—and nevertheless is. Then something similar would occur to the thinking that as preparatory thinking looks ahead to Appropriation and can only point—that is, give directives which are to make the direction of the entry to the site of Appropriation possible, somewhat similar to Hölderlin’s poetry which was not there for a century—and nevertheless was. On the other hand, the limit of thinking lies in that the preparation for thinking can only be accomplished in a special respect. It is accomplished in a different way in poetry, too, in art, etc., in which a thinking and speaking also occur.

Afterward “The Turn,” taken from the lecture series “Insight into that which is,” was read as a conclusion. This was done in order that what was discussed during the seminar might be heard again, so to speak, from another perspective as it were and in a more unified way. Then some questions were raised which were briefly answered.

The denial of world about which “The Turn” speaks is related to the denial and withholding of the present in “Time and Being.” For one can also speak about denial and withholding in Appropriation, since they have to do with the manner in which it gives time. The discussion of Appropriation is indeed the site of the farewell from Being and time, but Being and time remain, so to speak, as the gift of Appropriation.

The finitude of Being was first spoken of in the book on Kant. The finitude of Appropriation, of Being, of the fourfold hinted at during the seminar is nevertheless different from the finitude spoken of in the book on Kant, in that it is no longer thought in terms of the relation to infinity, but rather as finitude in itself: finitude, end, limit, one’s own—to be secure in one’s own. The new concept of finitude is thought in this manner—that is, in terms of Appropriation itself, in terms of the concept of one’s own.

But the accused made a sign of refusal. One had to be there, he said, if one was called, but to call oneself was the greatest error that one could make. (Hans Erich Nassack, Impossible Trial)

The title designates the attempt at a reflection which persists in questioning. The questions are paths to an answer. If the answer could be given, the answer would consist in a transformation of thinking, not in a propositional statement about a matter at stake.

The following text belongs to a larger context. It is the attempt undertaken again and again ever since 1930 to shape the question of Being and Time in a more primal way. This means: to subject the point of departure of the question in Being and Time to an immanent criticism. Thus it must become clear to what extent the critical question of what the matter of thinking is, necessarily and continually belongs to thinking. Accordingly, the name of the task of Being and Time will change.

We are asking:

1. What does it mean that philosophy in the present age has entered its final stage?
2. What task is reserved for thinking at the end of philosophy?

1. What does it mean that philosophy in the present age has entered its final stage?

Philosophy is metaphysics. Metaphysics thinks being as a whole—
the world, man, God—with respect to Being, with respect to the belonging together of beings in Being. Metaphysics thinks beings as being in the manner of representational thinking which gives reasons. For since the beginning of philosophy and with that beginning, the Being of beings has showed itself as the ground (arche, aition). The ground is from where beings as such are what they are in their becoming, perishing and persisting as something that can be known, handled and worked upon. As the ground, Being brings beings to their actual presencing. The ground shows itself as presence. The present of presence consists in the fact that it brings what is present each in its own way to presence. In accordance with the actual kind of presence, the ground has the character of grounding as the ontic causation of the real, as the transcendental making possible of the objectivity of objects, as the dialectical mediation of the movement of the absolute Spirit, of the historical process of production, as the will to power positing values.

What characterizes metaphysical thinking which grounds the ground for beings is the fact that metaphysical thinking departs from what is present in its presence, and thus represents it in terms of its ground as something grounded.

What is meant by the talk about the end of philosophy? We understand the end of something all too easily in the negative sense as a mere stopping, as the lack of continuation, perhaps even as decline and impotence. In contrast, what we say about the end of philosophy means the completion of metaphysics. However, completion does not mean perfection as a consequence of which philosophy would have to have attained the highest perfection at its end. Not only do we lack any criterion which would permit us to evaluate the perfection of an epoch of metaphysics as compared with any other epoch. The right to this kind of evaluation does not exist. Plato’s thinking is no more perfect than Parmenides’. Hegel’s philosophy is no more perfect than Kant’s. Each epoch of philosophy has its own necessity. We simply have to acknowledge the fact that a philosophy is the way it is. It is not our business to prefer one to the other, as can be the case with regard to various Weltschauungen.

The old meaning of the word “end” means the same as place: “from one end to the other” means: from one place to the other. The end of philosophy is the place, that place in which the whole of philosophy’s history is gathered in its most extreme possibility. End as completion means this gathering.

Throughout the whole history of philosophy, Plato’s thinking remains decisive in changing forms. Metaphysics is Platonism. Nietzsche characterizes his philosophy as reversed Platonism. With the reversal of metaphysics which was already accomplished by Karl Marx, the most extreme possibility of philosophy is attained. It has entered its final stage. To the extent that philosophical thinking is still attempted, it manages only to attain an epigonal renaissance and variations of that renaissance. Is not then the end of philosophy after all a cessation of its way of thinking? To conclude this would be premature.

As a completion, an end is the gathering into the most extreme possibilities. We think in too limited a fashion as long as we expect only a development of recent philosophies of the previous style. We forget that already in the age of Greek philosophy a decisive characteristic of philosophy appears: the development of sciences within the field which philosophy opened up. The development of the sciences is at the same time their separation from philosophy and the establishment of their independence. This process belongs to the completion of philosophy. Its development is in full swing today in all regions of beings. This development looks like the mere dissolution of philosophy, and is in truth its completion.

It suffices to refer to the independence of psychology, sociology, anthropology as cultural anthropology, to the role of logic as logistics and semantics. Philosophy turns into the empirical science of man, of all of what can become the experimental object of his technology for man, the technology by which he establishes himself in the world by working on it in the manifold modes of making and shaping. All of this happens everywhere on the basis and according to the criterion of the scientific discovery of the individual areas of beings.
No prophecy is necessary to recognize that the sciences now establishing themselves will soon be determined and guided by the new fundamental science which is called cybernetics.

This science corresponds to the determination of man as an acting social being. For it is the theory of the steering of the possible planning and arrangement of human labor. Cybernetics transforms language into an exchange of news. The arts become regulated-regulating instruments of information.

The development of philosophy into the independent sciences which, however, interdependently communicate among themselves ever more markedly, is the legitimate completion of philosophy. Philosophy is ending in the present age. It has found its place in the scientific attitude of socially active humanity. But the fundamental characteristic of this scientific attitude is its cybernetic, that is, technological character. The need to ask about modern technology is presumably dying out to the same extent that technology more definitely characterizes and regulates the appearance of the totality of the world and the position of man in it.

The sciences will interpret everything in their structure that is still reminiscent of the origin from philosophy in accordance with the rules of science, that is, technologically. Every science understands the categories upon which it remains dependent for the articulation and delineation of its area of investigation as working hypotheses. Their truth is measured not only by the effect which their application brings about within the progress of research.

Scientific truth is equated with the efficiency of these effects.

The sciences are now taking over as their own task what philosophy in the course of its history tried to present in part, and even there only inadequately, that is, the ontologies of the various regions of beings (nature, history, law, art). The interest of the sciences is directed toward the theory of the necessary structural concepts of the coordinated areas of investigation. "Theory" means now: supposition of the categories which are allowed only a cybernetical function, but denied any ontological meaning. The operational and model character of representational-calculative thinking becomes dominant.

However, the sciences still speak about the Being of beings in the unavoidable supposition of their regional categories. They just don't say so. They can deny their origin from philosophy, but never dispense with it. For in the scientific attitude of the sciences, the document of their birth from philosophy still speaks.

The end of philosophy proves to be the triumph of the manipulable arrangement of a scientific-technological world and of the social order proper to this world. The end of philosophy means: the beginning of the world civilization based upon Western European thinking.

But is the end of philosophy in the sense of its development to the sciences also already the complete realization of all the possibilities in which the thinking of philosophy was posited? Or is there a first possibility for thinking apart from the last possibility which we characterized (the dissolution of philosophy in the technologized sciences), a possibility from which the thinking of philosophy would have to start out, but which as philosophy it could nevertheless not experience and adopt?

If this were the case, then a task would still have to be reserved for thinking in a concealed way in the history of philosophy from its beginning to its end, a task accessible neither to philosophy as metaphysics nor, and even less so, to the sciences stemming from philosophy. Therefore we ask:

2. What task is reserved for thinking at the end of philosophy?

The mere thought of such a task of thinking must sound strange to us. A thinking which can be neither metaphysics nor science?

A task which has concealed itself from philosophy since its very beginning, even in virtue of that beginning, and thus has withdrawn itself continually and increasingly in the time to come?

A task of thinking which—so it seems—includes the assertion that philosophy has not been up to the matter of thinking and has thus become a history of mere decline?
Is there not an arrogance in these assertions which desires to put itself above the greatness of the thinkers of philosophy?

This suspicion easily suggests itself. But it can as easily be removed. For every attempt to gain insight into the supposed task of thinking finds itself moved to review the whole of the history of philosophy. Not only this, but it is even forced to think the historicity of that which grants a possible history to philosophy.

Because of this, that supposed thinking necessarily falls short of the greatness of the philosophers. It is less than philosophy. Less also because the direct or indirect effect of this thinking on the public in the industrial age, formed by technology and science, is decisively less possible to this thinking than it was in the case of philosophy.

But above all, the thinking in question remains slight because its task is only of a preparatory, not of a founding character. It is content with awakening a readiness in man for a possibility whose contour remains obscure, whose coming remains uncertain.

Thinking must first learn what remains reserved and in store for thinking to get involved in. It prepares its own transformation in this learning.

We are thinking of the possibility that the world civilization which is just now beginning might one day overcome the technological-industrial character as the sole criterion of man's world sojourn. This may happen not of and through itself, but in virtue of the readiness of man for a determination which has not yet been decided. It is just as uncertain whether world civilization will soon be abruptly destroyed or whether it will be stabilized for a long time, in a stabilization, however, which will not rest in something enduring, but rather establish itself in a sequence of changes, each of which presenting the latest fashion.

The preparatory thinking in question does not wish and is not able to predict the future. It only attempts to say something to the present which was already said a long time ago precisely at the beginning of philosophy and for that beginning, but has not been explicitly thought. For the time being, it must be sufficient to refer to this with the brevity required. We shall take a directive which philosophy offers as an aid in our undertaking.

When we ask about the task of thinking, this means in the scope of philosophy: to determine that which concerns thinking, which is still controversial for thinking, which is the controversy. This is what the word “matter” means in the German language. It designates that with which thinking has to do in the case at hand, in Plato’s language to pragma auto (cf. “The Seventh Letter” 341 C7).

In recent times, philosophy has of its own accord expressly called thinking “to the things themselves.” Let us mention two cases which receive particular attention today. We hear this call “to the things themselves” in the “Preface” which Hegel has placed before his work which was published in 1807, System of Science, first part: “The Phenomenology of Spirit.” This preface is not the preface to the Phenomenology, but to the System of Science, to the whole of philosophy. The call “to the things themselves” refers ultimately—and that means: according to the matter, primarily—to the Science of Logic.

In the call “to the things themselves,” the emphasis lies on the “themselves.” Heard superficially, the call has the sense of a rejection. The inadequate relations to the matter of philosophy are rejected. Mere talk about the purpose of philosophy belongs to these relations, but so does mere reporting about the results of philosophical thinking. Both are never the real totality of philosophy. The totality shows itself only in its becoming. This occurs in the developmental presentation of the matter. In the presentation, theme and method coincide. For Hegel, this identity is called: the idea. With the idea, the matter of philosophy “itself” comes to appear. However, this matter is historically determined: subjectivity. With Descartes’ ego cogito, says Hegel, philosophy steps on firm ground for the first time where it can be at home. If the fundamentum absolutum is attained with the ego cogito as the distinctive subjectum, this means: The subject is the hypokeimenon which is transferred to consciousness.
what is truly present, what is unclearly enough called "substance" in traditional language.

When Hegel explains in the Preface (ed. Hoffmeister, p. 19), "The true (in philosophy) is to be understood and expressed not as substance, but just as much as subject," then this means: The Being of beings, the presence of what is present, is only manifest and thus complete presence when it becomes present as such for itself in the absolute Idea. But since Descartes, *idea* means: *perceptio*. Being's coming to itself occurs in speculative dialectic. Only the movement of the idea, the method, is the matter itself. The call "to the thing itself" requires a philosophical method appropriate in it.

However, what the matter of philosophy should be is presumed to be decided from the outset. The matter of philosophy as metaphysics is the Being of beings, their presence in the form of substantiality and subjectivity.

A hundred years later, the call "to the thing itself" again is uttered in Husserl's treatise *Philosophy as Exact Science*. It was published in the first volume of the journal *Logos* in 1910–11 (pp. 289 ff.). Again, the call has at first the sense of a rejection. But here it aims in another direction than Hegel's. It concerns naturalistic psychology which claims to be the genuine scientific method of investigating consciousness. For this method blocks access to the phenomena of intentional consciousness from the very beginning. But the call "to the thing itself" is at the same time directed against historicism which gets lost in treatises about the standpoints of philosophy and in the ordering of types of philosophical *Weltschaubungen*. About this Husserl says in italics (*ibid.*, p. 340): "The stimulus for investigation must start not with *philosophies*, but with issues and problems."

And what is at stake in philosophical investigation? In accordance with the same tradition, it is for Husserl as for Hegel the subjectivity of consciousness. For Husserl, the *Cartesian Meditations* were not only the topic of the Parisian lectures in February, 1920. Rather, since the time following the *Logical Investigations*, their spirit accompanied the impassioned course of his philosophical investigations to the end. In its negative and also in its positive sense, the call "to the thing itself" determines the securing and development of method. It also determines the procedure of philosophy by means of which the matter itself can be demonstrated as a datum. For Husserl, "the principle of all principles" is first of all not a principle of content, but one of method. In his work published in 1913, Husserl devoted a special section (section 24) to the determination of "the principle of all principles." "No conceivable theory can upset this principle," says Husserl (*ibid.*, p. 44).

"The principle of all principles" reads:

*That very primordial datum Intuition is a source of authority (Rechtsquelle) for knowledge, that whatever presents itself in "Intuition" in primordial form (as it were in its bodily reality), is simply to be accepted as it gives itself out to be, though only within the limits in which it then presents itself.*

"The principle of all principles" contains the thesis of the precedence of method. This principle decides what matter alone can suffice for the method. "The principle of principles" requires reduction to absolute subjectivity as the matter of philosophy. The transcendental reduction to absolute subjectivity gives and secures the possibility of grounding the objectivity of all objects (the Being of this being) in its valid structure and consistency, that is, in its constitution, in and through subjectivity. Thus transcendental subjectivity proves to be "the sole absolute being" (*Formal and Transcendental Logic*, 1929, p. 240). At the same time, transcendental reduction as the method of "universal science" of the constitution of the Being of beings has the same mode of being as this absolute being, that is, the manner of the matter most native to philosophy. The method is not only directed toward the matter of philosophy. It does not just belong to the matter as a key belongs to a lock. Rather, it belongs to the matter because it is "the matter itself." If one wanted to ask: Where does "the principle of all principles" get its unshakable right, the answer would have to be: from transcendental subjectivity which is already presupposed as the matter of philosophy.

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We have chosen a discussion of the call "to the thing itself" as our
guideline. It was to bring us to the path which leads us to a determination of the task of thinking at the end of philosophy. Where are we now? We have arrived at the insight that for the call “to the thing itself,” what concerns philosophy as its matter is established from the outset. From the perspective of Hegel and Husserl—and not only from their perspective—the matter of philosophy is subjectivity. It is not the matter as such that is controversial for the call, but rather its presentation by which the matter itself becomes present. Hegel’s speculative dialectic is the movement in which the matter as such comes to itself, comes to its own presence. Husserl’s method is supposed to bring the matter of philosophy to its ultimately originary givenness, that means: to its own presence.

The two methods are as different as they could possibly be. But the matter as such which they are to present is the same, although it is experienced in different ways.

But of what help are these discoveries to us in our attempt to bring the task of thinking to view? They don’t help us at all as long as we do not go beyond a mere discussion of the call and ask what remains unthought in the call “to the thing itself.” Questioning in this way, we can become aware how something which it is no longer the matter of philosophy to think conceals itself precisely where philosophy has brought its matter to absolute knowledge and to ultimate evidence.

But what remains unthought in the matter of philosophy as well as in its method? Speculative dialectic is a mode in which the matter of philosophy comes to appeal of itself and for itself, and thus becomes presence. Such appearance necessarily occurs in some light. Only by virtue of light, i.e., through brightness, can what shines show itself, that is, radiate. But brightness in its turn rests upon something open, something free which might illuminate it here and there, now and then. Brightness plays in the open and wars there with darkness. Wherever a present being encounters another present being or even only lingers near it—but also where, as with Hegel, one being mirrors itself in another speculatively—there openness already rules, open region is in play. Only this openness grants to the movement of speculative thinking the passage through that which it thinks.

We call this openness which grants a possible letting-appear and show “opening.” In the history of language, the German word “opening” is a borrowed translation of the French clairière. It is formed in accordance with the older words Waldung (foresting) and Feldung (fielding).

The forest clearing (opening) is experienced in contrast to dense forest, called “density” (Dickung) in older language. The substantive “opening” goes back to the verb “to open.” The adjective Licht “open” is the same word as “light.” To open something means: To make something light, free and open, e.g., to make the forest free of trees at one place. The openness thus originating is the clearing.

What is light in the sense of being free and open has nothing in common with the adjective “light,” meaning “bright”—neither linguistically nor factually. This is to be observed for the difference between openness and light. Still, it is possible that a factual relation between the two exists. Light can stream into the clearing, into its openness, and let brightness play with darkness in it. But light never first creates openness. Rather, light presupposes openness. However, the clearing, the opening, is not only free for brightness and darkness, but also for resonance and echo, for sounding and diminishing of sound. The clearing is the open for everything that is present and absent.

It is necessary for thinking to become explicitly aware of the matter called opening here. We are not extracting mere notions from mere words, e.g., “opening,” as it might easily appear on the surface. Rather, we must observe the unique matter which is adequately named with the name “opening.” What the word designates in the connection we are now thinking, free openness, is a “primal phenomenon,” to use a word of Goethe’s. We would have to say a primal matter. Goethe notes (Maxims and Reflections, n. 993): “Look for nothing behind phenomena: they themselves are what is to be

3. Both meanings exist in English for light. The meaning Heidegger intends is related to lever (i.e., alleviate, lighten a burden). (Tr.)
learned." This means: The phenomenon itself, in the present case the opening, sets us the task of learning from it while questioning it, that is, of letting it say something to us.

Accordingly, we may suggest that the day will come when we will not shun the question whether the opening, the free open, may not be that within which alone pure space and ecstatic time and everything present and absent in them have the place which gathers and protects everything.

In the same way as speculative dialectical thinking, originary intuition and its evidence remain dependent upon openness which already dominates, upon the opening. What is evident is what can be immediately intuited. *Evidentia* is the word which Cicero uses to translate the Greek *enargeia,* that is, to transform it into the Roman. *Enargeia,* which has the same root as *argentum* (silver), means that which in itself and of itself radiates and brings itself to light. In the Greek language, one is not speaking about the action of seeing, about *videre,* but about that which gleams and radiates. But it can only radiate if openness has already been granted. The beam of light does not first create the opening, openness, it only traverses it. It is only such openness that grants to giving and receiving at all what is free, that in which they can remain and must move.

All philosophical thinking which explicitly or inexplicitly follows the call "to the thing itself" is already admitted to the free space of the opening in its movement and with its method. But philosophy knows nothing of the opening. Philosophy does speak about the lumen naturale, the light of reason, but does not heed the opening of Being. The *lumen naturale,* the light of reason, throws light only on openness. It does concern the opening, but so little does it form it that it needs it in order to be able to illuminate what is present in the opening. This is true not only of philosophy's method, but also and primarily of its matter, that is, of the presence of what is present. To what extent the *subiectum,* the *bypokeimenon,* that which already lies present, thus what is present in its presence is constantly thought also in subjectivity cannot be shown here in detail. Refer to Heidegger, *Nietzsche,* vol. 2 (1961), pages 429 ff.

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The End of Philosophy

We are concerned now with something else. Whether or not what is present is experienced, comprehended or presented, presence as lingering in openness always remains dependent upon the prevalent opening. What is absent, too, cannot be as such unless it presences in the free space of the opening.

All metaphysics including its opponent positivism speaks the language of Plato. The basic word of its thinking, that is, of his presentation of the Being of beings, is *eidos,* *idea:* the outward appearance in which beings as such show themselves. Outward appearance, however, is a manner of presence. No outward appearance without light—Plato already knew this. But there is no light and no brightness without the opening. Even darkness needs it. How else could we happen into darkness and wander through it? Still, the opening as such as it prevails through Being, through presence, remains unthought in philosophy, although the opening is spoken about in philosophy's beginning. How does this occur and with which names? Answer:

In Parmenides' reflective poem which, as far as we know, was the first to reflect explicitly upon the Being of beings, which still today, although unheard, speaks in the sciences into which philosophy dissolves. Parmenides listens to the claim:

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4. Standard translation: "It is needful that you should learn of all matters—both the unshaken heart of well-rounded truth and the opinions of mortals which lack true belief." (Tr.)
ning and end are everywhere the same. In this turning, there is no possibility of twisting, deceit and closure. The meditative man is to experience the untrembling heart of unconcealment. What does the word about the untrembling heart of unconcealment mean? It means unconcealment itself in what is most its own, means the place of stillness which gathers in itself what grants unconcealment to begin with. That is the opening of what is open. We ask: openness for what? We have already reflected upon the fact that the path of thinking, speculative and intuitive, needs the traversable opening. But in that opening rests possible radiance, that is, the possible presencing of presence itself.

What prior to everything else first grants unconcealment in the path on which thinking pursues one thing and perceives it: *hōtōs estin... etnai:* that presence presences. The opening grants first of all the possibility of the path to presence, and grants the possible presencing of that presence itself. We must think *aletheia,* unconcealment, as the opening which first grants Being and thinking and their presencing to and for each other. The quiet heart of the opening is the place of stillness from which alone the possibility of the belonging together of Being and thinking, that is, presence and perceiving, can arise at all.

The possible claim to a binding character or commitment of thinking is grounded in this bond. Without the preceding experience of *aletheia* as the opening, all talk about committed and non-committed thinking remains without foundation. Where does Plato’s determination of presence as *idea* have its binding character from? With regard to what is Aristotle’s interpretation of presencing as *energeia* binding?

Strangely enough, we cannot even ask these questions always neglected in philosophy as long as we have not experienced what Parmenides had to experience: *aletheia,* unconcealment. The path to it is distinguished from the street on which the opinion of mortals must wander around. *Aletheia* is nothing mortal, just as little as death itself.

It is not for the sake of etymology that I stubbornly translate the name *aletheia* as unconcealment, but for the matter which must be considered when we think that which is called Being and thinking adequately. Unconcealment is, so to speak, the element in which Being and thinking and their belonging together exist. *Aletheia* is named at the beginning of philosophy, but afterward it is not explicitly thought as such by philosophy. For since Aristotle it became the task of philosophy as metaphysics to think beings as such onto- theologically.

If this is so, we have no right to sit in judgment over philosophy, as though it left something unheeded, neglected it and was thus marred by some essential deficiency. The reference to what is unthought in philosophy is not a criticism of philosophy. If a criticism is necessary now, then it rather concerns the attempt which is becoming more and more urgent ever since *Being and Time* to ask about a possible task of thinking at the end of philosophy. For the question now arises, late enough: Why is *aletheia* not translated with the usual name, with the word “truth”? The answer must be:

Insofar as truth is understood in the traditional “natural” sense as the correspondence of knowledge with beings demonstrated in beings, but also insofar as truth is interpreted as the certainty of the knowledge of Being, *aletheia,* unconcealment in the sense of the opening may not be equated with truth. Rather, *aletheia,* unconcealment thought as opening, first grants the possibility of truth. For truth itself, just as Being and thinking, can only be what it is in the element of the opening. Evidence, certainty in every degree, every kind of verification of *veritas* already move with that *veritas* in the realm of the prevalent opening.

*Aletheia,* unconcealment thought as the opening of presence, is not yet truth. Is *aletheia* then less than truth? Or is it more because it first grants truth as *adequatio* and *certitudo,* because there can be no presence and presenting outside of the realm of the opening?

This question we leave to thinking as a task. Thinking must consider whether it can even raise this question at all as long as it thinks philosophically, that is, in the strict sense of metaphysics
which questions what is present only with regard to its presence.

In any case, one thing becomes clear: To raise the question of *aletheia*, of unconcealment as such, is not the same as raising the question of truth. For this reason, it was inadequate and misleading to call *aletheia* in the sense of opening, truth. The talk about the "truth of Being" has a justified meaning in Hegel's *Science of Logic*, because here truth means the certainty of absolute knowledge. But Hegel also, as little as Husserl, as little as all metaphysics, does not ask about Being as Being, that is, does not raise the question how there can be presence as such. There is presence only when opening is dominant. Opening is named with *aletheia*, unconcealment, but not thought as such.

The natural concept of truth does not mean unconcealment, not in the philosophy of the Greeks either. It is often and justifiably pointed out that the word *alethes* is already used by Homer only in the *verba dicendi*, in statement and thus in the sense of correctness and reliability, not in the sense of unconcealment. But this reference means only that neither the poets nor everyday language usage, nor even philosophy see themselves confronted with the task of asking how truth, that is, the correctness of statements, is granted only in the element of the opening of presence.

In the scope of this question, we must acknowledge the fact that *aletheia*, unconcealment in the sense of the opening of presence, was originally only experienced as *orthotes*, as the correctness of representations and statements. But then the assertion about the essential transformation of truth, that is, from unconcealment to correctness, is also untenable. 6

5. How the attempt to think a matter can at times stray from that which a decisive insight has already shown, is demonstrated by a passage from Being and Time (1927) (p. 262, New York: Harper & Row, 1962). To translate this word (*aletheia*) as "truth," and, above all, to define this expression conceptually in theoretical ways, is to cover up the meaning of what the Greeks made "self-evidently" basic for the terminological use of *aletheia* as a prephilosophical way of understanding it.

6. This statement has profound implications for Heidegger's book *Platon: Lehre von der Wahrheit*. (Tr.)

Instead we must say: *Aletheia*, as opening of presence and presenting in thinking and saying, originally comes under the perspective of *homoiosis* and *adaequatio*, that is, the perspective of adequation in the sense of the correspondence of representing with what is present.

But this process inevitably provokes another question: How is it that *aletheia*, unconcealment, appears to man's natural experience and speaking only as correctness and dependability? Is it because man's ecstatic sojourn in the openness of presencing is turned only toward what is present and the existent presenting of what is present? But what else does this mean than that presence as such, and together with it the opening granting it, remain unheeded? Only what *aletheia* as opening grants is experienced and thought, not what it is as such.

This remains concealed. Does this happen by chance? Does it happen only as a consequence of the carelessness of human thinking? Or does it happen because self-concealing, concealment, *lethe* belongs to *a-letheia*, not just as an addition, not as shadow to light, but rather as the heart of *aletheia*? And does not even a keeping and preserving rule in this self-concealing of the opening of presence from which unconcealment can be granted to begin with, and thus what is present can appear in its presence?

If this were so, then the opening would not be the mere opening of presence, but the opening of presence concealing itself, the opening of a self-concealing sheltering.

If this were so, then with these questions we would reach the path to the task of thinking at the end of philosophy.

But isn't this all unfounded mysticism or even bad mythology, in any case a ruinous irrationalism, the denial of *ratio*? I return to the question: What does *ratio*, *nous*, *noein*, perceiving (Vernunft—Vernehmen) mean? What does ground and principle and especially principle of all principles mean? Can this ever be sufficiently determined unless we experience *aletheia* in a Greek manner as unconcealment and then, above and beyond the Greek, think it as the opening of self-concealing? As long as *ratio* and the rational
still remain questionable in what is their own, talk about irrationalism is unfounded. The technological scientific rationalization ruling the present age justifies itself every day more surprisingly by its immense results. But these results say nothing about what the possibility of the rational and the irrational first grants. The effect proves the correctness of technological scientific rationalization. But is the manifest character of what-is exhausted by what is demonstrable? Doesn’t the insistence on what is demonstrable block the way to what-is?

Perhaps there is a thinking which is more sober than the irresistible race of rationalization and the sweeping character of cybernetics. Presumably it is precisely this sweeping quality which is extremely irrational.

Perhaps there is a thinking outside of the distinction of rational and irrational still more sober than scientific technology, more sober and thus removed, without effect and yet having its own necessity. When we ask about the task of this thinking, then not only this thinking, but also the question about it is first made questionable. In view of the whole philosophical tradition, this means:

We all still need an education in thinking, and before that first a knowledge of what being educated and uneducated in thinking means. In this respect, Aristotle gives us a hint in Book IV of his *Metaphysics* (1006a ff.). It reads: *esti gar apaideusia to me gignoskein tinon dei zetein apodeixin kai tinon ou dei.* “For it is uneducated not to have an eye for when it is necessary to look for a proof, and when this is not necessary.”

This sentence demands careful reflection. For it is not yet decided in what way that which needs no proof in order to become accessible to thinking is to be experienced. Is it dialectical mediation or originary intuition or neither of the two? Only the peculiar quality of that which demands of us above all else to be admitted can decide about that. But how is this to make the decision possible for us before we have not admitted it? In what circle are we moving here, inevitably?

Is it the *eukuklon aletheia*, well-founded unconcealment itself, thought as the opening?

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**THE END OF PHILOSOPHY**

Does the name for the task of thinking then read instead of *Being and Time*: Opening and Presence?

But where does the opening come from and how is it given? What speaks in the “It gives”?

The task of thinking would then be the surrender of previous thinking to the determination of the matter of thinking.