and to bring to clarity that which eludes most readers. Anyone already interested in the concerns that inspire Derrida’s work could not help but be advanced by Gasché’s study. And while this book is unlikely to satisfy all who are frustrated by Derrida’s writing, those asking properly philosophical questions of Derrida’s texts will find Gasché to be an inspiring partner and a competent guide.

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NOTES

2. Ibid., 45.
3. Ibid., 42.
4. Jacques Derrida, Memoires: for Paul de Man, trans. Cecile Lindsay et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 15. I have modified the translation because I take the rendering of “pour qu’on ne puisse sans ingénuité proposer” as “and we can no longer ingenuously propose” to be misleading. Derrida’s point is surely that, given the developments in certain deconstructive discourses, proposing a history of deconstruction would have to be ingenuous. Cf. Jacques Derrida, Mémoires: pour Paul de Man (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1988), 38.
6. For another investigation of the connection between deconstruction and genealogy, the reader should see Charles Scott’s contribution to a previous volume of this journal, wherein, Scott concludes: “The nonhistory of différence cannot be meant literally, as though it stood outside of a genealogy. Nor can it be meant as an archaic identity buried within a historical movement. The opinion that différence has no lineage cannot be taken as a textual truth” (“Genealogy and Différence,” Research in Phenomenology 20 (1990), 65).

From Metaphysics to Inhabitation

Here and now and in little things, that we may foster the saving power in its increase. This includes holding always before our eyes the extreme danger.

Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology"

One of the most profound aspects of Heidegger's thinking is his untiring attention to the finitude of thinking itself, in both its origin and object. Heidegger repeatedly takes up a meditation on what he characterizes as the interplay of presence and absence, or of revealing and concealing, which both animates and gives to be all human thinking. On the basis of his insight into this primordial phenomenon, Heidegger directs one of his strongest criticisms against a thinking oblivious to this interplay, which attempts to attain and secure a perfect presence, uncontaminated by absence, concealment, or nonbeing: the thinking of metaphysics. Metaphysical thinking renounces concealment, but insofar as it is and remains thinking, nevertheless inevitably conceals. Thus, the concealment of metaphysics is double: it both conceals and conceals itself as concealing, as a mode of the unconcealment of being. This insight into the uncanny self-concealing of metaphysics is all the more crucial since, according to Heidegger, the final form of metaphysical thinking is technology; and far from being an idle or academic activity, this last shape of metaphysics functions as the primary way in which what is revealed in the modern age: technology dominates, and does so in such a way as at the same time to conceal both its dominion and its danger.

And yet, the danger of technology has never been more apparent, at least in the sphere of the human relation to the natural world. Certainly one may question or even decry the effects and influences of technology at all levels of human acting and thinking, social or political, but it has become increasingly apparent the effects of technology on the natural world represent a grave and urgent danger; it would be a simple matter to catalog the varied and questionable transformations of the natural world brought about by technological manipulations: problems of species extinction, the devastation of wilderness areas and virgin forests, the increasing pollution levels of the air and seas, the disruption of ecosystems and the depletion of soil, widely known and acknowledged by thoughtful people, would only begin the list. In response to these potentially catastrophic problems, governments, businesses, and individuals alike have begun to take measures to arrest or retard these trends; and among philosophers a discourse has arisen—known loosely as environmental ethics—wherein precisely questions of