections 4.1 and 4.2, respectively.

go with the risk, Rilke says. On Heidegger's reading, we go with it—not by going passively *along* with it—but rather by willfully objectifying and re-presenting the world to ourselves in order to attempt to manage and control this risk (215). Third, by sometimes risking even more than “life itself does,” a *safebeing* is fashioned, “outside of all defense” (207, 223). It is the *poets*, Heidegger says, who risk more. It is their song that “turns our defenselessness into the open” (239). Again, it is the riskiness of it all that not only opens the path to the saving power but, in a fundamental sense, constitutes the saving power itself.

Let us return to Heidegger's question at the close of the Address that follows the 13 lectures in *The Principle of Reason*: “. . . what will become of the earth and of human existence on this earth” (*POR*, 129). This is the question of destiny as it is ordinarily expressed. What do Heidegger's explications in this chapter have to say in response? In the preceding paragraphs, Heidegger tells us that the outcome to this question depends upon locating a path to *noncalculative* thinking. In turn, locating such a path hinges on rejecting the determination of the essence of human beings as the *animal rationale*—i.e., the reckoning, calculating creature. The question of humankind and the question of thinking are inseparable. Heidegger regards finding a path upon which the thinking of the essence of being is regarded as worthy of thought as “the world-question of thinking.” Moreover, he says, “Answering this question decides what will become of the earth and of human existence on the earth” (*ibid.*).

A few years after delivering his lectures that comprise *The Principle of Reason*, Heidegger stated that *meditative thinking* is humankind's essential nature.²⁰⁴ So it seems likely that the sought-after path would accommodate such thinking. However, I do not hear Heidegger asserting that such a path is *exclusively constituted* by thinking of any kind. Rather, as he says, he seeks a path *upon which* thinking can think the essence of being. Thus, the path is not necessarily exhausted by thinking. Indeed, for Heidegger, the *Saying* of the essence of Being is a *shared responsibility* of both thinking and poetry.²⁰⁵

To sum up, we have come “full circle,” so to speak, in thinking the dwelling-destiny relation out of the thinking-poetry relation. Thinking and poetry each belong together with dwelling, and they belong together in their own right in the neighborhood occasioned by the nearness of their shared responsibility of Saying Being, each in a distinctive way. As I see it, thinking and poetry, in their belonging together, are upon the path that Heidegger envisions to respond to his world-question of thinking. In that sense, then, that which makes dwelling possible—thinking and poetry together—does determine our destiny.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter defends the claim that *dwelling is destiny*—established by the *belonging together* of thinking and poetry. “Dwelling” (*ethos*) is the originary meaning of “ethics” for Heidegger. “Dwelling” means the peaceful abiding on earth in the mode of “letting be” (*Gelassenheit*). Building, thinking, and poetry are essential for dwelling.

204. See “Memorial Address,” in *DOT*, 56. Also see my discussion in Section 4.4 above.

205. See “On the Nature of Language” in *OWL*, 82 and 89-90 as discussed in Section 5.1 above.

Here, *thinking* is the pondering, of dwelling (*ethics*), and *poetry* is the taking of the measure of the dimension between earth and sky. Such measure-taking, Heidegger says, has always been the means by which man has measured himself or herself. Thinking and poetry also belong together in their own right in “Saying” Being—i.e., giving Being by means of the gift of the word, each in its own distinctive way. On Heidegger’s view, *destiny* is thought as the *sending of Being* (*Geschick*) rather than as some sort of fateful outcome. Yet mankind is not a passive recipient of such sending, but instead is “engaged in building on and giving shape to the clearing and lighting of being” (*POR*, 85).

The overarching context for this analysis is *nihilism*, variously interpreted as the loss of the supersensory as well as the end, or completion, of metaphysics—which itself is taken to be the history of Western thought. The loss of the supersensory, epitomized in Nietzsche’s word, “God is dead,” speaks not only to the widespread and growing loss of belief in the Christian God (or any god), but also the loss of meaning in ideas themselves and belief in their power to inspire and transform. In response to this void, thinking in *values* has come to the fore. Whether linked to “the will to power” in Nietzsche’s thought or to Ian Barbour’s functional conceptualization, values now take the measure of all that is. On Heidegger’s view, however, such talk of values arises from reductively thinking Being as the Being of beings and ruptures the inherent belonging together of the Ought and Being itself. (By purporting to take the measure of all that is, values themselves cannot *be* and thus are irreparably separated from the Being of beings.)

The question of *destiny* is inseparable from the questions of the essence of humankind and the essence of thinking. It can be heard in Heidegger’s formulation of

Nietzsche's question: "Is man in his metaphysical nature prepared to assume dominion over the earth?" Heidegger and Nietzsche each thinks the question with regard to the *animal rationale*—the customary and still dominant formulation of the essence of humankind as the reckoning, calculating creature. Nietzsche responds by positing the *overman* as successor to the *last man*. Heidegger thinks the question by positing *meditative, mindful thinking* in contrast to *calculative thinking*.

With regard to the RST relation, these questions come to mind: First, thinking and poetry belong to the same neighborhood, Heidegger says, drawn there by the nearness of their shared responsibility to Say Being as Being. *Despite their inherent divergences, is there a "neighborhood" in which religion, science, and theology belong together, in some sense? What might serve as a "catalyst," so to speak?*

Second, poetry, Heidegger says, takes the measure of the dimension between earth and sky. *If formulated as reflection on religious experience and belief, does theology take the measure of earth and sky, in its own way? Or does theology, so construed, remain "earthbound," so to speak?*

Third, in light of the growing "footprint" of humankind on the earth, *is there "room" on the path upon which noncalculative thinking can think and say Being for calculative thinking as well?*

Epilogue: The Question of Being and the RST Relation

Three primary questions initially motivated this inquiry: First, in general, how are the interrelations (if any) among religion, science, and theology to be understood? Second, in particular, is there an important sense in which religion and science (alternatively, theology and science) can be said to be in “dialogue”? And third, is there a meaningful place for theology in the “public square” that is still dominated by the view that science serves as the “gold standard” for rationality and truth?²⁰⁶

I have attempted to think the RST relation in light of these motivating questions out of Heidegger’s engagement with the question of Being, in its many guises. In so doing, cross-cutting threads of comportment to things, reflection, thinking, and destiny have emerged. Each thread presences in two different modes: objectifying vs. nonobjectifying (Section 2.4); Reflexion vs. Besinnung (Section 3.4); calculative thinking vs. meditative, mindful thinking (Section 4.4); and fate vs. the sending of Being (Geschick) (Section 5.4). Roughly speaking, the first elements in the first three pairs collectively characterize modern science, whereas the second elements collectively characterize religion (specifically, Christian religious life) (Sections 2.1-2.3).

However, I contend that no similar assessments can be made for *theology*—at least in its common formulation as reflection on religious experience and belief. Indeed, the binaries in comportment, reflection, and thinking serve to *interrogate* theology as to

206. As I briefly argued in Chapter 1, these questions fundamentally motivated the establishment and early development of the academic field of RST studies.

its essential nature. Thinking, with Heidegger, (Christian) theology is totally nonobjectifying, but in what specific manner—like the blooming rose, poetry, or . . . ? (Section 2.4). Is the essence of theology expressed in reflection as representational, conceptual, calculative thought (*Reflexion*), or as mindful, meditative thinking (*Besinnung*)—or both? (Sections 3.4 and 4.4). And does theology have anything of significance to say with regard to the future of the earth and life upon the earth? (Section 5.4). As I see it, theology is the undetermined—or perhaps better, the underdetermined—member of the RST triad.

Before commenting further on the “question of theology,” I propose expanding the context for thinking the RST relation beyond that given earlier in Section 1.2 and the ensuing inquiry in Chapters 2-5. In my view, the context for thinking the RST relation today must also include the growing ecological footprint of humankind on the earth, including its climate-altering consequences (Section 5.4).

In addition, I regard as essential three compelling “world-questions” posed by Heidegger in these chapters: First, what will become of the earth and of human existence on the earth? (*POR*, 129; see Section 5.4). As I have suggested earlier, this question starkly expresses the question of destiny in its ordinary meaning. Clearly, however, it is unanswerable as formulated. What Heidegger *does* say is that the unfolding of the unknowable future depends upon answering a second question, expressed in two equivalent ways. Is there a path upon which noncalculative thought can think Being? (*ibid.*) In other words, is the essential nature of humankind that of the *animal rationale* or _____? (*ibid.*). Nietzsche filled in the blank with *overman*; Heidegger fills

it with man as *mindful, meditative thinker*. The third question, Nietzsche's question as formulated by Heidegger, expresses all of this integrally: "Is man in his metaphysical nature prepared to assume dominion over the earth?" (*WCT*, 65; see Section 5.3). I suggest that the current and projected status of global ecology and these three world-questions can serve to measure the significance of *any* attempt to think the RST relation in the "Anthropocene Age" in which some scientists say we now live (Section 5.4).

As hinted in my questions for theology in Chapters 2-5, I contend that theology must incorporate or otherwise accommodate, in some sense, *both* modes of comportment to things, *both* modes of reflection, and *both* modes of thinking—including poeticizing—in order to think and speak with significance about these compelling matters in the public square, as well as in the academy, and in religious communities today. Such a "multi-modal" formulation of theology can serve to mediate, or bridge, the singular modalities that characterize religion and science. What is called for, in my view, are theologies that can foster a *thinking-thanking-poeticizing* (*Denken-Danken-Dichten*) mode of inter-relationality among religion, science, and theology. To develop these claims further, let us return to the initial motivating questions.

I begin with the last question: Does theology have a legitimate place in the public square? From the readings selected for this inquiry, Heidegger consistently affirmed such a place for theology, but not without some conditions (Sections 2.3, 2.4, 3.3, and 5.3).

Briefly stated, the conditions are that theology think and speak in its own way,

independent from science and philosophy.²⁰⁷ Heidegger states this unequivocally in his letter to the Second Consultation on Hermeneutics at Drew University in 1964 (Section 2.4). Namely, theology's major task is

not to borrow *the categories of its thinking and the form of its speech from philosophy or the sciences*, but to think and speak out of faith for faith with fidelity to its subject matter. If this faith by the power of its own conviction concerns the human being as human being in his very nature, then genuine theological thinking and speaking have no need of any special preparation in order to reach people and find a hearing among them. (*P*, 55; emphasis added)

Roughly speaking, then, if theology has something to think and say that touches the core of what it means to be human in today's global context, then by all means it should do such thinking and saying—and do it faithfully without any help from philosophy or the sciences. Given, then, that theology has a legitimate “right” to be in the public square, does it have a *responsibility* to be there? Heidegger's PAT lecture supports such a view. Therein he emphasizes that religion without theology would be mute; theological concepts are necessary, Heidegger says, to grasp the “inconceivability” of faith (*P*, 50).

Thinking with Heidegger, I therefore suggest that a fundamental task of theology is to assist faith-based religion in bringing its voice to the RST relation in the face of the challenges of the Anthropocene Age. That is, out of their *reciprocal relation*,²⁰⁸ theology can enable their joint participation with science in the academy, the public square, and in

207. In his 1927/28 lecture, “Phenomenology and Theology,” Heidegger did claim that theology should demand of philosophy assistance in clarifying the ontological concepts that undergird theological concepts (*P*, 53). However, as I have shown in Section 2.4, later works do not mention any such role for philosophy.

208. “Theology . . . not only . . . makes faith and that which is believed its object, but . . . itself arises out of faith” (*P*, 46). See Section 2.3 above.

scientific and religious communities to fashion effective responses in the mode of bringing forth (*Hervorbringen*) and letting be (*Gelassenheit*).

Second, is there an important sense in which religion, science, and theology can be said to be in “dialogue”? Taking “dialogue” at first in its ordinary meaning, we are asking whether some important interconnections or “common ground” exists among them. Do they “belong together” in some sense? Heidegger examines the belonging together of thinking and poetry in terms of *nearness* and *neighborhood*. He holds that they belong to one neighborhood that is occasioned by the *nearness of Saying*. Each “Says” Being in its own way; Being is given by the gift of the Word.²⁰⁹

What is it that might occasion a “neighborhood” for religion, science, and theology? I suggest that the unprecedented perils—and opportunities—in the unfolding of the Anthropocene Age and Heidegger’s three world-questions may qualify. Thinking ontically, the most thought-provoking thing today, in my view, is that we have barely begun to acknowledge—let alone respond to—the unsustainable, climate-altering patterns of resource use and waste generation that threaten all life on earth. Thinking ontologically, that which threatens the extinction of Dasein threatens the elimination of the clearing for the disclosure of Being. Simply put, the survival of Dasein is essential for the *truth* of Being. I am suggesting that the unprecedented power of humankind to alter decisively the conditions necessary for life on this planet places this facticity at the “border,” so to speak, between the ontical and the ontological.

209. See “On the Nature of Language” in *OWL* (82, 89-90). Also see Section 5.1.

For thinking and poetry, the Same that is the nearness that occasions their neighborhood of belonging together lies in the commonality of that which they *do*—i.e., giving Being as the gift of the word. For religion, science, and theology, could it be a common *commitment to gazing steadfastly and truthfully* into the abyss brought into view by the emergence of the Anthropocene Age and the three world-questions of Heidegger and Nietzsche? I am suggesting that the Same for the RST relation is not common *activity* but, first of all, *commonality* that springs from steadfast, truth-filled gazing at the abyss together, yet each element doing so in its own way.

Of course, there already is much *staring at*—and some *looking into*—the abyss, but *reaching into* it is another matter. Studies and reports come to the public’s attention regularly, pointing to the ecological “cliff” we face in a matter of decades, if not sooner. Although many individual, local, regional, and national actions are underway, the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continues to rise and glaciers and ice caps continue to melt. Focused, effective action on a worldwide scale is not yet on the horizon. Thinking with Rilke and Heidegger, the essential nature of science and technology leads to *going with* this risk by objectifying it in calculable terms as a basis for fashioning defenses to ward off these dangers. Poets, in contrast, are those who *risk more* by reaching into the abyss to fashion a safebeing, *outside* of all defenses. In so doing, they take the measure of the dimension between earth and sky—and thereby the measure of humankind; they sing of the wholeness within unwholeness, of a *saving power*—precisely where the extreme danger lies. *Can theology, in its own way, reach into the abyss—or otherwise facilitate such reaching by religion, say—and join poetry in*

these tasks? And what about science? On Heidegger's view, science does not—and cannot—reach into the abyss, as it objectifies the abyss initially as something threatening that stands over against us and subsequently as something representable to us and amenable to conceptual, calculable analysis and technical management.

I suggest, however, that the RST relation *itself*, so to speak, can—and *must*—reach into the abyss. The individual elements cannot do so by themselves; however, I contend that such reaching *together* is possible and necessary. With respect to the first motivating question concerning the interrelations among the elements of the RST relation, the matter at issue is whether a mode of inter-relationality can be fashioned, out of which a collegial reaching into the abyss might be possible. Simply put, we need the very best science possible to understand and describe in *ontic* terms the intertwined dynamics of human activity and the biosphere at local, relational, national, and global levels and projected consequences. Such analyses can provide a basis for an initial set of possible options for effective response. At the same time, in *ontological* terms, we need to inculcate and nurture the spirit of *Gelassenheit*—noncoercive “letting be” that fosters contentment with “enough,” so that all others may have enough. Heidegger locates the spirit of *Gelassenheit* in mindful, meditative, remembering (*besinnlich, nachdenkend, gedenkend*) thinking. This spirit is also nurtured in each of the world's great religions as the thread of the movement from egocentrism to concern for the well-being of the other. Thinking mindfully and meditatively in the spirit of *Gelassenheit*, modifications and additions to these initial options for responsible action may emerge. Here, the content-,

relational-, and enactment-senses of the phenomenon of *Gelassenheit* in the Anthropocene Age are all in play.

An example of reaching into the abyss from out of the RST relation is thoughtfully articulated in *For the Common Good*, co-authored by ecological economist Herman Daly and theologian John B. Cobb, Jr.²¹⁰ They provide an extensive, rigorous critique of unfettered neoclassical economics and its subordination of the environment to economic processes and its axiomatic basis in individual self-interest. Instead, they call for constraining the size of the economy within the sustainable limits of the environment at local, regional, national, and global levels. Furthermore, they insist upon regarding individuals primarily as *persons-in-community*: “We believe human beings are fundamentally social and that economics should be refounded on the recognition of that reality” (Daly and Cobb, 164). While they acknowledge the great strength of market-driven economic systems to bring supply and demand into equilibrium without central planning, they hold that such activity should be subordinate to maintaining the ecological integrity of the planet and fostering the well-being of all persons.²¹¹

Daly and Cobb anchor their vision of biocentrism and the ultimate worth of human beings living in community out of an explicit religious vision, which they call *theocentrism* (ibid., Chapter 20). I pass over the details of theocentrism to cite a passage

210. Herman E. Daly and John B. Cobb, Jr., *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon, 1994).

211. In a move consonant with Heidegger’s recovery of originary meanings of familiar words, Daly and Cobb ground the primacy of the environment over economic activity by drawing upon Aristotle’s distinction between *chrematistics* and *oikonomia* (Daly and Cobb, *Common Good*, Chapter 7). The former focuses on short-term gains in exchange value for individuals, while the latter is the “economy of the household” and is centered upon fostering the long-term well-being of all those in the household (ibid., 138).

that arguably exemplifies the clear-eyed, yet hope-filled, character of their formulation of the RST relation as *Denken-Danken-Dichten*:

Yet there is hope. On a hotter planet, with lost deltas and shrunken coastlines, under a more dangerous sun, with less arable land, more people, fewer species of living things, a legacy of poisonous wastes, and much beauty irrevocably lost, there will still be the possibility that our children's children will learn at last to live as a community among communities. Perhaps they will learn also to forgive this generation its blind commitment to ever greater consumption. Perhaps they will even appreciate its belated efforts to leave them a planet still capable of supporting life in community. (ibid., 406)

In my view, requiring “the very best science” in order to understand the interplay between human activity and the biosphere that is decisively shaping our future necessitates placing *ecological economics* as a primary and multi-faceted science in the RST discourse. Michael Welker cites works by Ted Peters, Robert Russell, and others as evidence that physics and biology have been the primary dialogue partners for theology since the inception of the RST academic field in the 1960s.²¹² Given the urgency of addressing unsustainable, climate-altering patterns of resource consumption and waste generation, I strongly suggest that it is time to grant comparable status to the emerging “trans-discipline” of ecological economics as a crucial discourse partner for religion and theology.²¹³

212. Welker briefly describes a succession of three “phases” in thinking the science-theology relation: a methodological phase, a physics phase, and an emerging biology phase (Welker, “Science and Theology,” 553).

213. Other theologians who have written insightfully about the interrelationships among religion, economics, and the environment include Larry L. Rasmussen, *Earth Community Earth Ethics* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996) and Rosemary Radford Reuther, *Integrating Ecofeminism, Globalization, and World Religions* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005). For a treatment of the science of ecological economics itself, see, for example, Herman E. Daly and Joshua Farley, *Ecological Economics: Principles and Applications* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2004). They write: “. . . ecological economics is not a

Let us return one more time to the formulation of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief. Expressed in this way, can theology possibly make the contribution of bridging the singular modalities of religion and science sketched above that seems called for? I suggest that Heidegger's examination of different modes of the comportment to things, reflection, thinking, and destiny uncover latent meanings in this formula that can provide a path for genuine RST dialogue. Such a path entails a common commitment to desire-free gazing at the abyss, followed by reaching into it together in fruitful dialogue and mindful response.

Consider the first half of the formula, "reflection on religious *experience*." On Heidegger's view, the meaning, or sense, of religious experience, taken as the phenomenon of religious life, unfolds in three "directions"—content-sense (the apostolic proclamation), relational-sense (having become, grounded in faith), and enactment-sense (comportment to everyday life) (Section 2.1, 2.3). His multi-faceted, phenomenological explication of the essence of religion (as factual life experience, oriented by faith) guards against forms of theological reflection that seek to objectify the essence of religion and therefore reduce it (as a science would) to its *content*-sense, that is, its "whatness."²¹⁴

As for the second half of the theological formulation, "reflection on . . . religious *belief*," Heidegger compactly links theology, faith, and belief in the PAT lecture: "Theology is the science of that which is disclosed in faith, of that which is believed" (*P*,

discipline, nor does it aspire to become one. For lack of a better term, we call it a 'trans-discipline.' . . . Real problems do not respect academic boundaries" (Daly and Farley, *Ecological Economics*, xvii).

214. Recall Heidegger's critique of Troeltsch's objectification of religion: "Religion is for him an external object and can as such be integrated into different material complexes (as appropriate to different philosophical 'systems')" (*PRL*, 20). See Section 2.1.

45). That is, the content-sense of the phenomenon of believing is “not some coherent order of propositions about facts or occurrences which we simply agree to” (ibid.), but rather, is “Christ, the Crucified God” (44). The knowledge or understanding that faith has of itself is found in *believing*. On Heidegger’s view, then, *faith* is the undisclosed bridge that links the two halves of the customary formulation of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief.

The chief matter at issue for both halves of this formulation of theology, however, is the *manner*, or mode, in which such reflection is carried out—i.e., within the orbit of representational, conceptual thought or mindful, meditative thought. Of equal importance is the mode, or manner, of theology’s comportment toward things (objectifying or not) and its thinking (calculating or mindfully meditative). I suggested at the beginning of this Epilogue that, roughly speaking, *religion* is characterized by nonobjectifying comportment to things, meditative thinking, and mindful reflection, while *science* is characterized by the complementary cluster of objectifying comportment, calculative thought, and reflexive (egocentric) reflection. In part, my inquiry has delineated these two clusters as a compact expression of Heidegger’s claim that religion and science are two fundamental—and fundamentally different—ways of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world.

I suggest, then, that what is called for in this emergent Anthropocene Age are forms of theology that can bridge, or “traverse,” *both* of these modes of Being-in-the-world. Forms of theology are needed to nurture and bring to intelligible public expression the ethic of love of neighbor, near and far, and the sacredness, or enchantment, of this earth as our *ethos* (dwelling-place). On the one hand, such theological forms should

engage science in academic dialogue regarding “boundary sensitivities and . . . conceptual limits,” as Michael Welcker calls for (Welker, “Science and Theology,” 558). On the other hand, theological forms are needed to help overcome the “muteness” of religion in the public square *and the “deafness” of science to the relational- and enactment-senses of whatever phenomena are at issue in the public square*. Such descriptions of theological engagements seem consistent with those expressed by Philip Hefner (and others) that the arenas for RST dialogue today must include the public square as well as the academy and religious and scientific communities. (See Sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.)

Let me say a bit more about “traversing.” I think that, for such theological “shuttling” between religion and science as modes of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world to be fruitful, it must grow out of the common *gazing* before the abyss. By “gazing,” I intend to connote Heidegger’s recovery of the root meaning of *weil* (typically taken to mean “because” in the sense of reason-seeking and giving) as *weilen* (in the earlier sense of tarrying, remaining still, keeping to oneself). He writes: “The while [das Weilen] . . . names the simple, plain presence that is without why—the presence upon which everything depends . . .”—that is, ground (*POR*, 127).²¹⁵ In sum, “gazing” means “being present.” I hear in these words the tonalities of *Gelassenheit* and *Hervorbringen*: being present together—religion, science, theology—in *releasement to the bringing-forth of the abyss*. Speaking figuratively (as I have been doing for some time), theology must “while” awhile with religion and science before that which is—the abyss of the emerging

215. See also Section 3.3 above.

Anthropocene Age and the world-questions of Heidegger and Nietzsche—and wait (not await) for that which must be done to come forth.

Let us imaginatively return once more to the common gazing upon the abyss by religion, science, and theology. Recall that, on Heidegger’s view, the comportment to things—whether objectifying or non-objectifying—derives from Dasein’s distinctive modes of Being-in-the-world. Recall the “double-seeing” of the rose as, on the one hand, *outside* the why (“it blooms because it blooms”) yet *within* the why, when it becomes an object for our analysis and knowledge.²¹⁶ He also declares that the research scientist can “see double”:

Even if the sciences, precisely in following their way and using their means, can never press forward to the essence of science, still every researcher and teacher of the sciences, every man pursuing a way through a science, can move, as a thinking being, on various levels of reflection [*Besinnung*] and can keep reflection vigilant.²¹⁷

That is, the science researcher and teacher “can move . . . on various levels of reflection” by thinking *mindfully* as well as *calculatively* when doing science.

This example suggests that perhaps it is time to move from thinking the RST relation in terms of *nouns*—religion, science, theology—to *persons* engaged in, or with, them. Thinking with Heidegger, let us consider modes of Dasein in which “theologizing,” “religionizing,” and “scientizing” are taking place. As we have seen in *Being and Time* and elsewhere, these activities reflect modes of Dasein’s Being-in-the-world. And as I have argued (Section 2.2), these modes of Dasein, in a sense, “co-determine” Dasein’s

216. See *The Principle of Reason*, 35-37, and the discussion above in Section 3.3.

217. Heidegger, “Science and Reflection,” in *QCT*, 181-82. Quoted earlier in Section 3.4 above.

comportment to the entities in Dasein's environment. The ready-to-hand becomes present-at-hand when Dasein's mode shifts from that of everyday Dasein to the mode of science, for example.

Could this shifting, or traversing, of Dasein's modes of Being-in-the-world—and the consequent comportment of Dasein to things in Dasein's environment (objectifying or non-objectifying)—suggest imagining the “dialogue” *within each Dasein and among the many Dasein*, steadfastly gazing truthfully into the abyss? As I see it, this takes the possibility of “dialogue” beyond that of, say, theologian and scientist (as envisioned by, for example, Michael Welker) to that *within* each Dasein himself/herself. And is not that already prefigured, in a way, by Heidegger's example of the science researcher and teacher quoted above?

I conclude this Epilogue by summarizing how this dissertation as a whole supports my thesis statement on page 2 of this inquiry. First, I have engaged the work of Ian Barbour and J. Wentzel van Huyssteen sufficiently to support my claim that “contemporary explications of the religion-science and science-theology relations are conducted in the mode of *metaphysical* (i.e., representational, reason-seeking and -giving) thinking.” Second, in the course of examining several of Heidegger's works that are germane to matters of continuing importance in the RST discourse (as expressed in the chapter titles), I have illuminated *non-metaphysical* modes of thinking that complement metaphysical perspectives which presently dominate this discourse. And third, I have imaginatively sketched from these resources a mode of interrelationality among religion, science, and theology (i.e., Denken-Danken-Dichten) that incorporates

both metaphysical and non-metaphysical thinking. In so doing, I have offered an interpretation of Dialogue (exemplified by Cobb and Daly's *For the Common Good*) that I believe is pertinent to the unfolding challenges of the Anthropocene Age and the three "world questions" posed by Heidegger and Nietzsche. I have attempted to think the *essence* of the RST relation, in the sense of positing that these challenges and questions now serve as minimal criteria for *any* significant formulation of the RST relation in this epoch.

Finally, this inquiry has called into question the essential nature of theology itself. Whereas I have argued that religion and science bifurcate rather cleanly along nonmetaphysical vs. metaphysical lines, I see no such inherent clarity for theology. Rather, the dualities in comportment to things, reflection, and thinking that come to light in Heidegger's works serve to *interrogate* the customary formulation of theology as reflection on religious experience and belief. As I see it, the possibility of genuine Dialogue in this current Age hinges on whether or not theology can—and will—traverse nonobjectifying as well as objectifying comportment to things, mindful as well as Cartesian reflection, and meditative as well as calculative thinking in its interrelations with religion and science. By incorporating *both* modes of comportment to things, reflection, and thinking, theology can legitimately claim its rightful place in the public square, as well as in academia and religious communities. And if we accept Heidegger's claim that religion, science, and theology are different modes of Being-in-the-world for us (as Dasein), then these tasks are not only for professional theologians but for each of us as well.

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Appendix: Schema of the Dissertation

Thinking, with Heidegger, the Religion-Science-Theology Relation

Chapter 1: Introduction

Motivating Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the interrelations among religion, science, and theology to be understood? • Is a relation of “dialogue,” in some sense, possible among these three elements? • Does theology have a rightful place in the public square dominated by the view that science serves as the “gold standard” for rationality and truth?
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Why RST? <u>Religion-Science</u> (Hefner, Barbour) vs. <u>Theology-Science</u> (Welker) → <u>RST</u> ✓ Proffered “bridge”: theology as reflection on religious experience and belief ✓ Significance of thinking RST relation: Whitehead (1926), Barbour (1966), Zygon (1966)
Reformulated MQs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With regard to the RST relation (Gefragte), what is its essential nature (Erfragte)? ○ Does thinking its essence matter in any urgent, compelling way? If so, how?

Chapters 2-5: Threads

Q of Being (formulations)	Sense of Being	Truth of Being		Place of Being
Chapter Titles (Befragten)	2. Phenomenology & the RST Relation	3. Truth & the RST Relation	4. Technology & the RST Relation	5. Ethics & the RST Relation
Thread #1	Role of philosophy? Is theology a science?	Truth in religion, science, theology?	Status of technology wrt RST relation?	Significance of RST wrt dwelling (<i>ethos</i>)?
Science	Content-sense (“whatness”)			
Religion (i.e., religious life)	Content-, relational- (how) & enactment- (how) senses			
Theology	undetermined			
Threads #2-#5	Comportment to things (2 forms: ↓)	Reflection (2 forms: ↓)	Thinking (2 forms: ↓)	Destiny (2 forms: ↓)
Science	objectifying (<i>Gegenstand, Objekt</i>)	<i>Reflexion</i>	calculative	fate vs. <i>Geschick</i> (i.e., sending of Being)
Religion	non-objectifying	<i>Besinnung</i> (mindfulness)	meditative	
Theology	undetermined			
Q of Being	The Question of Man, Mankind (<i>der Mensch</i>)			

Epilogue: The Question of Being and (Rethinking)the RST Relation

Expanded Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergence of the <i>Anthropocene Age</i> (Crutzen); ecological footprint (Wackernagel, Rees) ▪ Heidegger’s world-questions: What will become of the earth and its inhabitants? Is there a path of noncalculating thought? Is man, in his metaphysical nature, ready to assume dominion over the earth? (Nietzsche)
Theology	Called to traverse (cut across) both forms of comportment, reflection, and thinking, thereby revitalizing its customary formulation (see “proffered ‘bridge’” above)
Rethinking the RST Relation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What is called for? A <i>thinking-thanking-poeticizing</i> mode of interrelationality, arising from the commonality of steadfast <i>gazing</i> (being present) before the abyss of the emergent Anthropocene Age. ➤ Bring the “trans-discipline” of <i>ecological economics</i> to the fore in thinking the RST relation.