

DIEGO PÉREZ LASERRE

UNIVERSIDAD DE SAN SEBASTIÁN – PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE CHILE

THERE AND BACK AGAIN.  
HEIDEGGER AND TOLKIEN ON  
TECHNOLOGY

diego.perezl@uss.cl

*Recepción:* Noviembre 2018

*Aceptación:* Diciembre 2018

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to analyze Tolkien's and Heidegger's thoughts on technology with the aim of justifying that the metaphysical/ontological position of the second brings problems regarding the solution of the problem concerning technology that can be easily solved if one opts for a Tolkienian approach to the problem, that is, from a rather mundane or everyday dimension of humanity (or "hobbitry", to be more precise).

KEY WORDS

Tolkien, Heidegger, technology

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo tiene por finalidad analizar las reflexiones vertidas tanto por J.R.R. Tolkien como por Martin Heidegger sobre la técnica con el objetivo de justificar que la posición metafísica/ontológica del segundo trae problemas en lo que se refiere a la superación del problema de la técnica que pueden ser fácilmente superados si uno opta por una aproximación Tolkieniana al problema, es decir, desde una dimensión más bien mundana o cotidiana de la humanidad (o "hobbitidad", para ser más precisos).

PALABRAS CLAVE

Tolkien, Heidegger, tecnología

Philosophy and literature. Is there a connection between these two topics? Though this is a question that justifies a rather large study, for the purposes of this essay we will make ours the statement that due to their malleability they cannot be treated as two altogether differentiable domains.<sup>1</sup>

Literature, then, (or at least some of it) may allow us to understand the underlying philosophical thought that prevails in a certain time and place. As Hans-Georg Gadamer says, art (in which we include literature) “is temporal in a more radical sense than everything that belongs to history”.<sup>2</sup> Even though Gadamer is talking about the aesthetical experience and how in it we may see in a more adequate way the disclosure of being, his statement about historicity may also be applied to the work of art itself: in it the artist, conscious or unconsciously,<sup>3</sup> captures a particular way of revealing the world that is characteristic of an era. Having this in mind, we have that different artistic and philosophical expressions from a same time may be manifesting (or even are inevitably manifesting) the same way of interpreting the world, of how the unveiling of being is operating, but in a different manner. So, in order to get a complete picture of it one should not prefer one over the other, but rather try to find the relation between both and see how each one of them provides a piece to assemble this epochal puzzle.

Now, a phenomenon that was relevant in the twentieth century (and continues to be to this day) is the one concerning technology. This not only because of the advances and moral dilemma that it brought on, but also because of the “metaphysical-scientific way of looking at the world that [...], in fact, «has» made unavoidable the alienated, unhoused, recurrently barbaric estate of modern technological and mass-consumption man”.<sup>4</sup> Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was one of the first thinkers to give thought to this topic. Although in *Being and Time* (1927) a preamble to this subject may be found, is since the beginning of the thirties that technology occupies an important place on his thought.<sup>5</sup> However, he was not the only one. John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892-1973) was another thinker to whom the question concerning technology was essential, though “the specific treatment of [...] «it» in his works has not been fully appreciated”.<sup>6</sup>

A question, then, rises: is it possible to complement their thoughts to get a more complete picture of this topic? To try to answer this we will briefly review Heidegger’s (1) and Tolkien’s (2) thoughts concerning technology; attempt to show how both of them, based on completely different grounds, managed to place themselves above the prevailing technological thinking of their (and our) time and foresee its catastrophic consequences (3); and, finally, analyse the solutions that can be drawn from reading and comparing both authors (4).

## 1. TECHNOLOGY AS FULFILMENT OF METAPHYSICS: MARTIN HEIDEGGER

“Technology is a way of revealing”.<sup>7</sup> That is what Heidegger says in his work entitled *The Question Concerning Technology* (1954). But, what does he mean by this? To understand its significance, first we must have in consideration the following: first, Heidegger distinguishes the being of entities or beings (as they appear in certain historical time) from being as such.<sup>8</sup> On this matter, he says that what should have been the fundamental question of the metaphysicians, that is, the question about the meaning of being, was actually never made. Second, he historicizes the question of being, that is, he points out that the history of being, which is history in a more fundamental sense and not mere historiography, is the most faithful and profound record of the *meaning* of an era. Thus, whatever epochal events one seeks to explain, whether they belong to the realm of politics, art or natural sciences, they cannot escape the essential determinations of this history.<sup>9</sup> And last, Heidegger “is centrally concerned with the relation between man and being, with man as the openness to which and in which being presences and is known”<sup>10</sup> throughout the history of metaphysics.

How, then, has Western metaphysics approached to the question of being? Heidegger tells us that due to the scientific tradition that has dominated reasoning in Western history from Plato and Aristotle, which arose not from a real perception of being, but from taking-for-granted the central existential mystery, this question has been forgotten.<sup>11</sup> Thus, a “predominance of beings over against being”<sup>12</sup> has been stated.

Now, in Friedrich Nietzsche, whom Heidegger considers to be the last metaphysician of the Western tradition, the scholar from Freiburg tells us that this oblivion of being is taken to “the extreme of metaphysical thinking”.<sup>13</sup> This because his “thought of will to power thinks beings as a whole such that the metaphysical ground of the history of the present and future age becomes visible and at the same time determinative”.<sup>14</sup> Due to the specific purpose of this essay, an elaborate and detailed analysis of this topic will not be made. Nonetheless, Heidegger’s reading concerning *truth* in Nietzsche’s thought needs to be mentioned: Heidegger focuses on Nietzsche’s statement that “truth must exist, but what is true about this truth does not need to be «true»”<sup>15</sup> and explains it the following way: men need truth. However, there is not a pre-existing reality to which men have to conform. This need is rather a biological urge inherent to human beings. Thus, truth is not something objective and transcendent that men must seek outside. Truth is merely an estimate of value, a mere point of view that was able to prevail over others. So, what is true in life is not extrinsically determined by some supernatural realm, something fixed or crystallized; it is we, from inside, who beforehand regulate and establish this horizon of what needs to be truth in chaos. Truth, then, is revealed not as *re-presenting* [*Vor-stellen*], but as *re-presenting* [*Vor-stellen*];<sup>16</sup> in it we find an inventive nature of reason which

puts a horizon within a perspective (hence the emphasis on presenting). “The world arises from life-activity of what is alive and *is* only *what* and *how* it arises”.<sup>17</sup> Now, since the different horizons that may be fixed in chaos never run out, an inevitable conclusion arises: there is no real world; everything is apparent. The distinction between the real and the apparent world has disappeared.

By now, the reader must be thinking, why was there a need to bring this up? Why are we talking about truth and appearance? Wasn't this essay about technology? Well, to talk about Nietzsche's concept of truth was necessary because technology, or more precisely the concept of technology that we actually have, is, according to Heidegger, a necessary consequence of the self-imposed horizon of the oblivion of being that our inventive reason has fixed upon chaos. Now, even though this decision comes from Plato, it is in the rational and scientific foundations of Descartes where we find an important precursory of the current concept of technology. This because, as Steiner points out, “for Descartes, truth is determined and validated by certainty. Certainty, in turn, is located in the *ego*. The self becomes the hub of reality and relates to the world outside itself in an exploratory, necessarily exploitative way. As knower and user, the *ego* is predator”.<sup>18</sup> In other words, the estimation of value that man has imposed upon chaos is that he is the centre of existence and that all that surrounds him matters only if he fixes on it some value that is useful to him. Nature is a mess that he has to order according to his own utility. Francisco Soler explains it in a very clear way when he says that “from Descartes [...] modern man began to walk the path towards *mastering* all there is: he imposes his terms to reality —chaos—, dominates, crushes, exploits, pulverizes, transforms, accumulates, distributes; in sum *produces*, fabricates the world”.<sup>19</sup>

Clearer should now be getting, then, why technology is a way of revealing. The current concept of technology is consequence of the way man, throughout the history of metaphysics, has revealed being (or more precisely forgotten it). “It is precisely technology the phenomenon that expresses in the plane of the way of being of man in the world, the unfolding and fulfilment of metaphysics”.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. NOBODY CARES FOR THE WOODS AS I CARE FOR THEM.<sup>21</sup> J.R.R. TOLKIEN

Modern Age “is indeed an age of «improved means to deteriorated ends». It is a part of the essential malady of such days – producing the desire to escape, not indeed from life, but from our present time and self-made misery – that we are acutely conscious both of the ugliness of our works, and of their evil”.<sup>22</sup> That is what John Ronald Reuel Tolkien tells us in his essay *On Fairy Stories* (1939). Clear is, then, that his vision of modern times is not a happy one. As Harrington points out, Tolkien had “no patience with the Twentieth Century-with its speed, with its filth and with its destructive potential, both physical and spiritual”.<sup>23</sup> However, it is not his obscure

vision of modernity, which can be found in many authors, that surprises us, but rather what he thinks is the cause of it. The origin of this evil may not be found outside; it does not come from an external entity. It is us, humanity, that, through our creations, have given life to this misery and self-imposed it in our lives. There is no other to whom we may attribute responsibility; we are the ones that seek these deteriorated ends.

Now, one of Tolkiens most relevant intellectual discomfort with modernity is the relation between man and technology. In his essay *On Fairy Stories* he states it quite clearly when he says that,

not long ago – incredibly though it may seem – I heard a clerk of Oxford declare that he «welcomed» the proximity of mass-production robot factories, and the roar of self-obstructive mechanical traffic, because it brought his university into «contact with real life». [...] The expression «real life» in this context seems to fall short of academic standards. The notion that motor-cars are more «alive» than, say, centaurs or dragons is curious; that they are more «real» than, say, horses is pathetically absurd. How real, how startlingly alive is a factory chimney compared with an elm tree: poor obsolete thing, insubstantial dream of an escapist!<sup>24</sup>

What we can get from this is that underlying these words there is a cry for help for man's alienation in what is inessential in existence. We have forgotten what is real and true, and left the world adrift. Now, though in his non-literary work we may find many similar references to technology, it is in his novels where subtly and in a more profound way this matter unfolds. Tolkien's antipathy "to modern industrial society can surprise no one who has so much glanced at *The Lord of the Rings*".<sup>25</sup> As all ought to know, this is the story of how a hobbit named Frodo departs from The Shire, his home town, towards Mordor, to destroy Sauron's one ring, which he got from his uncle Bilbo, to save Middle-Earth. This few words, as the reader certainly has noticed, do not make justice to what *The Lord of the Rings* really is; but they do give us a queue to analyse some parts of its storyline that are related to the matter that concerns us. Now, with this preliminary description in place, we will turn the analysis toward two characters: Tom Bombadil and Treebeard.

The first one we meet in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. Who Tom Bombadil really is and where he comes from is not very clear. All we know is that he has been around Middle-Earth since the beginning of times (even before the *Valar* arrived) and that he seems to have a special connection with nature. In the novel he is the one who saves Merry, Pippin, Frodo and Sam from the Old Willow Man in The Old Forest. After this has been done, he invites them over to stay with him and his wife Goldberry in his house for a few days; it is here, in a dialogue between Frodo and Tom Bombadil's wife, where we are able to have a glance at Tolkien's view concerning the relation between man and nature. Frodo asks Goldberry whether "all this strange land belongs to him [Tom Bombadil]?", to what she answers: "No indeed! [...] That

would indeed be a burden, [...] The trees and the grasses and all things growing or living in the land belong each to themselves”.<sup>26</sup> Though at first sight this dialogue seems to be insignificant, we can gather much of Tolkien’s thought from it. For him nature is not something that man owns. It has its own being that must be respected. In other words, land (and the beings that inhabit it) does not belong to humanity; it belongs to itself. It is wrong for mankind to attribute lordship over nature and determine its ends. This goes against their own being and trees know it. Tolkien expresses this, though in a very subtle way, when he points out that “Tom’s words laid bare the hearts of trees and their thoughts, which were often dark and strange, and filled with hatred of things that go free upon the earth, gnawing, biting, breaking, hacking, burning: destroyers and usurpers”.<sup>27</sup> In other words, because they belong to themselves, they hate and suffer with creatures that destroy them for their own purposes without considering that they are living things.

Now, though it may seem that Tolkien is merely criticizing how we treat nature, his thoughts are actually a clear reflection of his own personality. As Braulio Fernandez Biggs indicates, “known is Tolkien’s devoted love towards tress [...]. He admired them, «talked» to them and suffered every cut and pruning”.<sup>28</sup> Having this in consideration, it is not strange that our next character to be analysed is actually a tree. We are talking about Treebeard. Though he is not in fact a tree, he belongs to a “tree-ish” species called *Ents*. They are the shepherds of the forest, and, as we are told in *The Silmarillion*,<sup>29</sup> are in charge of protecting all trees and plants. In Ents we may see in a more direct way some of Tolkien’s thought concerning technology. This because, as he himself says, “Ents are composed of philology, literature, and life”.<sup>30</sup> Returning to the novel, we meet Treebeard in *The Two Towers* in the forest of Fangorn when Merry and Pippin are escaping from Grishnákh, one of Saruman’s orcs. After the hobbits tell him some of the adventures they’ve been on, they arrive to the topic of Saruman, the white wizard. About him Treebeard says that “He [Saruman] has a mind of metal and wheels; and he does not care for growing things, except as far as they serve him for the moment”.<sup>31</sup> The topic of technology here is clear. Saruman has the mind of a machine and thus does not care for other things (in this case trees and plants) unless he gets some profit from them. Things that surround him do not matter for themselves; the wizard is the one that determines if they are worth or not. But what bothers Treebeard the most is “the orc-work, the wanton hewing – *rárum* – without even the bad excuse of feeding the fires”.<sup>32</sup> That is, the destruction of nature for no apparent reason, for the mere desire of destruction, for assuming a superiority over the rest of the world that enables creatures to do what they want with it, even if it is not useful for anyone. It is not strange, then, that Ents end up marching to war singing “*To Isengard with doom we come! With doom we come, with doom we come!*”.<sup>33</sup>

Now, though this few passages of *The Lord of the Rings* do not cover all of the authors concerns about man, nature and technology, they do leave us with a thought: underlying Tolkien's narrative lies a severe critique towards the idea that man has certain privileges over the surrounding world that enables him to do as he wishes with it, to impose his own standards, to order it without any consideration that is not his own, even if this means destroying it.

### 3. OBLIVION OF BEING AND OBLIVION OF NATURE: HEIDEGGER AND TOLKIEN

“Our time is at hand: the world of Men, which we must rule. But we must have power, power to order all things as we will, for that good which only the Wise can see”.<sup>34</sup> That is what Saruman tells Gandalf when they are talking in Orthanc. Now, doesn't this seem similar to Heidegger's position of the self-imposed need of man for ordering reality according to his own will? Doesn't Saruman's claim remind us of his critique to Descartes *cogito ergo sum* and the arrogance of rationalism? And, does Tom Bombadil's and Treebeard's anger based on man's taking-for-granted nature based on his belief that reality is solely determined from him differ much from Heidegger's claim that “the power concealed in modern technology determines the relation of man to that which exists”<sup>35</sup> and thus “nature becomes a gigantic gasoline station, an energy source for modern technology and industry”?<sup>36</sup> It seems they are actually talking about the same thing but approach it in a different manner. Heidegger's critique towards modern technology is based on metaphysical grounds, on a misconception and forgetfulness of what being really is. Tolkien, on the other hand, thinks that the problem can be found in how man embraces the otherness of nature, on his belief of superiority over the surrounding world, in the fact that he has forgotten that all things belong to themselves. But in the end, their intellectual discomfort is the same: man's belief that he is the centre of existence and how, based on this misconception, he relates to the world.

Now, after bringing forward both of these authors view on nature and technology, we ask ourselves, why did they criticize technology? Was it merely because they were more comfortable with country life? Or did they actually see that terrible consequences arose from modern calculative thought? For Heidegger, the oblivion of being and its consequential mechanical thought is not something that is important merely for the theoretical field. Actually, he is of the opinion that the metaphysical decision of what is and is not being for an epoch affects the whole of reality. In the Middle Ages, for example, a being itself carried the form and men, in the act of knowing, were mere receptacles of it. That is, things existed for themselves and man was a mere spectator. In modern times, however, man only receives raw data, chaos, and he is the one that orders it and gives the form. Thus, things need a certain activity from man to come to existence. Man, in a sense, makes reality. For Tolkien, on the other hand, man has a “huge capacity to mold not only himself, but

also the environment”;<sup>37</sup> so, how he relates to things that surround him is not a minor thing. Though, as Christian, the creator of Middle-Earth does believe that there are natural things that are determined by God and are immutable, he is also of the idea that man, throughout his conception of the otherness and his relation with it, is able to shape the world in a certain way. In his own words, “a man is both a seed and in some degree also a gardener, for good or ill”.<sup>38</sup> Having this in consideration, we may conclude that for both of these authors any phenomena we seek to explain, whether they belong to the realm of humanities, arts or natural sciences, cannot escape from the modern mechanical determination that man has imposed over reality. Even politics get dragged and subsumed under this technological view. But, why politics? Well, as Marcos García de la Huerta indicates, “if anything may define the condition of political being is precisely «being in the world», which is a sort of an *a priori* to politics. There is no «politicity» without «being with others» in a virtually common world”.<sup>39</sup> And how has been (and still is) our being *in the world*? To use Heidegger’s words, mechanized, and that means violent and thoughtless. Violent, because we haven’t established a harmonic existence with the otherness, with the surrounding world. Thoughtless, because we haven’t realized that in proceeding like this, we are actually destroying ourselves. Indeed, we have the notion that what surrounds us is something we must confront and impose our own will, and the consequences of this have not been positive. Deforestation of the planet and tropical jungles, pollution of air and water, extinction of numerous animal species and global are only of them. But, why do we proceed like this? Why don’t we stop? It is surprising that it is in Tolkien’s Melkor<sup>40</sup> where we find the answer. He tells us that this character “sought [...] to increase the power and glory of the part assigned to him”<sup>41</sup> and that, because of his “arrogance to contempt for all things save himself, [...] he turned to subtlety in perverting to his own will all that he would use”.<sup>42</sup> The correlation is uncanny and it seems that it is no coincidence, the problem is our *ego* that seeks to dominate.

What is worst is that we haven’t realized that this self-centred conception of man does not only have harmful consequences for the environment, but also for ourselves. We not only defy nature with our desire to rule, but also the rest of humanity. Both of our authors know this, and their insights on the atomic bomb confirms it. Tolkien, on a letter written in 1945 to his son Christopher, says that “such explosives in men's hands, while their moral and intellectual status is declining, is about as useful as giving out firearms to all inmates of a gaol and then saying that you hope «this will ensure peace»”.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, our lack of concern for including wisdom and considering moral principles in technological advances has led us to something like the Hobbesian state of nature, where man is a wolf to man. No one is safe and it is our own existence the one that is in danger. Heidegger has the same thought, but he says that is not the bomb, nor the men who created it the ones to blame. For him this weapon of mass destruction is natural consequence of the oblivion of being. He tells us that “man stares at what the explosion of the atom bomb



could bring with it. He does not see that the atom bomb and its explosion are the mere final emission of what has long since taken place".<sup>44</sup> In other words, if it wasn't the atomic bomb, it would be another machinery the one that threatens our own existence. The problem is us.

In a few words, our narcissistic view of what our status in existence has serious practical consequences that should not be taken lightly. Wars for energy sources, walls for preventing immigration, the prevalence of economic interest over humanity and the belief that wealth is the solution to every problem reflect this very clearly. Nonetheless, as Gandalf says, we should not despair "for despair is only for those who see the end beyond all doubt. We do not".<sup>45</sup>

#### 4. THE WAY OUT: DELIVERANCE FROM THE PLANTLIKE STATE OF HELPLESS PASSIVE SUFFERER

After this analysis, the reader is probably asking him or herself the following: are these authors saying that we should go back to a pre-mechanical life style and throw away all technological advances that have been accomplished by man? And, if this is not the case, are we doomed to live in this technical horizon that we have established for ourselves?

The answer to the first question is clearly no; none of these authors are naïve enough to believe that in order to overcome man's alienation in technology we must return to the age of the cavemen. In the case of Heidegger, to understand his critique towards machination that way would be to misinterpret his thought.<sup>46</sup> In his own words, "it would be shortsighted to condemn it [technology] as the work of the devil. We depend on technical devices; they even challenge us to ever greater advances".<sup>47</sup> Technological advances, then, are not themselves the cause of modern man's "loss of direction". There is nothing wrong with using technology for our own advantage. The problem, as Tolkien points out, is to use this "devices (apparatus) instead of [...] «developing» the inherent inner powers or talents — or even the use of these talents with the corrupted motive of dominating: bulldozing the real world, or coercing other wills".<sup>48</sup> The issue, then, are the purposes for which we use technical knowledge and how we relate to the devices we create.

Now, and returning to our second question, if destroying all cars, iPhones and iPads is not the solution, is there a way out? For Heidegger there is. He tells us that

we can act otherwise. We can use technical devices, and yet with proper use also keep ourselves so free of them, that we may let go of them any time. We can use technical devices as they ought to be used, and also let them alone as something which does not affect our inner and real core. We can affirm the unavoidable use of technical devices,

and also deny them the right to dominate us, and so to warp, confuse, and lay our nature.<sup>49</sup>

His call, then, is to overcome modern vision of technical objects, to regain their essence and, throughout this, win back our independence from mechanical devices. However, there is a catch. As Steiner points out, this call is the same as the one to overcome Western metaphysics “precisely because exploitative technology and the worship of allegedly objective science are the natural culmination of Western metaphysics after Plato”.<sup>50</sup> This detachment from technological devices, then, couldn’t possibly be the way to overcome modern man’s technological alienation. If the question concerning technology and the overcoming of Western metaphysics are the same, we have that such an enterprise does not depend on particular individuals. In other words, there is nothing in our daily lives that we can do to go past the metaphysical decision of forgetfulness of the being, and the detachment from technological devices, though useful for us, would make sense only as an emotional tone that we should have while waiting for this major metaphysical decision to occur, nothing more. As the king Theoden says when talking about the paths of the dead, “*the way is shut*”.<sup>51</sup>

We have arrived at a dead end; we are trapped in a technological way of interpreting the world. However, it is precisely here where the question we made at the beginning of this essay becomes decisive: can the literary works of Tolkien add something to Heidegger’s thought? Fortunately, the answer seems to be positive. Though both authors seem to share this dark vision concerning modern man and our conception of nature and technology, we have that “underlying Tolkien’s sometimes dark technological narratives lies a persistent hope that cultures and peoples, once fallen, can still hope to re-order their sub-creation to conform to their creator”.<sup>52</sup> Isengard falls, Ents defeat Saruman and Frodo, with a little help from Gollum, destroys the Ring. Darkness, or at least most of it, is banished from Middle-Earth. But, how was this accomplished? Did some powerful being through organized political tactics and war strategies or merely by his own power manage to impose his will over his enemies? Was there a metaphysical decision of reversing the oblivion of being? The answer to all of these questions is no. On the contrary, this heroic deed was done by a small and simple creature: a hobbit from *The Shire*. Now, though the story of Frodo and the Ring is a real treasure in terms of fiction, the extent of its value does not end there. This mainly because, as Fernandez Biggs points out, for Tolkien “literature should provide a way out, be a road towards recovery”.<sup>53</sup> That way, the final victory of the fellowship of the Ring means only one thing: hope for our world. Hope that, throughout small decisions in our daily lives, the mechanical and technological way of representing the world will be defeated and better times will come. Hope that we, simple and apparently unimportant man and women, can

actually create a better world. Change is possible, we must only dare to take the first step. As Tolkien say to W.H. Auden in one of his letters:

Most men make some journeys. Whether long or short, with an errand or simply to go «there and back again», is not of primary importance. As I tried to express it in Bilbo's Walking Song, even an afternoon-to-evening walk may have important effects. When Sam had got no further than the Woody End he had already had an «eye-opener». For if there is anything in a journey of any length, for me it is this: a deliverance from the plantlike state of helpless passive sufferer, an exercise however small of will, and mobility – and of curiosity, without which a rational mind becomes stultified.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ASENSI, M., *Literatura y Filosofía, Teoría de La Literatura y Literatura Comparada*, Síntesis, Madrid, 1996, 10.

<sup>2</sup> GADAMER, H.G., *Truth and Method*, Continuum, London, 2004, 121.

<sup>3</sup> This is actually the case of Tolkien and the Ents. In a letter to W.H. Auden the author states the following: “Take the Ents, for instance. I did not consciously invent them at all. The chapter called «Treebeard», from Treebeard's first remark on p. 66, was written off more or less as it stands, with an effect on myself (except for labour pains) almost like reading someone else's work. And I like Ents now because they do not seem to have anything to do with me. I daresay something had been going on in the «unconscious» for some time, and that accounts for my feeling throughout, especially when stuck, that I was not inventing but reporting (imperfectly) and had at times to wait till «what really happened' came through»”. TOLKIEN, J.R.R. “Letter 163 to W.H. Auden”, en: HUMPHREY, C. (ed), *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, HarperCollins, London, 1995, 227.

<sup>4</sup> STEINER, G., *Heidegger*, Fontana Press, London 1987, 33.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. SABROVSKY, E. “Introducción”, en: SABROVSKY, E. (ed), *La Técnica En Heidegger*, vol. 1, Santiago, Ediciones Diego Portales, 2006, 9.

<sup>6</sup> KIDWELL, J., “On Dwarves and Scientists: Probing for Technological Ethics in the Creative Imagination of J.R.R. Tolkien”, *Forum*, vol. 8 (2009), 1.

<sup>7</sup> HEIDEGGER, M., “The Question Concerning Technology”, en: LOVITT, W. (trad.), *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, Garland Publishing Inc., New York & London, 1977, 12.

<sup>8</sup> As Heidegger says in paragraph 6 of *Being and Time*: “The Being of entities «is» not itself an entity”. For the present essay the following edition of *Being and Time* has been used: HEIDEGGER, M., *Being and Time*, HarperCollins, London, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> As Heidegger says, “what is philosophically primary is [...] the Interpretation of authentically historical entities as regards their historicity”. Paragraph 10 of *Being and Time*. HEIDEGGER, M. *Being and Time*.

<sup>10</sup> LOVITT, W., “Introduction”, en: HEIDEGGER, M., *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, Garland Publishing Inc., New York & London, 1977, xiii.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. STEINER, *Heidegger*, 33.

<sup>12</sup> HEIDEGGER, M., *Nietzsche*, vol. III, HarperSanFrancisco, New York, 1991, 6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>18</sup> STEINER, *Heidegger*, 36.

<sup>19</sup> SOLER, F., “Prólogo”, en: HEIDEGGER, M., *Filosofía, Ciencia y Técnica*, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago, 1997, 80.

<sup>20</sup> VATTIMO, G., *Introducción a Heidegger*, Gedisa, Barcelona, 2002, 86.

<sup>21</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “The Two Towers”, en: *The Lord of the Rings*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 2004, 472.

- <sup>22</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R. “On Fairy Stories”, en: TOLKIEN, C. (ed.), *The Monsters and the Critics: And Other Essays*, HarperCollins, London, 1997, 151.
- <sup>23</sup> HARRINGTON, J., “Making Things Real: Technology, Creation and Some Lessons from Tolkien” [en línea], <[http://homepages.luc.edu/~jharr4/Published\\_and\\_Publication\\_Ready\\_Articles\\_files/Making2.pdf](http://homepages.luc.edu/~jharr4/Published_and_Publication_Ready_Articles_files/Making2.pdf)> [consulta 20/4/2016], 4.
- <sup>24</sup> TOLKIEN, “On Fairy Stories”, 149.
- <sup>25</sup> HARRINGTON, “Making Things Real: Technology, Creation and Some Lessons from Tolkien”, 4.
- <sup>26</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “The Fellowship of The Ring”, en: *The Lord of the Rings*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 2004, 124.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.
- <sup>28</sup> FERNÁNDEZ BIGGS, B., “Tolkien y El Reencatamiento Del Mundo”, en: LARIOS, G. (ed.), *Tolkien: Raíces y Legado*, Centro de Estudios Bicentenario-Universidad del Desarrollo, Santiago, 2005, 123.
- <sup>29</sup> Cf. TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “Quenta Silmarillion”, en: TOLKIEN, C. (ed.), *The Silmarillion*, HarperCollins, London, 2007, 33–34.
- <sup>30</sup> TOLKIEN, “Letter 163 to W.H. Auden”, 227.
- <sup>31</sup> TOLKIEN, “The Two Towers”, 473.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.
- <sup>34</sup> TOLKIEN, “The Fellowship of The Ring”, 259.
- <sup>35</sup> HEIDEGGER, M., ANDERSON, J. (trad.), y FREUND, E. (trad.), *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of Gelassenheit*, Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1966, 50.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.
- <sup>37</sup> FERNÁNDEZ BIGGS, B., *Tolkien y El Reencantamiento Del Mundo*, Ediciones Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago, 2003, 60.
- <sup>38</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “Notes on W. H. Auden’s Review of The Return of the King”, en CARPENTER, H. (ed.), *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, HarperCollins, London, 1995, 258.
- <sup>39</sup> GARCÍA DE LA HUERTA, M., “Relectura «Política» de La Cuestión de La Técnica”, en: SABROVSKY, E. (ed.), *La Técnica En Heidegger*, vol. 2, Ediciones Diego Portales, Santiago, 2007, 395.
- <sup>40</sup> Melkor, also known as Morgoth, is an Ainur that rebelled against Ilúvatar and, out of pride, desired to corrupt Middle Earth.
- <sup>41</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “Ainunlindalë: The Music of the Ainur”, en: TOLKIEN, C. (ed.), *The Silmarillion*, HarperCollins, London, 2007, 4.
- <sup>42</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “Valaquenta”, en: TOLKIEN, C. (ed.), *The Silmarillion*, HarperCollins, London, 2007, 19.
- <sup>43</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “Letter 102 to Christopher Tolkien”, en: CARPENTER, H. (ed.), *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, HarperCollins, London, 1995, 133.
- <sup>44</sup> HEIDEGGER, M. y HOFSTADTER, A. (trad.), *Poetry, Language, Thought*, Harper & Row, New York, 1971, 166.
- <sup>45</sup> TOLKIEN, “The Fellowship of The Ring”, 269.
- <sup>46</sup> Cf. ACEVEDO, J., “Introducción a La Pregunta Por La Técnica”, en: HEIDEGGER, M., *Filosofía, Ciencia y Técnica*, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago, 1997, 99–100.
- <sup>47</sup> HEIDEGGER, *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of Gelassenheit*, 54.
- <sup>48</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “Letter 131 to Milton Waldman”, en: CARPENTER, H. (ed.), *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, HarperCollins, London, 1995, 168.
- <sup>49</sup> HEIDEGGER, *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of Gelassenheit*, 54. It is surprising how Heidegger’s thought on this matter relates to what Tolkien illustrates in a conversation between Gimli and Legolas in *The Two Towers*, concerning Helms Deep caves. In it, the dwarf tells his friend that “no dwarf could be unmoved by such loveliness. None of Durin’s race would mine those caves for stones or ore, not if diamonds and gold could be got there. Do you cut down groves of blossoming trees in the springtime for firewood? We would tend these glades of flowering stone, not quarry them. With cautious

---

skill, tap by tap – a small chip of rock and no more, perhaps, in a whole anxious day – so we could work, and as the years went by, we should open up new ways, and display far chambers that are still dark, glimpsed only as a void beyond fissures in the rock”. The similarity relies in proposing a new, non-violent, way of considering what surrounds us. TOLKIEN, “The Two Towers”, 548.

<sup>50</sup> STEINER, *Heidegger*, 134.

<sup>51</sup> TOLKIEN, J.R.R., “The Return of the King”, en: *The Lord of the Rings*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 2004, 798.

<sup>52</sup> KIDWELL, “On Dwarves and Scientists”, 10.

<sup>53</sup> FERNÁNDEZ BIGGS, *Tolkien y El Reencantamiento Del Mundo*, 65.

<sup>54</sup> TOLKIEN, “Notes on W. H. Auden’s Review of The Return of the King”, 257.