

Research Brief

Thinking Differently: Letting things be Towards Caring for the Fourfold and Shepherd of Being

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Abstract

One of the central themes in the writings of Martin Heidegger is his investigation of the problem brought about by technological thinking (calculative thinking); this leads to a tragedy when it becomes the only form of thinking. He asserts that the modern age is the age of modern technology (the atomic age). However, underneath this technological advancement, there conceals a certain kind of danger—more than mere dangerous as Heidegger himself says, it is “danger as such.” He viewed the essence of technology as enframing (*Gestell*), this implies that everything in nature is treated as ‘standing reserve (*Bestand*)’. First, I demonstrate Heidegger as an environmental thinker by investigating his views on technology by going through his key concepts of *Gestell* and *Gelassenheit* (meditative thinking, letting things be) towards a new kind of environmental concern amid technological culture. Second, I demonstrate that tragedy arises because enframing as the dominant mode of revealing grants representational calculative thinking. This kind of thinking as the only truth results in one-dimensional rationality that displaces all other modes of revealing, thus, to think differently is necessary. Finally, I affirm the necessity of holding a steadfast relationship between the ‘fourfold’ and the significance of retrieving our role as ‘shepherds of Being’ to restrain humanity’s relentless drive for objectification and manipulation.

Keywords: Martin Heidegger, Gestell, Gelassenheit, letting things be, fourfold, shepherd of Being

INTRODUCTION

Martin Heidegger's critique of technology illustrates how the revealing of modern technology encourages humans to an exploitative and manipulative power over nature. Heidegger's discussions and views on the condition of technology with his very much-debated article, *The Question Concerning Technology* (1977b) were variously articulated. Heidegger's analysis of technology is not only a mere investigation of a technological method. His analysis deals mainly with the technological mode of being. Heidegger focuses on the question "What is the essence of technology?" Heidegger questions technology in the collection of essays called *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (1977b) as he introduces the retrieval and definition of the ancient Greek concept of *technê* and moves on to the discussion of modern technology and emphasizes the contrast between them. While in the *Discourse on Thinking* (1966a), a small book which primarily consists of a memorial address in commemoration of the German composer Conradin Kreutzer, Heidegger presents *Gelassenheit*, understood as meditative thinking as the solution over humanity's ability to cope with the challenges of the modern technological period. Heidegger's first essay *Memorial Address* (1966b) and a short work called "*Conversation On A Country Path About Thinking* (1966c) both explain his later philosophy and shows his worry about humanity's neglect and abandonment of the ability to think meditatively (*Gelassenheit*), as he contrasted it with representational thinking which presents a significant understanding into how he felt man could overcome the danger of the modern age. According to Heidegger, this problem in its less obvious form is thoughtlessness. "The growing thoughtlessness must, therefore, spring from some process that gnaws at the very marrow of man today: man today is in flight from thinking" (Heidegger, 1966a, p. 45). Heidegger stresses the necessity of holding a steadfast relationship between the 'fourfold' and the significance of retrieving our role as 'shepherds of Being' to restrain humanity's relentless drive for objectification and manipulation.

It is undeniable that human life is inconceivable without the presence of technology, since both the extent concerning nature and the way we participate in the world are bounded within technology. When Heidegger speaks of technology, he means far beyond machines and when Heidegger explains the essence of technology, he suggests a specific way of revealing it. For Heidegger, the term technology involves a particular understanding of the Beings, of human beings, and nature in general. This understanding of how beings exist allows natural science its dominating way of encountering the world. Modern technology is not simply the application of natural science for even the essence of technology does not originate from the rise of mechanization. The term technology is a fundamental issue in all of Heidegger's work, thus his writings on modernity came to focus explicitly on the problem of technology as seen in his two essays *The Question Concerning Technology* (1977b) and *The Turning* (1977c).

Modern technology reveals the world in the manner of a challenging-forth, it directs towards an endless pursuit of efficiency and productivity, and worst, it exploits beings, things, and nature as a whole. This issue is critical, because modern technology, as can be seen, has 'enframed' and broadly altered human action in such a way that it threatens the survival of both the human and non-human worlds. Thus, it is necessary to

shift to a different kind of thinking, which is through *Gelassenheit* which brings forth the light on the way human actions have been fundamentally transformed by modern technology. In the end, one needs to be critical and be open to a better engagement with modern technology, not merely by using technology, but also by way of questioning concerning its essence, that one may access the truth, the dangers, and saving power about technology. According to Heidegger, our ability to ethically challenge the world around us rests on our ability to reinstate the essential relation to Being that characterizes and influences our existence. This kind of relation discloses a path that lets the world become meaningful for human existence which brings us into proper relation to beings and the rest of nature. Heidegger describes this state in his later work as poetic dwelling which requires that human beings come to understand the essential relation to Being that defines them as the “shepherds of being,” rather than the lords and masters of all they encounter (Heidegger, 1993a, p. 304).

According to the 2011 *Tropical Forestry and Biodiversity Analysis* commissioned by USAID, the destruction of biodiversity and natural resources remains a core environmental problem in the Philippines. Our country is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world but biodiversity contained in the natural forest areas is perishing at an alarming rate. One of the emerging environmental threats to the Philippines' biodiversity is climate change, mostly from human activities. The scopes of the enframing problems of modern technology and its impact in the Philippines include deforestation, forest degradation, illegal fishing, and illicit wildlife trade. Enframing manifests in the mechanization and digitalization of the various aspects of our lives—it can be seen in the areas of agriculture, transportations, and communications, among many others. Some of the environmental hazards through pollution are uncontrolled emission of a large number of gases such as CO₂ in the air and improper disposal of waste into the water systems by factories and industries. These among others contributed to the rapid depletion and degradation of our country's biodiversity and natural resources. Many of the industrial activities require raw materials from natural resources. Most of these are nonrenewable resources such as coal, crude oil, natural gas, and uranium, and other substances such as minerals, forests, and lumber, water, and fishery resources, fertile land, and animals. Other human activities that exploit the environment are as follows; farming and agricultural activities such as deep plowing, overgrazing, burning of ashes, concentrated deforestation, and usage of toxic and poisonous chemicals to enhance fertility.

There is a need for an integrated approach from our local stakeholders, who have the greatest stake in protecting the environment and natural resources. Thinking differently could facilitate our character as 'shepherds of Beings,' a change in behavior towards an effective approach in conservation, capacity building in biodiversity conservation, and preventing wildlife trafficking. Through reflective thinking, we can improve our decision-making in managing the evidence generated by science and technology and supporting environmental law enforcement. A more coherent and holistic solution to our most pressing environmental problems will require a mutual action involving almost all the countries and the people on Earth, though most nations are

unlikely to agree to such concerted action unless they are being treated fairly and ethically (Brown, 2001).

In this paper, I will explore Heidegger's key concepts on his interpretation of the essence of technology, *Gestell* (Enframing), *Gelassenheit* (letting things be), fourfold, and shepherd of Being. Heidegger's analysis of technology includes a lack of humanity's understanding of the essence of technology which controls us in a dangerous situation that may direct to calamity. My discussion shall proceed mainly by looking at Heidegger's distinction between *Gestell* and *Gelassenheit*. Heidegger's assertion towards thinking differently can be seen as a remedy to the crisis brought by enframing. By way of conclusion, I illustrate the significance of Heidegger's remedy to return to our role as shepherds of Being by reflecting on humanity's relationship between the fourfold and our response to Being, which calls us to be its shepherd.

2. Technological Thinking- *Gestell*

Heidegger identified thoughtlessness "as an uncanny visitor who comes and goes everywhere in today's world" (Heidegger, 1966b, p. 46). This thoughtlessness is considered by him as "calculative thinking, which resulted in the understanding of the world-oriented by the theoretical attitude which computes. This kind of thoughtlessness is due to modern-day man's 'flight from thinking.' Calculative thinking races from one prospect to the next. Calculative thinking never stops, never collects itself" (Heidegger, 1966b, pp. 46-47).

Heidegger has regarded 'calculative thinking' which characterizes our modern age as the basis of the theoretical attitude and mastery over nature. Heidegger distinguished "modern technology from the Ancient Greek concept of '*techne*' as a mode of knowing and *Gestell* (enframing) which talks about instrumental relation or the activity of manipulation" (Heidegger, 1970, p. 285). "We now name the challenging claim that gathers man to order the self-revealing as standing-reverse: *Ge-stell* (enframing)" (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 324). *Techne* implies a kind of creativity allowing nature to reveal itself— it is a bringing-forth, on the contrary, enframing is a challenging-forth, it exploits the natural world available for technical manipulation. In this regard, it prevents us from understanding our existence and our meaningful relation to beings within the world that surrounds us.

Modern technology is "revealing in the form of challenging" (Heidegger, 1977a, p. 14). This sense of challenging-forth of revealing operates in a form of setting upon, ordering, and of controlling nature as standing-reserve. This occurs when the energy concealed in nature is brought forth to be transformed and then stockpiled for further use. As a form of order, it challenges nature by extracting and storing, thus making nature so ordered to stand by to distribute the energy that human needs and demands. For Heidegger, standing-reserve may be regarded as anything that stands for further ordering. Nature is considered as storage that exists exclusively to supply energy being demanded and required by humanity; nature itself stands as a huge "gasoline station" (Heidegger 1966b, p. 50). This modern age is the age of modern technology and Heidegger called it the "atomic age" (Heidegger, 1996a, p. 29). To use Heidegger's term,

science and technology have now "enframed" the natural world by turning it into a mere object of experimental study subject to domination, consumption, and exploitation. Thus, the natural world has become a "standing reserve" always available for technical manipulation.

Since humans can and do participate in the many ways technology manifests, in his essay *The Question Concerning Technology* (1977b), Heidegger condemned the view of nature as a mere resource for human consumption. Modern technology is revealing, and this reveals that rules in modern technology are challenging. He gives his alarming call for us to shift our attempt from good or bad, peaceful or destructive technologies to the essence of technology itself. He wrote:

puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy which can be extracted and stored as such...Agriculture is now the mechanized food industry. Air is now set upon to yield nitrogen, the earth to yield ore, ore to yield uranium...to yield atomic energy, which can be unleashed either for destructive or for peaceful purposes. (Heidegger 1977b, pp. 14-15)

It is important to understand that stored energy here is understood as the purest form of standing reserve, from being stationary to something that can be controllable anytime. It patiently waits and is ready to be put to use towards its possibilities (e.g. the stockpile of coal next to a power plant). Heidegger's critique of modern technology is not just a discourse to any particular technology, rather he argues about the technological revealing that is rooted in the modern drive to dominate life- everything is taken as standing-reserve. He further maintains that this technological view displays the power of modern science as it rejects the essences and diminishes the meaning of everything to function. He acknowledges the legitimacy of modern science but challenges its forgetfulness of another order of truth- the truth of revealing.

3. Thinking Differently through *Gelassenheit*

To endorse Heidegger as an environmental thinker, this section deals more on Heidegger's response to the danger of modernity and by analyzing his notion of *Gelassenheit* as a way out from the calculative thinking that characterizes *Gestell*. Many Deep Ecologists were attracted to Heidegger's notion of *Gelassenheit*, having interpreted "letting things be" to end the exploitation of nature as raw material for economic gain. In *Being and Time* (1962), Heidegger talks about resoluteness; afterward, he highlighted on *Gelassenheit*, "a serene openness to a possible change in our understanding of being" (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 339). It is similar to resoluteness which is also an openness—a letting be, which allows a way towards the dwelling place to uncover Being. It is difficult to achieve because it requires standing outside "the reigning technological understanding of being into which everyone is socialized...." (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 339).

It should be noted that for Heidegger, the things and Beings that we encountered are not to be thought of as objects to be manipulated out there for examination. In his *Discourse on Thinking* (1966a) Heidegger explains, "calculative thinking is not meditative thinking, not thinking which contemplates the meaning which reigns in everything that is"

(Heidegger, 1966b, p. 46). Calculative thinking emerges when it seeks to order and sets up nature making it possible for further ordering as a resource. Thus, calculative thinking influences not only the way we understand the world but it also endangers our relations with it by reducing all the beings it encounters and resources available for technological exploitation. In today's technological period, we are forced to understand ourselves and the world solely from the perspective of the modern sciences contrary to Heidegger's views, which grants us to interpret nature as our appropriate place and to think differently. Calculative thinking is threatening to displace all other modes of revealing. Thinking in this way dominates all aspects of modern life and endangers transforming our understanding of ourselves and others into a mere exploitable matter. This technological rationality should be avoided, alternatively, one's thinking should aim to comprehend, to elicit, and awaken which engages to think further. This process permits us to grow to be thoughtful as it expands and deepens our awareness which involves a tremendous task of cautiousness and creativity and to not look for an easy answer which might maneuver us toward the rule of machination.

Heidegger's concept of *Gelassenheit* could be the basis of our meaningful understanding of ourselves in the context of our practical experience and, thus, permits us to encounter the nature around us completely. The shift from this kind of thinking shows the interconnection of human existence and the world around us and it also promotes the development of sincere environmental concern. Thus, when we appreciate Heidegger's description of *Gelassenheit* as "letting-be of beings" (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 125), it clears the way towards the principles of action and a realization that the natural environment is an essential place for our existence and can thereby arrive at a real environmental ethic. *Gelassenheit* could be attained through meditative involvement with the world we experience as an alternative to the theoretical attitude of modern science, and this kind of thinking could be a way out from enframing and calculative thinking that characterizes the modern age. An attitude of "letting things be" marks a new beginning that could promote an engagement with nature, allows us to dwell with the world around us, and meditate on what could be a way to recover from the dangers of enframing. Heidegger's notion of *Gelassenheit* as thinking differently from calculative thinking is an approach that could allow for a free relation to technology and openness to things as well.

In their reading of Heidegger's critique of technology, both Iain Thomson (2011) and Mark Wrathall (2019) agree on the importance of learning and convey Heidegger's call for learning to think differently, and they consider this as a response to our ecological condition. Thomson (2011) interprets Heidegger's ontotheology as fitting together with technology, as *Gestell*. For Heidegger, ontotheology means that everything is grounded on one thing, it can be God or some undefinable 'it', or any other form of being, which is discoverable, and thus can resolve problems. This thinking grants the forgetting of 'Being' (*Sein*) allowing everything to become 'beings' (*Seiende*). In today's technology, it means that everything or every being has now reduced to a mere 'standing-reserve.' Thomson remarks:

"environmental devastation, our growing obsession with biogenetic optimization, the increasing reduction of higher education to empty

optimization imperatives, and the nihilistic erosion of all intrinsic meaning are just some of the most obvious symptoms of the underlying ontotheology “enframing” our sense of reality.” (Thomson, 2011, p. 117)

The suitable approach to this and our ecological catastrophe is to venture on learning to think differently. Wrathall (2019) describes this treatment, following Heidegger’s notion that there are numerous ways to think, and thus one’s primary task is to learn to think differently. It is through thinking differently that we can understand and conquer technology through *Gelassenheit*. Wrathall (2019) emphasizes that “conquering technology does not mean that we can, nor that we should, abandon technology completely” (p. 22).

4. Caring for the Fourfold and Shepherd of Beings

Heidegger’s essay, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking* (1993c), put more emphasis on “the role of human beings dwelling on the earth as mortals, through caring for the fourfold in the sense of sheltering it back into its being, and saving the earth in the sense of letting it free into its being” (Heidegger.,1975, pp. 145-61). Heidegger’s “Fourfold” is comprised of “earth,” “sky,” “divinities,” and “mortals.” According to Heidegger:

Earth is the serving bearer, blossoming and fruiting, spreading out in rock and water, rising into plant and animal. The sky is the vaulting path of the sun, the year’s seasons and their changes, the light and dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of the weather, the drifting clouds, and the blue depth of the ether...The divinities are the beckoning messengers of the godhead, the god appears in his presence or withdraws into his concealment. The mortals are human beings. They are called mortals because they can die. To die means to be capable of death as death. Only man dies, and indeed continually, as long as he remains on earth, under the sky, before the divinities. When we speak of [any one of these], we are already thinking of the other three along with them, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four. (Heidegger 1993c, p. 351)

The cited passage above shows the utmost significance. The “four” of the fourfold are collectively united as one. That is, one cannot think of any of these “four” in seclusion from the other three, “The simple oneness of the four we call the fourfold” (Heidegger, 1993c, p. 352). Take the case for example in *The Turning in The Question Concerning Technology* (1977c), when one is to “pay heed” to the questioning way, it means to say that to “pay heed” is to read “fourfold” with equal importance on the fold. This world-gathering of the fourfold, earth, sky, divinities, and mortals discloses to us and enables us to turn aside from the rule of technology as enframing, this is to turn homeward (Heidegger, 1977c, pp. 36-49). This event will enable us to reform technology, rescue things, and ultimately to be at home in the world as we are brought into an agreement with it. Heidegger’s appeal to “let things be,” is his call for letting the beings be alone. This allows beings to manifest in their own accord and asks for complete non-intervention to the realm of things to overcome the current environmental crisis. He promotes a way where things are not to be understood as objects to be quantified so that they do not be

manipulated, controlled, and dominated. Heidegger is inspired by the understanding of a thing as gathering, stating "a thing reveals itself as a particular gathering of the elements of the world" (James, 2000, p.364). This shows the comprehensive view about things that could guide us to reveal things within the relationship of the "fourfold."

In environmental ethics, the primary objective of this call, as Howe (1993) points out, is to retain the possibility of acknowledging things in their own accord, that is to allow Being to act in its demands. This supports a way to surpass the dictating calculative thinking of the human mind which is inclined to reduce things as resources. Things establish themselves in the "gathering in" way and disclose their connection in the environment. Howe (1993) added that the utility of a thing for human beings is only one of its aspects; however, the true essence of things is: "... that which gathers up and comes together, creating a presence of the fourfold unity of earth, sky, gods, and men. The thing manifests the harmonious interplay of the fourfold in the world" (p. 65).

The "fourfold" helps in the revealing of the essence of things that could change our perspective and create a new path that would help us in transcending this environmental crisis. Dunn (2009) points out, "characteristics of dwelling are saving, receiving, awaiting, and initiating" (p. 66). Dunn (2009) further explains that mortals or human beings dwell on the earth to preserve the fourfold. This preservation entails our understanding of the essence of things. It is through dwelling that the truth of beings is revealed, which happens by disclosing their presence and link to the fourfold.

"Man is the shepherd of Being" is considered as one of Heidegger's most famous and significant statements. Heidegger says man is "thrown" from Being itself into the truth of Being so that he might "guard the truth of Being so that beings might appear in the light of Being as the beings they are" (Heidegger, 1993c, pp. 334-335). To be a guard or a guardian of truth is, for Heidegger, to let things appear in the light of being. Guarding or shepherding in this sense is gathering, sparing, preserving, and the bringing-near of the four- in the fourfold. Sparing and preserving signifies a manner in which human beings are gathered fourfold. Since sparing and preserving is what is proper to human dwelling, this is something of which human beings are capable. Thus, to spare and preserve is to regard the fourfold into our care. In his reading of Heidegger's philosophy of technology, Foltz (1995) reminds us that "the ontological status of nature in a technological world is to be a resource, to be raw material, and hence to be one component of the inventory that is installed within the technological framework, and nothing more" (p. 74). Modern technology has directed human beings to transform themselves as the lords and masters of nature rather than as the "shepherds of being," and this has carried us into a period of environmental crisis.

Heidegger's *The Question Concerning Technology* (1977b) concludes with an examination of a line by Holderlin: "Where the danger is, grows the saving power also" (p. 34). This phrase recognizes the value of the relationship between what it means to be as the shepherd of Being and what it is to care for the appeal of Being. There is a need to establish a meaningful and harmonious relationship with the Beings that we encounter by not mastering or subjugating them which is the measuring of the sciences. This

attunement to Being could restore our understanding of the appropriate character of our involvement with the world around us. To care as a shepherd is to respond to a call from Being, that is to somehow take part in the "turnabout of the oblivion of Being" (Heidegger, 1971, p. 183). This "oblivion of Being" is identified as the objectless and distancelessness of the technological manner—where the object is regarded as no longer standing over-against us. This is a kind of dwelling where the fourfold ceases in the gathering sense of the fold, but instead, becomes mastered and disconnected components that serve humans as lords of the earth. To attend to Being allows us to listen to the call of Being which turns one's attention and changes one's attitude, shifting away from the domineering manners of humans who are detained into technological revealing. To guard Being is perhaps an alternative path, a path of salvation that brings a new beginning into thinking differently that attends the turnabout of the oblivion of Being.

Humans have already begun to change Earth's climate. Evidence suggests that there is a discernable human influence on global climate, most of the warming observed over the last years could be attributed to human activities. It is already too late to prevent some damage to the climate system. The objectification and manipulation of nature could also lead to expected dramatic population growth and human impact that will increase significantly in the near decades. This could be seen not only because of the huge increase in population but also because of the advent of materialization- new technical and mechanical powers that could dig deeper, connect and communicates faster, build larger and traverse easier on great distances through automobiles, trucks, ships, and planes. This technological thinking resulted in serious threats and could generate new environmental problems globally. These include global climate change; worldwide loss of biodiversity, forests, and wetlands; long-range transport of toxic substances; the decline of coastal ocean quality; and degradation of the world's freshwater and ecological systems. While it is true that new technologies have given humans increased power both to protect and destroy the environment, the combination of more people and greater technical potency has created several growing environmental threats (Brown, 1997).

The most vulnerable to climate change are the poorest nations and marginalized people around the world, their ecological systems are most at risk. The poorest countries with higher population densities are most vulnerable to storms, flooding, and a rising sea level, also the health of the poor worldwide is at the greatest risk. Climate change is expected to cause significant loss of life in the poorest nations. Direct and indirect health effects would also increase. The food supplies of the poor are especially at risk from global warming, especially for those who are in arid regions of Africa, Asia, and Central and South America (Brown 2001). The poorest nations have the least financial and institutional ability to adapt to climate change, thus they are the least prepared to spend money on strategies that might allow them to adjust to the increasing climate change. In the poorest nations, the capacity for research, analysis, and policy development is generally weak. Yet it is "precisely the poor who will be most vulnerable to the unanticipated shocks of climate change" (Brown 2001, 65).

Technological advancement and its misapplications have not only interfered with the ecological balance but controlled us away from our role as 'shepherds of Being.' The

individual became man-centered, forgets about Being, and has dominated and lost the reverence for nature. Through our understanding of what the essence of technology entails, we may certainly be able to stand in free relation to technology. "Using thoughtful consideration of our technological use, we may apply technology without being 'enframed' into its calculative practices. Heidegger suggests that we are 'Shepherds of Being' and that we have been granted the power to reveal the world in certain ways"(Ballard, 1971, p. 60).

CONCLUSION

One of the threats of enframing is the danger brought about by technological manipulation and the dominating calculative thinking that treats Being and the rest of nature for economic reasons as resources. This means that saving us from the danger of enframing means searching for the source of the danger itself, specifically that way which has led to a kind of thinking. Therefore, to avoid enframing, to let beings be, and to safeguard our meaningful relation with Beings and the environment, require us to think differently. Without such an alternative path, calculative thinking seems to be in total control for the time to come.

We can see that everything is so ordered to stand by, to be directly and instantly at hand. Undeniably, even humanity stands there as a resource just so that we may be on call for a further ordering open to be objectified or manipulated. Our way of thinking about nature guides us on how we act concerning nature. Heidegger's thought grants nature to become meaningful for us as an essential part of our lives and contemplates our relationship with nature on how they are hampered by technology. Certainly, technology is substantial to fulfill and meet human needs, conversely, unrestrained and boundless technology negatively dominates the environment. Humans too became what Heidegger calls 'a standing reserve'- the way we think, talk, and act reduce into the world of objectification and manipulation. Heidegger offers a possible way out of technological domination and environmental crisis. This path allows "let beings be" to be open to the technological world and at the same time to dwell in a fitting relation to humans and the rest of nature. He reminds us that we should know that we are only caretakers of nature and we should not destroy it. His concepts of dwelling, safeguarding, and preserving grant humanity's self-standing and allow the rest of nature to come into their being.

There is nothing wrong with 'enframing' per se. Technology has aided us in many different ways. It helped people to have not only a comfortable life but most importantly, a much decent and better one. It has compelled us to achieve the apparent aspiration of human convenience, success, and progress. The problem arises when we reduce everything into the calculable or when we can no longer get out of the technical and scientific misfortune. There is no doubt that technology served as a powerful force to improve our standard way of living, but it comes with a great cost. Consequently, the introduction and the production of modernized technological goods and their harmful consequences are typically oppressive to the environment.

Our country has undertaken a devastating degradation of its natural resources through humanity's over-exploitation and technological misappropriation. Climate change

and loss of biodiversity, raise the ethical question of our human duty to protect animals, plants, and nature in general from destruction by human behavior and of the responsibilities of the developed world to the developing world. This calls for collective effort in strengthening environmental law enforcement to safeguard biodiversity, improve natural resources management, and behavioral change focusing towards a shepherding one that protects and manages our environment.

Heidegger calls for a new beginning and offers an alternative environmental attitude to transcend this technological age. It is through thinking differently that the truth of beings is revealed in their presence within the relationship of the fourfold. Failure to achieve the true revelation of things in the fourfold caused primarily by the technological revelation is expressed as the lack of human dwelling—the loss of one's nearness to the being of the world and relation to the fourfold. Thus, the fourfold suggests an attitude towards the earth, not of domination and exploitation for these characterize an assault to nature, but of humility and stewardship of staying with things and seeing the earth as what it is, thus taking care of it through preserving and safeguarding. When humanity 'let things be,' when we no longer think of ourselves as the lords of beings but recognize that we are the "shepherds of Being," it opens a meaningful relationship to the coming of Being. We are called into the preservation of the truth of Being and not to conceal it, which means to say that Being is under our care.

Conflict of interest:

None.

Ethical Clearance:

The study was approved by the institution.

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