

The Ethical Significance of *Gelassenheit* in Martin Heidegger in the Age of AI

La significación ética de la *Gelassenheit* en Martin Heidegger en la era de la IA

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Abstract: In the era dominated by artificial intelligence (AI), questions about ethical engagement with technology have become imperatively complex. This paper examines Martin Heidegger's concept of *Gelassenheit* often translated as "releasement" or "letting-be" is an ethical framework for navigating the challenges posed by AI. The paper observes that moving beyond the constraining logic of technological "enframing" (*Gestell*), *Gelassenheit* emphasizes openness, reflection and the cultivation of human freedom and dignity in the face of inescapable algorithmic systems. Thus, applying this principle, humans can resist the reduction of experience to data, assert critical agency and foster a relational and mindful engagement with technology. The paper argues that the promise of *Gelassenheit* is precisely a future in which AI supports human flourishing without submerging it and where the mystery, fragility and openness of human life remain intact in the face of systems that seek to calculate everything. Thus, in releasement, human reclaims its freedom not by rejecting technology entirely but by remembering that its deepest identity cannot be computed and that to be human remains more than what any algorithm can grasp.

Key-words: *Gelassenheit*, Heidegger, artificial intelligence, ethics of technology, human dignity, freedom

Resumen: En la era dominada por la inteligencia artificial (IA), las cuestiones relativas al compromiso ético con la tecnología se han vuelto imperativamente complejas. Este trabajo examina el concepto heideggeriano de *Gelassenheit*, traducido a menudo como "desasimiento" o "dejar-ser", como un marco ético para afrontar los desafíos que plantea la IA. El artículo observa que, al ir más allá de la lógica constrictiva del "enmarcamento" tecnológico (*Gestell*), la *Gelassenheit* enfatiza la apertura, la reflexión y el cultivo de la libertad y la dignidad humanas frente a sistemas algorítmicos ineludibles. Así, aplicando este principio, los seres humanos pueden resistir la reducción de la experiencia a datos, afirmar su capacidad crítica de acción y fomentar una relación con la tecnología que sea atenta y consciente. El trabajo sostiene que la promesa de la *Gelassenheit* es precisamente la de un futuro en el que la IA favorezca el florecimiento humano sin anegararlo, y en el que el misterio, la fragilidad y la apertura de la vida humana permanezcan intactos frente a sistemas que pretenden calcularlo todo. De este modo, en el desasimiento, el ser humano recupera su libertad no rechazando por completo la tecnología, sino recordando que su identidad más profunda no puede ser computada y que ser humano sigue siendo más de lo que cualquier algoritmo puede aprehender.

Palabras clave: *Gelassenheit*, Heidegger, inteligencia artificial, ética de la tecnología, dignidad humana, libertad

Preamble

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed human experience and also raising fundamental ethical questions about autonomy, freedom and human dignity. From predictive algorithm to decision-making systems in healthcare, finance and social governance, AI increasingly mediates human action, perception and relationality. While much discourse focuses on regulation, control and strict safeguard, a deeper philosophical concern emerges: how can humans cultivate an ethical stance towards technology that preserves freedom, dignity and authentic being? This is where Heidegger's concept of *Gelassenheit* or "releasement" offers a compelling foundation for addressing this question by providing an approach that moves beyond mere control of technological systems to the cultivation of thoughtful and reflective engagement. (Heidegger, 1977, p. 32; Dreyfus, 1991, p. 221).

Heidegger distinguishes *Gelassenheit* from calculative thinking, emphasizing a mode of openness and receptivity that allows beings, including technology itself, to "let-be" without reducing them to mere instruments of standing-reserve (*Bestand*) (Heidegger, 1977, p. 32). Fundamental to *Gelassenheit* therefore is a call to cultivate a willingness to step back from the compulsion to control or dominate technological systems and instead foster a mode of ethical attentiveness that respects both human and non-human agency. Dreyfus (1991, p. 222) emphasizes that such openness does not entail passivity; rather, it involves a deliberate engagement that allows humans to discern proper relation to technology without being consumed by it.

Enframing and the Crisis of Technological Thinking in the Age of AI

The age of artificial intelligence is often described as an era of unprecedented innovation and from Heidegger's perspective, it is equally an era of unprecedented danger; not danger in the sense of catastrophic failure or malevolent machines, but danger rooted in a subtle transformation of how humans beings encounter the world, others and themselves (Fasiku and Attah, 2024, p. 109). Central to Heidegger's critiques of technology is the term *Gestell*, often translated as "enframing", or the mode of revealing in which everything including human life appears primarily as a resource to be calculated, optimized and used (Heidegger, 1977, p. 19). Heidegger argues that the essence of modern technology is not technological equipment itself, but the worldview it imposes, one that reduces beings to what he calls *standing-reserve* (*Bestand*). In contemporary AI, this worldview manifest in *datafication* i.e. the systematic conversion of human behavior, emotion, attention and even identity into data that can be processed, predicted and monetized. Social media algorithms organize what individuals see and believe; AI-driven surveillance systems classify bodies and behaviors; recommendation engines steer decisions; predictive analytics attempt to anticipate future actions. All of these align with the logic Heidegger

warned about the transformation of the world into a calculable order designed for efficiency and control (Heidegger, 1977, p. 17).

The danger thereof is not simply that AI systems can be biased or opaque although these problems are inevitable but that human mode of engaging the world becomes narrowly calculative and predictive. Heidegger thus distinguishes calculative thinking which focuses on prediction and efficiency from meditative thinking, which opens space for reflection, care and meaning (Heidegger, 1977, p. 46). Thus, in algorithmic age, calculative thinking dominates not only technical processes but in everyday life in which people increasingly relate with/to themselves through metrics such as productivity data, screen-time analytics, fitness trackers, mood logs or credit scores. Even social interactions are filtered through quantification such as the number of likes, followers or engagements one receives on digital platforms (Fasiku and Attah, 2024, p. 112). As Zuboff rightly noted, this “instrumentarian power” reconfigures behaviors into objects of extraction and modification (Zuboff, 2019, p. 45). Heidegger would likely see this as a clear indication that “enframing” has permeated the entire structure of existence.

However, AI does not simply respond to human desires; it actively shapes them gradually narrowing the horizon of what one finds meaningful or worthy of attention. This is Heidegger’s fear that technological thinking constrains the openness necessary for authentic *being-in-the-world*. When algorithms present already-filtered worlds, offering preselected paths and optimized options, the human capacity for genuine choice, surprise and contemplative freedom diminishes. Coeckelbergh excitingly argues that, algorithmic systems can create “moral and experiential tunnels” restricting how individuals interpret themselves and their possibilities (Coeckelbergh, 2020, p. 57).

This crisis of technological thinking also plunges into a crisis of relationality. In a world essentially dominated by AI, relationships risk becoming instrumentalized. Digital platforms encourage individuals to treat connections as data points, attention as currency and identity as a construct to be optimized for visibility and perhaps influence. Heidegger aptly warns that “enframing” threatens to obscure more original ways of relating especially those marked by care, presence and openness because, everything becomes approached through the lens of utility (Heidegger, 1977, p. 32). As such, when AI mediates interactions, even unconsciously, human beings begin to lose sensitivity to the depth and unpredictability that characterize genuine relationships. This crisis extends to political and societal structure as well, because AI-driven governance, algorithmic policing, biometric surveillance and automated decision-making systems reflect a worldview in which human beings become manageable units of prediction rather than free and dignified subjects. Crawford however noted that AI embeds social and political assumptions into seemingly neutral systems, often reinforcing inequality while at the same time masking the underlying power dynamics (Crawford, 2021, p. 10). Such systems illustrate what Fasiku and Attah feared that technology might become the dominant perspective through which the world is interpreted,

leaving little or no room for alternative perspective or mode of being (Fasiku and Attah, 2024, p. 114).

It is important however to emphasize here that Heidegger was not anti-technology. His major concern was with the unreflective dominance of technological thinking. AI demonstrate this dominance very remarkably. In many areas such as education, healthcare and employment, AI is treated as a default solution, even when it subtly reshapes the values of the institutions it serves. So, for Heidegger, this is precisely how “enframing” becomes dangerous not through overt coercion but through the quiet normalization of calculative logic until it becomes the *take-for-granted* way of encountering the world (Heidegger, 1977, p. 28). The danger that follows is that the individual no longer recognizes “enframing” as a mode of revealing among many; they mistake it for the only way the world can be.

Hence, it is important to identify the tension at the heart of this discussion because as much as AI promises efficiency, convenience and capability, yet in doing so, it risks narrowing the horizon of human freedom and diminishing the capacity for thoughtful, meaningful and dignified existence. The dominance of algorithmic reasoning encourages humans to value themselves and others in terms of usefulness or data productivity, thereby forgetting that existence is richer than what any computational model can capture. As Floridi notes, the *infosphere* increasingly mediates reality, raising questions not only about ethics but about ontology and what it means to be human in a digitally structure world (Floridi, 2014, p. 24).

Understanding this crisis is pertinent because it sets the stage for Heidegger’s alternative *Gelassenheit* or releasement. If “enframing” represents a closing-off of existential possibilities, *Gelassenheit* represents an opening; an invitation to engage with technology thoughtfully rather than reactively. The severity of this crisis reveals why such a posture is urgently needed (Fasiku and Attah, 2024, 114). Without releasement, humans risk becoming absorbed into the technological worldview, losing the capacity to relate to themselves and others with depth, dignity and freedom. The AI era thus embodies both the culmination of “enframing” and the possibility of rediscovering new ways of being. This crisis is real, but it is also an opportunity, a call to rethink how human inhabit a world increasingly shaped by algorithms.

Understanding *Gelassenheit* and the Possibility of Letting-Be

To understand why *Gelassenheit* offers a meaningful ethical viewpoint for the age of AI, it is essential to understand the depth of what Martin Heidegger meant by the concept. *Gelassenheit* is often translated as “releasement,” but it is more than a passive detachment or a romantic withdrawal from technology without being dominated by it. It represents a subtle but powerful transformation in how we think, feel and dwell in a world permeated by powerful technological force. Heidegger first introduces *Gelassenheit* explicitly in *Discourse on Thinking*

(1959), where he describes it as a way of allowing things to “be.” This does not mean indifference; it means resisting the urge to control, manipulate or reduce everything to calculable function (Heidegger, 1966, p. 55). *Gelassenheit* therefore emerges as a counter-movement to *Gestell* (enframing), which is the technological mindset that seeks to transform all beings including human being into resources or standing-reserve (Heidegger, 1977, p. 19). To understand *Gelassenheit* more evidently, one must therefore situate it within Heidegger’s long-standing concern with the dominance of the calculative thinking. In this view, modern humanity risk losing the capacity for what he calls “meditative thinking” a reflective, open and contemplative way of encountering reality (46). Calculative thinking therefore is not inherently wrong; indeed, it is necessary for science, engineering and technological innovation. But when calculative thinking becomes the foundation of all thought, the human relationship with the world becomes compressed and flattened. Beings are approached only in terms of what they can deliver, not in terms of their intrinsic meaning or presence. *Gelassenheit* thus emerges as a corrective way of stepping back from the aggressive stance on modern technology without rejecting it. As Heidegger himself writes, it is “the allowing of things to be in their own essence” (Heidegger, 1966, p. 59). This shift is subtle yet crucial because instead of forcing technology to conform to human control or allowing technology to control human existence, *Gelassenheit* proposes a third way, a space of thoughtful freedom.

In *Gelassenheit*, Heidegger seems to echo the spirit of earlier mystical and contemplative traditions that valued openness and non-coercive awareness. However, he remains firmly grounded in the contemporary technological condition. His point is not that human should escape into nature or abandon modernity; rather he insists that humans must learn to relate to technology differently. Dreyfus interprets this not as anti-technology romanticism but as an existential readiness and ability to use technology without letting it define the meaning of existence (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 222). This distinction is particularly important in the age of AI, where humans increasingly surrender decision-making, attention and even identity to algorithmic systems. *Gelassenheit* becomes relevant because it reorients the human response to technological dominance. Instead of reacting with fear or blind enthusiasm, *Gelassenheit* fosters openness without surrender. It cultivates a mindful space where humans can recognize technology’s power yet maintain interior freedom (Fasiku, 2025, p. 98).

Another significant aspect of *Gelassenheit* is the way it transforms human agency. In the enframed world, the human being is subtly conditioned to act as a manager of resources or as a resource to be managed. AI amplifies this tendency by automating tasks, predicting behaviors, recommending choices and nudging decisions. Under these conditions, human agency risks shrinking into algorithmic compliance. *Gelassenheit*, however nurtures a renewed sense of agency, one that is grounded not in domination or control but in reflective discernment. Heidegger distinguishes between two forms of freedom: the modern freedom of mastery and the deeper freedom of letting-be. The first one is rooted in openness (Heidegger, 1966, p. 60). In the context of AI ethics, this

distinction is vital. The dominant approach to AI ethics focuses on control such as control through designs, regulation, governance or oversight. These are necessary, nevertheless, they do not address the deeper cultural and existential issues at stake.

However, *Gelassenheit* suggests that freedom in the age of AI is not simply about controlling machines but about cultivating a way of being that is not determined by them. This leads to another most important insights in Heidegger's thought where he maintains that technology does not dominate human beings by force; it dominates by shaping how they think and experience the world. That is why *Gelassenheit* is not a strategy but a transformation of disposition and as Feldman says, *Gelassenheit* is an "ethical opening" that allows humans to encounter technology without being absorbed into its logic (Feldman, 2021, p. 523). It resists the reduction of human dignity to measurable outputs or algorithmically predicted behaviors. Thus, in a world where AI increasingly determines what individuals see, search for, pay attention or desire, *Gelassenheit* fosters attentional sovereignty as a way of reclaiming one's capacity to attend, reflect and choose thoughtfully. This sense, it is not retreat, but a form of active clarity enabling beings to recognize both the promise and the peril of AI.

Importantly also, *Gelassenheit* also offers a new model of ethical relationality. Instead of interacting with technology from a stance of exploitation or fear, human can approach AI with care, discernment and responsibility. Coeckelbergh notes that ethical engagement with AI requires not only rules but a cultivated sensibility; one that is mindful of the vulnerabilities and dependencies that AI creates (Coeckelbergh, 2020, p. 88). *Gelassenheit* therefore provides specifically such a sensibility. This relations openness also extends to extend-to-human relationships. When "enframing" dominates, human beings risk treating each other as tools, metrics or data profiles. *Gelassenheit* on the other hand nurture the capacity to truly encounter others beyond utility value or algorithmic representations. It rekindles the human ability to meet others with presence, depth and humility which are key elements of dignity.

Gelassenheit also opens up the possibility of dwelling, a concept central to Heidegger's later work. Dwelling is not simply inhabiting a physical space; it is an existential condition of being rooted in meaning and presence (Heidegger, 1971, p. 145). In the AI era, where speed, automation, and optimization dominate, dwelling becomes fragile. *Gelassenheit* becomes the foundation of relearning how to dwell, how to live meaningfully, slowly, attentively and responsibly within a technological world. In this way, *Gelassenheit* is both a critique and an invitation. On the one hand, it critiques the dominance of technological thinking while at the same time inviting humans to cultivate a wiser, more dignified relationship with technology. Instead of resisting AI, humans can learn to encounter it thoughtfully, use it responsibly and refuse to let it eclipse deeper forms of meaning. *Gelassenheit* thus becomes a powerful ethical framework; one that helps preserve the richness of human life in an algorithmic age.

***Gelassenheit* as an Ethical Attitude towards AI**

A central promise of *Gelassenheit* (Heidegger's notion of *releasement toward things*) is that it can restore a meaningful sense of human dignity in an age when artificial intelligence increasingly shapes, predicts and normalizes human behavior. In *Discourse on Thinking*, Heidegger argues that authentic dignity emerges when humans "let beings be" rather than subject everything to the instrumental logic of control (Heidegger, 1966, p. 55). This point is very crucial today because algorithmic systems operationalize precisely the opposite orientation: they model human beings as data flow, behavioral patterns and predictable nodes in a technological grid. The ethical challenge there is not simply whether AI harms or benefits society, but whether humans can still relate to themselves as more than programmable resource. *Gelassenheit* offers therefore a critical alternative not an anti-technology stance but a way of being that resists reducing the world and the self to raw materials for optimization.

One important and in fact the most striking implication of *Gelassenheit* for technological ethics is its insistence on self-limitation. Modern societies often assume that if a technology *can* be built, it inevitably *should* be deployed. Heidegger exposes this as a symptom of "enframing", the technological worldview that interprets all existence including human existence as something to be ordered, optimized and in fact exploited. (Heidegger, 1977, p. 23). As such, when AI development follows this pattern, dignity becomes conditional or utility: a person matters insofar as they generate profitable data, efficient output or predictable behavioral signals. *Gelassenheit* thus disrupts this momentum by suggesting that ethical freedom involves choosing not to dominate, even when domination is technically implied or possible.

This is a radical shift because, it redefines morality not as maximizing outcomes, but cultivating the capacity to *step back*. Ethical self-limitation therefore becomes an act of care for oneself, for others and for the world. This very idea connects closely with contemporary debates on digital autonomy and algorithmic power. Scholars such as Han argue that modern technologies often transform individuals into self-optimizing subjects who internalize the logic of productivity, speed and constant connectivity (Han, 2015, p. 92). AI intensifies this dynamic by providing frictionless pathways to convenience as shown in recommendation engine that tell us what to watch, predictive keyboards that finish our sentences and social feeds that anticipate our desires and preferences. Therefore, from Heidegger's perspective, these systems risk hollowing out our sense of agency because they narrow the range of the possible ways of being. *Gelassenheit* however counters this assumption by reintroducing reflective distance, an openness where the individual can pause before responding to the pressures of technological systems. The dignity protected is not abstract but experiential because it emerges when a person recognizes themselves as capable of deciding how they will relate to technology, rather than being passively shaped by it.

Additionally, *Gelassenheit* suggests a way to reconceive freedom beyond the common narrative of unlimited choice. For Heidegger, genuine freedom

does not arise from many options, but from the possibility of encountering the world without coercion from technology or from one's own compulsion. (Heidegger, 1966, p. 62). AI, however, often reinforces compulsive patterns by exploiting cognitive biases and behavioral tendencies. In this sense, the ethical problem is subtler than over manipulation, because it is the slow erosion of inner space where decisions gain meaning. *Gelassenheit* thus preserves this inner space by ensuring a kind of *calm availability*; a readiness to engage with technology and also the readiness to disengage. This dual movement protects human dignity because it treats the self not as an instrument to be optimized but as a being whose worth is intrinsic and irreducible. Also, applying *Gelassenheit* to AI ethics encourages communities and institutions not just individuals to adopt forms of technological humility. Ethical self-limitation at the societal level might involve choosing *not* to implement data-intensive surveillance systems for instance even when they promise efficiency because choosing *not* to automate decision-making in context where human judgment is morally essential or choosing *not* to pursue predictive analytics that expand institutional power at the expense of human unpredictability and freedom. These are exercises of dignity not constraints on progress. They demonstrate that a society can relate to technology with maturity using it thoughtfully not compulsively.

Thus, *Gelassenheit* as an ethical attitude suggests that the human future with AI does not hinge on eliminating technologies or mastering them completely, but on cultivating a deeper awareness of how we will allow them to shape us. By resisting the totalizing mindset of “enframing” and embracing a posture of releasement, individual and societies can sustain forms of dignity that remain intact even amid rapid technological advancement. This is not nostalgia for a pre-technological world; it is a call for a *more human* technological worlds, one where freedom is preserved through humility, restraint and a willingness to let things be.

From Releasement to Ethical Praxis

The proceeding argument has suggested that Heidegger's notion of *Gelassenheit* offers a profound reorientation for ethical reflection in the technological age. However, a fundamental question persists: how can a concept grounded in existential ontology meaningfully inform the practical governance of artificial intelligence? If releasement remains confined to contemplative reflection, its significance to contemporary AI ethics risks appearing abstract or indeterminate. The challenge therefore is to demonstrate how *Gelassenheit* can move from ontological insight to ethical applicability without reducing it to a procedural formula. Heidegger himself cautions against transforming thinking into calculative technique (Heidegger, 1996, p. 46), and thus the task is not to extract rigid rules from thought, but to articulate a methodological orientation capable of guiding moral deliberation within AI development and deployment.

Heidegger's critique of modern technology as *Gestell* describes a mode of revealing in which beings appear primarily as standing-reserve, resource ordered for efficiency and control (Heidegger, 1993, p. 320). In such a condition, human beings themselves risk becoming components within technological systems rather than autonomous centers of meaning. Contemporary AI systems often operate precisely within this horizon as predictive analytics, behavioral scoring and algorithmic optimization render individuals intelligible as data points, probabilities and performance metrics. The ethical relevance of releasement therefore emerges as a counter-posture rather than asking only how efficiently a system function, releasement asks how that system discloses the human being. It shifts the evaluative emphasis from optimization to ontological disclosure. As Feldman argues, releasement does not advocate withdrawal from technology but a transformation in the manner of engagement which serves as an attitude that resist totalizing control and preserves human openness. (Feldman, 2021, p. 508).

To render this orientation practically meaningful, one may articulate a structured framework for ethical reflection grounded in Heidegger's insights. The first moment involves phenomenological disclosure analysis; prior to implementation, designers and institutions must interrogate how an AI system presents or constitutes its human subjects. For instance, does a hiring algorithm reduce applicants to predictive productivity indicators derived from historical data? Or does a predictive policing tool disclose neighborhoods as statistical risk terrain? Such systems may unintentionally narrow the understanding of human capacity to what is historically measurable, thereby foreclosing transformation and novelty. This concern echoes Borgmann's warning that technological devices can obscure richer forms of engagement by reconfiguring reality around efficiency and availability (Borgmann, 1984, p. 40).

The second moment entails an enframing diagnostic. The evaluative question here becomes whether the system primarily orders human beings as standing reserve. For instance, predictive scoring systems finance, employment or in criminal justice frequently operate within logics of extraction and optimization that align with Heidegger's description of *enframing*. When algorithmic systems treat persons as reservoirs of behavioral data to be mined and predicted, they invariably intensify the reduction that Heidegger identifies. Feenberg's critical theory of technology reinforces this reductionist concern when he notes that technical systems often embody social power structures unless reflexively redesigned (Feenberg, 199, p. 87). Releasement thus demands no immediate rejection, but a heightened scrutiny and the possibility of modification or refusal.

A third moment may be described as the releasement test itself. In this case, one must ask whether a posture of letting-be would permit, modify or reject the intervention. For example, in healthcare, diagnostic AI tool may assist physicians without supplanting interpretive judgment. In this case, releasement may permit the system insofar as it supports rather than replaces human discernment. In this kind of domain, releasement may demand significant modification or even refusal. The decisive criterion is whether

existential openness and human unpredictability, vulnerability and narrative depth is however preserved.

Closely related is a dignity preservation inquiry. Human dignity in this context isn't merely a legal abstraction but an ontological condition grounded in the capacity for self-disclosure and transformation. Zuboff observes that surveillance-based data economies for instance transform lived experience into behavioural surplus for commercial exploitation. (Zuboff, 2019, p. 94). As such, when AI systems convert human interiority into extractable data, they inevitably risk diminishing this ontological dignity. Releasement thus resists such total visibility by preserving what Heidegger calls the "mystery" that belongs to being itself (Heidegger, 1966, p. 55). As such, ethical AI governance informed by releasement would therefore protect domains of life where opacity, ambiguity and contextual judgment are essential.

Finally, releasement introduces a principle largely absent in contemporary innovation discourse. Modern technological culture often assumes that capabilities entails obligation. However, Heidegger reminds us that the essence of technology is not itself technological, but rooted in a particular mode of revealing. It certain domains such as an intimate relationship or grief are transformed into calculable processes, something irretrievable may be lost. Han's critique of the "burnout society" highlights how this optimization logic can erode depth and contemplative space (Han, 2015, p. 12). Releasement thus legitimizes the ethical possibility of limitation, recognizing that wisdom sometimes manifests as refusal rather than expansion. Thus, releasement would require hybrid model of preserving this human interpretive discretion rather than fully automated candidate ranking.

Admittedly, the movement from ontology to practice is not without its difficulty. It is very evident that releasement lacks the procedural determinacy characteristic of rule-based ethical theories. Its guidance may however appear indeterminate in contexts demanding clear policy prescriptions. However, this indeterminacy is not a defect but a reflection of its depth. As such releasement becomes a regulative mechanism rather than a prescriptive model. It shapes the horizon within which ethical decisions are made, even if it does not supply ready-made answers. Furthermore, institutional structures oriented towards profit and scalability may resist calls for restraints. Thus, embedding releasement into AI governance may require institutional practices and mechanisms such as regular ethical audit, interdisciplinary oversight boards and structured pauses before deployment.

Undeniably, the ethical significance of *Gelassenheit* lies not in transforming it into a compliance manual but in cultivating ethical imagination. It only helps to reintroduce deliberative space into technological momentum and reminds us that human beings exceed every predictive model. Where AI systems seeks mastery through calculation, releasement introduces humility; where algorithms seek exhaustive transparency, it preserves mystery and where innovation seeks acceleration, it legitimizes thoughtful hesitation. In this way, the transition from philosophical theory to ethical applicability does not diminish Heidegger's

depth, rather, it allows his insights to enlighten contemporary dilemma with renewed urgency. Releasement therefore becomes ethically operative precisely insofar as it reshapes how we see, questions and limits the technological systems that increasingly shape humans.

Towards a “Post-enframed” Digital Ethics and the Re-Humanization of Technology

If *Gelassenheit* offers a personal and philosophical posture toward technology, then its final ethical power lies in its ability to reshape collective life; our institutions, communities, public spaces and digital identity, memory and value. In such a world, the ethical questions are no longer only about what AI does, but more about what it makes us to become. Therefore, a “Post-enframed” digital ethics must begin with the recognition that technology does not merely serve society; it reconfigures society. Scholars such as Feenberg (1999, p. 72) and Couldry (2020, p. 14) argue that digital infrastructures embed assumptions about what counts as meaningful, efficient or valuable. When these infrastructures follow the logic of “enframing”, society adopts a worldview where relationships are reduced to data exchanges, attention becomes a commodity and identity is managed through algorithmic profiles. Heidegger’s critique warns that such systems shape a world in which human beings increasingly perceived themselves through technological categories as “users” “data subjects” or “engagement units”. *Gelassenheit* intervenes by calling for a reorientation as a form of collective awareness that refuses to treat human existence as a programmable resource.

At the community level, *Gelassenheit* ensures what might call relational freedom i.e. a shared commitment to allowing persons, culture and ways of life to unfold without being forced into algorithmic standardization. Digital technologies often homogenize cultural expression, privileging viral contents, optimized engagement and predictable patterns of consumption. In contrast, in releasement encourages communities to cultivate spaces where ambiguity, slowness and difference are not liabilities but essential features of human flourishing. For example, ethical technology design guided by *Gelassenheit* would prioritize platforms that support deliberation over speed, context over metrics and mutual understanding over automated matching. It would also resist the pressure to collect unnecessary personal data or information, recognizing that not all aspects of human life should be rendered visible, measurable or computationally exploitable.

Very importantly also, “post-enframed” digital ethics implies a transformation in how institutions understand responsibility. In a world dominated by AI-driven decision-making, responsibility often becomes diffused because companies attribute outcomes to algorithms, governments to complex systems and individuals to their devices. Heidegger’s analysis of “enframing” helps clarify why this happens especially when technology is seen as an autonomous

force, human lose sight of the fact that they remain its creators, deployers and custodians. *Gelassenheit* restores responsibility not by demanding control but by demanding attentiveness. Ethical institutions must ask, *what kind of world does this technology call forth? What human possibilities does it open or close?* Adopting such questions, institutions create space for humility, reflectivity and genuine accountability such qualities often absent in technologically accelerated societies.

Furthermore, a “post-enframed” digital ethics recognizes that resisting the excesses of technological power requires collective will, not merely individual choice. Even if a person practices releasement in their personal life, they remain embedded in large-scale technological system such as predictive policing algorithms for instance, social media feeds, biometric database and governmental AI frameworks. As such, *Gelassenheit* becomes socially meaningful only when communities institutionalize practice of technological restraints. This may involve limiting invasive AI deployment, ethical review boards that prioritize human dignity over efficiency or public education initiatives that cultivates a more thoughtful digital culture. Such measures do not reject technological progress but ensure that progress does not eclipse humanity

Another significant dimension in the re-humanization of digital spaces. AI mediated platforms shape how people communicate, argue, love and learn. Yet, these spaces are often designed with commercial incentives that amplify outrage, polarization and/or addictive engagement. From Heidegger’s standpoint, these platforms train users to respond automatically, thoughtlessly and reactively these are habits that mirror the technological attitude itself. *Gelassenheit* challenges this by advocating for spaces that encourage presence rather constant stimulation. Digital environment guided by releasement would emphasize context, care and dialogue. They would make room for withdrawal, silence and nonlinear interaction, which is a condition necessary for reflection and ethical depth.

Finally, a “post-enframed” ethics points toward a new kind of technological imagination. Instead of asking how AI can make life faster, easier or more predictable, *Gelassenheit* invites us to ask a more radical question: *how might technology sustain human dignity, mystery and freedom?* Thus, a “post-enframed” digital future is one in which AI does not dictate human possibilities but participate in a larger ethical landscape shaped by openness and deep respect for beings in their various forms.

Conclusion

The age of AI confronts us with an ethical crossroads of either continuing along the path of “enframing”, allowing algorithmic systems to dictate out rhythms of thought and patterns of life, or we rediscover a more originitive way of being. Heidegger’s notion of *Gelassenheit* (*releasement*) offers a pathway that is neither *technophobic* nor blindly *technophilic*. It calls us to engage technology

without surrendering ourselves to it, to use digital tools without allowing them to define the measure of human

Worth. In this sense, releasement is more than an attitude; it is a discipline of attention, a resistance to the subtle reduction of life to date and utility. It opens a clearing where freedom becomes something other than the freedom to optimize, where dignity is honored in its unquantifiable depth and where being is allowed to unfold without coercion. When applied to AI, *Gelassenheit* becomes an ethical anchor, reminding individuals, communities and institutions that the highest task of technology is not domination or prediction but service to a world where humans remain capable of wonder, reflection and genuine encounter.

If a “post-enframed” future is possible, it will emerge not from more powerful algorithms but from more thoughtful ways of dwelling with them. The promise of *Gelassenheit* is precisely a future in which AI supports human flourishing without submerging it and where the mystery, fragility and openness of human life remain intact in the face of systems that seek to calculate everything. In releasement therefore, human reclaim its freedom not by rejecting technology but by remembering that our deepest identity cannot be computed and that to be human is ultimately, to remain more than any algorithm can understand.

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