

**BEYOND 'THE FRAME' -  
WORLD AWARENESS  
AND WHERE IT LEAVES US**



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## **1. World Awareness**

First of all, let us allow ourselves to be fully aware of the nature of the world we live in:

A world of global war and genocide, of global poverty and disease, malnutrition and starvation, statelessness and homelessness, sex- and people-trafficking, economic slavery, child-labour, sex slavery and violent misogyny (two women and one child are murdered every week – not in Somalia but in the United Kingdom).

A world run entirely in the interests of bankers and financial speculators and their tools - multi-national corporations, military-industrial complexes and the corrupt ruling elites, dictatorial or ‘democratic’ who serve those interests.

A world of ecological devastation driven by competition for declining natural resources and raw materials - not least clean water and air – a state of growing devastation made absolutely inevitable and unavoidable by the all-devouring need of capitalism for economic ‘growth’.

A world in which there are still enough nuclear weapons to kill every man, woman and child several times over – to destroy humanity as a whole for the sake of national ‘defence’.

A world that seeks to create itself in the mirror image of the idealised body images, self images and ‘lifestyles’ promoted by the advertising industry, all in the service of hawking competing and therefore ruinously over-produced and resource-exhausting commodities through ever-cheaper labour.

A world of economically enforced wage-slavery disguised as ‘productive’ work or ‘employment’, and disguising the mass unemployment of individual creative potentials.

A world that seems ever more on the verge of total self-destruction through global wars and/or ecological catastrophe, whether gradually or abruptly.

This is also a world, which, whilst constantly seeking ‘solutions’ for all these complex and dire ‘problems’ does not even begin to address the most important and basic *questions* that they raise – and that may lay behind them.

We know of the documentaries and ‘hi-definition’ Hollywood disaster movies that present eye-popping images of potential global catastrophes and their possible aftermath. These offer graphic reflections of people’s fears and anxieties, and yet lack any element of *reflection* on one most fundamental and yet obvious and thought-worthy question. The question is what sort of wholly invisible and un-filmable ‘mindset’ is it that can so powerfully override people’s awareness of the depressing state of our world as to prevent an immediate mass revolution. Indeed what sort of ‘mindset’ is it that can claim ‘depression’ to be an epidemic *disease* rather than an entirely *healthy* reaction to the state of the world – a mindset that leads to chemical treatments for ‘psychosis’ in a world that can itself best be characterised as a world gone ‘mad’ – *a world of total global and social psychosis*.

For even ignoring the most obviously, acutely and chronically depressing events that are occurring all the time all over the world, how else are we to describe a world in which ‘real feeling’ is identified with a chocolate brand, ‘bliss’ with a perfume, a stress-free life with an insurance company and ‘freedom’ with anything from an automobile to a tampon, a mobile phone network or a portable netbook.

A world which is effectively dominated by the two most despiritualising and dehumanising religions of all - ‘The Monotheism of Money’ on the one hand and a ‘Polytheism of Commodities’ on the other – the choice between worshipping a PC or Mac, iPhone or Samsung - or any one of hundreds of gods in the pantheons of shampoos and facial creams, cars and gadgets, celebrities or pop idols.

A world in which the invisible ‘hand’ of an invisible yet all-mighty and mysterious ‘force’ called The Market is ultimately the *sole arbiter* in deciding what is of *value* and what constitutes ‘normal’ or ‘rational’ behaviour and action.

A world as much dominated by wholly unquestioned assumptions of ‘free market’ economics, modern ‘science’ and ‘common sense’ as the medieval world was by the myths and dogmas of the church.

A world in which ‘culture’ is nothing but a worldwide marketing industry for pop idols, celebrities, and media technologies offering an entertainment circus for the masses – ‘let them eat images’.

A world in which ‘knowledge’ is schizophrenically fragmented into countless scientific or academic specialisms – in each of which ‘research’ replaces meditative and thoughtful *reflection* – and in which the basic question of what constitutes true ‘knowledge’ is never raised.

A world in which a manic search for ‘causes’ and ‘cures’, statistical ‘evidence’ and scientific or spiritual ‘certainties’ replaces all search for *meaning* in the world.

Yet even those ‘counter-cultures’ represented by traditional religious fundamentalisms on the one hand, and New Age spiritual fads and faddism on the other, though they appear to offer a source of meaning, are all too often but a mirror image of the dominant culture – indeed an integral part of it. For they too replace reflection on basic questions with either unquestioned dogmatic certainties or else a diverse array of packaged commodities or ‘techniques’ for the marketplace of spiritual consumers. The fact that ‘spiritual celebrities’ such as Deepak Chopra can still sell money-making ‘spiritual’ recipes for perfect *happiness* in this world - recipes which show not the least *awareness* of that world and of its relation to individual *unhappiness* – is perhaps a perfect exemplification of the spiritual hollowness and commercialism typical of our world, not to mention the expression of an almost total lack of awareness of all that goes on in it. This is

tantamount to a type of *spiritual denialism* of worldly realities of the most shallow and callous sort. That is why I myself would dearly love to see the Deepak Chopras of this world forced by law to sell or teach their recipes for ‘happiness’ *in person* to bereaved families in Palestine, Iraq or Afghanistan, to individual torture victims, to penniless asylum seekers living rough - or to war-maimed, AIDS-ridden, starving, sexually abused – and in many cases also *illiterate* children.

One can waffle, New-Age style, all one will about ‘The Field’, ‘Quantum Consciousness’ etc. etc. without beginning to be truly conscious of and thus able to question the invisible ‘mindset’ I mentioned. To even find a word to name it is a huge challenge in itself. After a lifetime of profound meditative questioning and reflection the 20<sup>th</sup> century German thinker Martin Heidegger was the first to venture such a word. In German, this word is: *das Gestell*.

## **2. The Frame**

To begin to understand what Heidegger meant by *das Gestell* I will translate it to begin with as ‘The Frame’. Doing so enables us to begin to define it, albeit not ‘positively’ – as some identifiable ‘thing’ we can ‘posit’ (such as a particular framework of thought or social framework). Yet we can begin to define *das Gestell* ‘negatively’ – by what it *excludes* from itself. Negatively defined, it is that ‘Frame’ which excludes from its frame any dimensions of awareness – not least awareness of the world – that do not ‘fit the frame’ or that are not ‘framed’ in its terms. ‘The Frame’ then, is that which demands that awareness always be ‘framed’ in a way that ‘fits the frame’. ‘The Frame’ is effectively a hidden ‘frame up’. For what is *excludes* from its frame most of all is any awareness of the sort that might expose its hidden nature – the tacitly agreed *rules* governing what fits or does not fit it. These rules determine the ways in which any type of understanding or awareness needs to *be framed* in order to find a place ‘in the frame’ – rather than be left outside of it. For like a picture frame, The Frame only allows a picture of the world to become visible that ‘fits the frame’. Yet ‘The Frame’ is not just some particular frame –

‘a’ frame – but *the* frame. This would correspond to a type of picture frame that only allows within it pictures that *are themselves and already framed in a particular way*. With this simple pictorial understanding of ‘The Frame’ in mind, there is no way in which the profound questions and comprehensions of such great or subversive thinkers as Heidegger, Martin Buber, Ivan Illich or Ronald Laing can any longer find a place within it and are now reduced to mere footnotes in the margins of contemporary thought. For ‘being in the frame’ is something permitted only to expressions of awareness bounded by and framed according to the ‘markers’ that define ‘The Frame’ – which demands that everything be fitted into the pre-determined pigeon holes of recognised academic or ‘scientific’ specialisms and sub-specialisms - and formally ticked under the boxed categories that are now universally used by publishers to frame and market their wares as saleable commodities.

### **3. The Standing Reserve**

The term *Gestell* is similar to other German words such as *Gebirge* (mountain chain) which imply a gathering of things such as mountains (*Berge*) into a unity. According to Heidegger a characteristic of the *Gestell* is the way it gathers together everything as a type of stock or ‘standing reserve’ (*Bestand*). Through the term *Bestand* Heidegger offered important insight into the essentially *dynamic* character of the Frame or *Gestell* - which is not merely some type of purely static social system or ‘framework’ of reasoning (*Verstand*) but that which turns all things into *Bestand* – a mere stock of resources for the functioning of pre-calculated ‘processing’ systems. Thus the world’s forests become a mere ‘standing reserve’ for the timber industry, and timber itself a mere calculable reserve of stock for industrial processing or ‘enframing’ into frames, flooring fences, furniture etc. Similarly, the seas and oceans become one giant ‘fish farm’ - a standing reserve for entrapping and processing its life forms into pre-packaged seafood. Even air, specifically in the form of carbon dioxide emissions, becomes – like mortgage debts – a standing reserve for financial trading. Administrative and commercial challenges become a standing reserve for processing through the consultancy and IT industry. More sinisterly, human life and human beings too, become part of the ‘Standing Reserve’.

Medical patients become a mere standing reserve for the medical and health industry – not least for scientific ‘research’ aimed at the production of profitable pharmaceutical drugs. Indeed whole new diagnostic categories of ‘illness’ are constructed and designated for this very purpose. Individuals seeking mental-health counselling cease to be recipients or even ‘users’ of health ‘services’. Instead they become a mere ‘standing reserve’ for *competitive tendering* between different ‘service providers’ - each seeking to offer the fastest, most functionally efficient, quantifiable and ‘cost-effective’ methods of technologically *processing* an ever-larger patient ‘pool’ through mechanistic treatment methods or ‘techniques’. The principal purpose of treatment is not to understand or heal the client’s suffering but to satisfy quantifiable government targets and to ensure their continued economic activity or functioning. ‘Health’ itself is effectively *defined* as the capacity for economic productivity and *functionality* in any form - rather than as the capacity for the creative *fulfilment* of individual human potentials. Institutionalised medical and health ‘services’ are, as Ivan Illich pointed out long ago, a classic example of what he called “institutionalised counter-productivity”. Thus the most cost-effective forms of ‘counselling’ are the least *humanly* ‘effective’ – even in terms of the true target of merely achieving fully or partially restored economic functionality to the patient – at whatever cost to their health. And the demand for ‘evidence’ and ‘results’ in achieving these targets through quantifiable health data leads to their rampant fabrication by both institutional health providers and the practitioner they employ. As with the ‘health’ system, so also with institutionalised ‘education’ – where the setting of quantifiable targets for even basic skills such as literacy and numeracy are what leads to these targets not being met. Industries and commodities that deplete their own raw materials in the service of short term profit, institutions of global economic growth which produces global poverty, medical treatments that cause more deaths than the illnesses they are supposed to treat and educational institutions which produce ever more world- and truth ignorant generations of children – these are just some expressions of “institutional counter-productivity” – itself inseparable from the “enframing” of whole realms of nature and entire population sectors as a mere statistical “standing reserve” for industrial, medical or educational processing, the essence of *das Gestell*. The German verb ‘stellen’ in its different forms means to order or set in place. *Das Gestell* does indeed order, set

and keep in their place both things and people. All the more important then, that those who write or speak critically of a type of conspiratorial ‘New World Order’ understand *das Gestell* – ‘The Frame’ or ‘The Enframing’ – as its hidden essence, one that is not the work of any individual or group but is that which works to shape and distort both nature and human beings in a way directly contrary to their *human* nature.

#### **4. Climates of Consciousness**

Behind all the current debates among scientists, economists, pundits and politicians surrounding both the causes and potentially catastrophic effects of global warming lies a wholly unthought dimension. In particular, apocalyptic Hollywood-style images of a ‘Day After Tomorrow’ – in which climate change brings about ‘climate catastrophe’, and with it, the end of human civilisation as we know it – singularly fail to recognise the most significant change of all. This is not the recognised disruption of ecosystems and the loss of biodiversity that is currently bringing an end to countless species of life. Nor is it the type of climatic change anticipated in the near or medium-term future – bringing with it a rise of sea levels and the submergence of entire land masses. For none of these current ecological realities or future climatic prognostications recognise the catastrophic decline of human civilisation that has *already occurred*. This decline does not have its causes in changes of the global climate, for the latter is but an expression of a fundamental change in *human nature* – in *the global climate of consciousness*. I am speaking of the sinking of whole *continents of human knowledge* and with it the loss of entire *species of knowledge* – in particular all those that lie outside the current ‘Frame’. Indeed, within the time-frame of just three decades, entire century- or millennia-old traditions of knowledge have been sunk. Even such great 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century giants as Nietzsche, Freud, Hegel, Marx and Martin Heidegger have been reduced to the status of ‘outdated’ thinkers or mere footnotes in the history of human thought, treated as mere ‘fossils’ in the archaeology of knowledge – and seen as best left buried in the strata of their centuries. For today we live in a global *climate of consciousness* in which such ‘species’ of great thinkers and all deep and original thinking ‘outside the frame’ are no longer countenanced – and in which the slightest claim to original or ‘primary’ thinking of any sort is regarded as politically and

academically ‘incorrect’. Indeed it is no longer considered necessary to even study the ‘primary’ works of great thinkers, buried as they are now under mountains – slag heaps – of superficial and often grossly ignorant ‘secondary’ literature claiming to offer adequate knowledge ‘about’ them. The reason for this is that our current global culture is no longer capable of even recognising, let alone appreciating and accommodating, the quite different *climate of consciousness* out of which such great thinkers and works of thought arose – which as early as the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and as recently as the 1970’s encompassed a far greater eco-diversity of species of knowledge than is now countenanced (for example numerous profound but wholly different understandings of what constitutes ‘knowledge’ or ‘science’ themselves. In the current climate of consciousness however, human beings have become so focussed on potentially catastrophic climate change in nature that they have become blind to the *civilisational catastrophe that has already occurred*. Any natural catastrophes that may occur in the future will be but a consequence, the after-shock of an earthquake that has reduced the proudest monuments to human thought and artistic creativity to ruin, and with them also the most significant pointers to what alone can ‘save’ humanity – the birth of a new climate of consciousness within the mass psyche of humanity and its expression in a new mode of thinking, outside ‘The Frame’.

## **5. The Con-Struct**

A basic characteristic of our world and its ‘Frame’ is what Martin Heidegger called “flight from thinking”. By this he did not mean ‘thinking’ as it is ordinarily understood – for this consists solely of using different sets or ‘frameworks’ of verbal concepts or constructs to understand the world – whilst not even beginning to question more deeply the meaning or adequacy of particular concepts or constructs. As well as ‘The Frame’ or ‘Enframing’, another way of translating what Heidegger called *das Gestell* is ‘the Con-struct’. By this is meant that which invisibly determines all those *con*-sensual methods of collectively *con-struing*, *structuring* or ‘*con-structing* our experience and understanding of the world that pass as ‘thinking’ – whilst at the same time passing over the most basic or fundamental of ‘constructs’ that ‘frame’ them – *the* Con-struct.

“I see the essence of technology in what I call the Con-struct ... The workings of the Con-struct mean: Human beings are caught [*gestellt*], claimed, and challenged by a power that is revealed in the essence of technology. The experience that humans are structured [*gestellt*] by some-thing that they are not themselves...”

Martin Heidegger *Spiegel* interview

Heidegger first coined the term *Gestell* in a profound search to identify and articulate the hidden essence of technology and of our technological culture. By ‘technology’ however, he did not mean actual technological constructions, instruments or gadgets of the sort that have become so much a part of our culture. Nor did he see technology merely as the ‘application’ of scientific thinking to the creation of diverse technologies and their products. Instead he saw technology as the hidden essence of scientific *thinking* itself.

The term *Gestell* derives from the German verb *stellen* – to set, set up or set upon. From it is derived the German word for representation [*Vorstellung*] meaning to ‘set before’ or ‘set in front’. *Das Gestell* can thus also be translated as a ‘set up’ or ‘frame up’. What is ‘framed’ by The Frame is expected and ‘set up’ (like a painting but unlike a piece of music) to be a *structured representation* of something – such as the *theoretical constructs* of modern science. What scientific constructs in particular conceal however, is the way in which they themselves are what first constructs the very *idea* of whatever it is that science then claims to represent or set before us as some experimentally proven or empirical ‘fact’. As Heidegger writes:

“Modern science’s way of representing [‘setting’ things ‘before’] pursues [‘sets upon’] and entraps [‘sets up’] nature as a calculable coherence of forces. Modern physics is not experimental physics because it applies [technological] apparatus to the questioning of nature. Rather the reverse is true. Because physics ... already as pure theory, sets nature up to exhibit itself [‘set itself before us’] as a coherence of forces calculable in advance, it therefore orders its experiments precisely for the purpose of asking [only] whether and how nature reports itself when set up in this way.”

Martin Heidegger *The Question Concerning Technology*

Thus it is simply *not* the case that there is first of all something that exists ‘out there’ – an ‘electron’ for example – something which science then happens to have a ready-to-hand term for and ready ways of finding evidence of. Instead the very term ‘electron’ is itself an objectified *construct* of scientific theory, just as what ‘an electron’ essentially *is* is nothing pre-determined by nature - but instead a construction of diverse and ever-changing theoretical representations or ‘constructs’ of it.

A current example of the latter lies in the concepts of ‘dark matter’, an as yet unexplained substance needed to account for otherwise inexplicable gravitational forces which prevent galaxies from flying apart – and believed to account for 90 to 99% of the physical universe. Together with this goes the concept of ‘dark energy’, supposed to make up 74% of the mass-energy of the universe and uniformly present throughout space. Attempts to identify the nature of dark matter however, postulate *in advance* its *particulate* nature. Hence the use of such a massive set up of ‘apparatus’ (another meaning of *Gestell*) as the CERN Hadron Collider to ‘discover’ the type of particles that make it up. What however, would such a discovery bring – except the confirmation of a postulate already *set up* – one which prevents nature itself from revealing itself in any other ways besides those set up through the limited set of questions on the basis of which it is experimentally interrogated and challenged to ‘answer’ for itself only and exclusively in terms of those questions. The ‘discovery’ of a ‘particle’ fitting the characteristics of dark matter would not ‘prove’ anything except those theoretical constructs and modes of experimental *measurement* by which such a discovery could come about – constructs and modes of measurement which *pre-define* the very ‘thing’ they are intended to ‘discover’ and ‘explain’ in such a way as to *fit the frame* of current ‘physics’. Thus such a ‘revolutionary’ discovery, far from being a profound scientific ‘breakthrough’, would in reality merely permit the addition of one more ‘particle’ to the current constructs of physics, albeit one now desperately needed to hold together our entire physical-scientific understanding of the universe – and to prevent *it* from ‘flying apart’ in precisely the way that ‘dark matter’ itself is supposed to prevent the universe itself from doing.

“Former Harvard research scholar, professor Shahriar Afshar said that failure to find the particle would bring current scientific theory tumbling down like a house of cards with nothing to replace it.”

[Richard Alleyne](#)

According to Afshar himself:

“There will be an all-out war among physicists. It will be a nightmarish situation that will put physics back into the wilderness.”

“We need to start having discussions about what are the alternatives. Because if the LHC [Large Hadron Collider] fails, then the Standard Model fails. If the Standard Model fails we have nothing left.”

## 6. Thinking or ‘Theory’

Whether we translate it as ‘frame’ or ‘frame up’, ‘set up’ or ‘con-struct’, the term *Gestell* is what allowed Heidegger to distinguish *thinking* from each and every type of *theorising*, ‘scientific’ or otherwise. For what characterises *theories* is that whilst each is defined by a specific set or framework of theoretical constructs, the theorists who work with and within them remain *thoughtlessly unaware* of the role of these frames and their constructs in ‘enframing’ or ‘constructing’ the very ‘facts’ or ‘realities’ which the ‘theories’ themselves claim merely to ‘represent’. A ‘theory’, in this sense, is like a picture of the world in which everything is ordered and taken into account except the very *frame* which first frames and presents the picture *as* a picture. It is the invisibility of their own theoretical *frames* to the theorists themselves – the *unthought* and therefore also *unquestioned* nature of their constructs – which distinguishes *theorising* from *thinking*.

“Theory makes secure at any given time a region of the real as its object-area. This area character of objectness is shown in the fact that it specifically maps out in advance the possibilities for the posing of questions.”

Martin Heidegger *Science and Reflection*

In contrast to the term ‘theory’, the word ‘philosophy’ has acquired an almost old-fashioned ring. And to the extent to which, as Heidegger himself repeatedly pointed out, science has effectively replaced even the most basic forms of philosophical reflection and thinking, the latter have indeed become ‘outdated’. The problem is that in place of the type of thinking that once characterised ‘philosophy’ we now have only a setting up of ‘theories’ or ‘models’. These in turn are judged only according to types of scientific ‘evidence’ of a sort already *framed in advance by those theories and their constructs*. Such evidence has no more ‘validity’ than a box-ticking questionnaire that restricts the one interrogated to choosing from a *pre-determined set of answers* in response to a *pre-determined set of questions* – and that according to the pre-determined *terms* in which the questions themselves are framed. This ‘questionnaire’ model is not restricted to actual questionnaires. Instead it reveals how, in essence, all *theories* and their research ‘evidence’ replace and block free thinking. For free thinking requires a space for free and open *questioning* ‘outside the frame’ – a questioning not bound by the framework of theoretical constructs it questions, nor bound exclusively by the question that can be framed in terms of those constructs – but a thinking which is instead free to question those constructs from outside their frame, and thus also to reveal and question the *hidden* and as-yet *unquestioned* assumptions that might lie behind them. Among these are a number of basic or ‘root assumptions’ that constitute the very essence of ‘The Frame’, not merely as ideas but as social practices which dominate our conceptual, perceptual and practical relation to the world

## **7. Root Assumptions**

The three interconnected root assumptions that constitute the essence of The Frame:

- Reality is made up of a set of identifiable ‘objects’.
- Knowledge is knowledge of objects.
- Truth is ‘objectivity’.

Again, these root assumptions are not merely intellectual principles but *social practices* – practices which frame and construct our perception of reality in their image.

The Frame is the essence of these practices, namely:

*The Total Objectification of Subjectivity*

- the reduction of subjectivity of ‘consciousness’ *as such* to an objectifiable ‘phenomenon’.
- the reduction of human subjectivity or consciousness to the property of an objectifiable ‘subject’ – the human being – or to an anatomical object – the brain.
- the reduction of all conscious beings or ‘subjects’ to *objects* of thought, feeling or perception.
- the reduction of knowledge as such to a relation between an objectified subject and its cognitive objects.
- the reduction of the world as subjectively experienced to a world of known objects, existing independently and prior to the subjective experience of them.

The current English usage of the word ‘object’ is traced no further back than the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Eytmologically, it derives from the Latin *obicere* – to ‘throw against’, ‘put in the way of’, ‘put before’, or ‘put in front of’ - hence also something to ‘aim at’ or ‘target’.

Some of the numberless socio-cultural consequences of the Root Assumptions as a social practice – the *Total Objectification of Subjectivity*.

1. War on people – the reduction of the subjectively experiencing beings – seen as mere bodily objects to military targets.
2. War on illness – the reduction of all *subjectively* experienced dis-ease, distress or discomfort to something ‘caused’ by anatomical identifiable ‘disease’ object such as a gene or virus – and thus to a ‘target’ for pharmaceutical drugs and for an entire ‘health’ industry conducting warfare aimed at the eradication and annihilation of illness (e.g. ‘war on cancer’).
3. War on nature – the reduction of nature, including human nature, to natural and human ‘resources’ – actual or potential objects of extraction and exploitation in the service of the ever-increasing production of objects as commodities. Thus oceans are reduced to giant

fish farms, the sky to ‘air space’ for the airline industry, living and conscious animals to raw materials for industrial processing by the food industry.

4. War on values – the reduction of all subjectively experienced and embodied values to a single quantifiable value – ‘market value’ – and the total *devaluation of all values* that cannot be objectified in the form of commodities (marketable products and services).

5. War on women – being historically seen by men as the chief symbols, evokers and embodiments of dimensions of subjectivity that challenge The Frame, women are necessarily a principle object of entrapping Enframing and Objectification, and – to the extent that they defy practices of enframing and objectification – of necessary punishment, imprisonment or annihilation *as* objects. This in turn allows men to give vent to the ever-threatening and aggressive surge of their own repressed and objectified subjectivity.

6. War on consciousness as such – that is to say, on all understanding, expressions, manifestation and embodiments of subjectivity that defy practices of enframing and objectification. A principle weapon in this war is the field of so-called ‘consciousness studies’. These treat consciousness as a mysterious ‘phenomenon’ – totally disregarding the logical and wholly un-mysterious truth that since consciousness is the very *condition* for our experience of any phenomena whatsoever, it cannot – *in principle* – be reduced to or explained by any phenomena we are conscious of.

7. War on the world – ‘globalisation’ as the total fragmentation and loss of ‘world’ – now reduced to an ever-more fragmented set of competing national, cultural, communal, and private modes of enframing and objectification, all built on the Root Assumptions and serving the Total Objectification of Subjectivity – principally through modes of interpersonal and international *warfare*.

8. War on God – the reduction of ‘god’ to an invisible, transcendental *object* of worship in place of the subjective experience of God – not as an object but as that universal and divine consciousness or subjectivity present within and manifest as all things and all beings. Institutionalised religions and theologies are just as much weapons in the war on god as secularism or militant ‘atheism’.

## 8. ‘War’ and ‘Awareness’

The words ‘consciousness’ and ‘conscience’ share a common root ( Latin *consciere*) meaning a common or shared (*con-*) knowing or awareness (*scire*) with both a subjective and ethical character. The English words *aware* and *beware* and the German words *gewahren* (to be aware) and *wehren* (to guard or defend) have a common root in the Indo-European *wer* - whose sense is that of keeping safe by acting as ‘guardian’ or ‘warden’

(themselves cognate words). Yet there is a fundamental distinction between the violent guardianship or defensiveness of 'war' (a word rooted in Old High German *werra* – 'confusion') and that clear, quiescent 'guarding awareness' that allows us to act – without violence – as responsible and subjectively aware guardians or wardens of the world.

Yet the question that Martin Heidegger was left with towards the end of his life was whether there was – or how long there still would be – any place in our war-riven world for a 'receiving-perceiving' awareness that is free of the constraints of 'The Frame'. Hence the following exchange in the 1976 interview he gave to the German magazine 'Der Spiegel':

SPIEGEL: Can the individual still influence this network of inevitabilities at all, or can philosophy influence it, or can they both influence it together in that philosophy leads one individual or several individuals to a certain action?

HEIDEGGER: Those questions bring us back to the beginning of our conversation. If I may answer quickly and perhaps somewhat vehemently, but from long reflection: Philosophy will not be able to bring about a direct change of the present state of the world. This is true not only of philosophy but of all merely human meditations and endeavours. Only a god can yet save us...

SPIEGEL: Is there a connection between your thinking and the emergence of this god? Is there, as you see it, a causal connection? Do you think we can get this god to come by thinking?

HEIDEGGER: We cannot get him to come by thinking. At best we can prepare the readiness of expectation.

SPIEGEL: In earlier times – and not only in earlier times – it was thought that philosophy was indirectly very effective (seldom directly), that it helped new currents to emerge. Just thinking of Germans, great names like Kant, Hegel, up to Nietzsche, not to mention Marx, it can be proved that philosophy has had, in roundabout ways, an enormous effect. Do you think this effectiveness of philosophy is at an end? And when you say philosophy is dead, that it no longer exists are you including the idea that the effectiveness of philosophy (if indeed it ever existed) today, at least, no longer exists?

HEIDEGGER: I just said that an indirect, but not a direct, effect is possible through another kind of thinking. Thus thinking can, as it were, causally change the condition of the world.

SPIEGEL: We have already named Kant, Hegel, and Marx as great movers. But impulses came from Leibniz, too – for the development of modern physics and therefore for the origin of the modern world in general. We believe you said just now that you do not expect such an effect today any more.

HEIDEGGER: No longer in the sense of philosophy. The role philosophy has played up to now has been taken over by the sciences today ... Philosophy dissolves into the individual sciences: psychology, logic, political science.

SPIEGEL: And what takes the place of philosophy now?

HEIDEGGER: Cybernetics [what we now call ‘Information Technology’]

SPIEGEL: Or the pious one who remains open?

HEIDEGGER: But that is no longer philosophy.

SPIEGEL: What is it then?

HEIDEGGER: I call it the Other Thinking.

SPIEGEL: You call it the other thinking. Would you like to formulate that a little more clearly?

HEIDEGGER: Were you thinking of the sentence with which I conclude my lecture on The Question Concerning Technology: “For questioning is the piety of thinking”?

SPIEGEL: In a conversation with a Buddhist monk approximately two years ago, you spoke about “a completely new method of thinking” and said that “for the time being only very few people can execute” this new method of thinking. Do you mean to say that only very few people can have the insights that are, in your opinion, possible and necessary?

HEIDEGGER: “Have” in its very primordial sense - that they can, in a way, “say” them.

SPIEGEL: Yes, but in the conversation with the Buddhist, you did not clearly describe how it can be realized.

*HEIDEGGER: ... I know nothing about how this thinking is “effective.” It could also be that the path of thinking today leads toward silence, so that thinking may be protected from being thrown out within a year. It could also be that it takes three hundred years to become “effective.”*

The question of where the nature and direction of our world leaves us – and with it the future of thinking as such – is still with us. It is the task of ‘The New Yoga’ not to change

the world directly but to offer – through ‘The Awareness Principle’ – the foundations of that “Other Thinking” through which that *knowing and guarding awareness* which Heidegger correctly named as “the god” (not ‘a’ god) who can save us now. Those “few people who can execute this new method of thinking” are what he called, in 1938, “The Ones to Come”. By this he meant those who alone can allow themselves, in this, the era and hour of humanity’s apparent ‘going under’, to ‘go under’ in a more essential sense – through letting themselves go down into an ever-deepening questioning and *understanding*. For “disquiet of questioning is not an empty insecurity, but the enopening and fostering of that stillness which ... awaits the simple intimacy of the call.”

“The Ones to Come” are us “...*those strangers of like mind who are ... mace bearers of the truth of be-ing, in which a being is uplifted to the simply mastery that prevails in every thing and every breath. The stillest witness to the stillest stillness, in which an imperceptible tug turns the truth back, out of the confusion of all calculated correctness ... They reside in masterful knowing, as what is truthful knowing. Whoever attains this knowing-awareness does not let himself be computed and coerced.*”

Martin Heidegger *Contributions to Philosophy*

For further essays and information on books by Peter Wilberg see:

[www.peterwilberg.org](http://www.peterwilberg.org)

[www.thenewyoga.org/e-books.htm](http://www.thenewyoga.org/e-books.htm)

<http://globaltrends2025.blogspot.com>

<http://theawarenessprinciple.blogspot.com>

[www.heidegger.org.uk/new\\_medicine\\_home.htm](http://www.heidegger.org.uk/new_medicine_home.htm)

<http://meaningofdepression.blogspot.com>

<http://heideggerindianthought.blogspot.com>

<http://physicsanddarkmatter.blogspot.com>

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