Essential Readings in Heidegger

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Basic Writings, ed., David Farrell Krell.

Professor David Farrell Krell, currently teaching at the University of Mannheim, West Germany, and already well known both for his scholarly articles and for his co-editorship and co-translation of Heidegger's Early Greek Thinking (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), has done a great service by gathering together in this essential anthology five new translations, and by reprinting in whole or part five already published translations, of Martin Heidegger's works. The result is an exceedingly fine and polished piece of work which not only replaces earlier and inadequate translations but also offers for the first time in English a set of readings which at once spans the whole of Heidegger's professional life and delves into most of the major areas of his thought.

The new translations in this volume are the following: (1) The Introduction to Being and Time, translated by Joan Stambaugh in collaboration with J. Glenn Gray and David Farrell Krell. This is the first installment of Professor Stambaugh's completely new translation of the whole of Being and Time which will appear shortly from Harper and Row and replace the current rendering by Macquarrie and Robinson, published in 1962. (2) "What is Metaphysics?" translated by David Farrell Krell, which replaces the older translation by R. F. C. Hull and Alan Crick, which appeared in 1949 in Existence and Being, pp. 325-349. (3) "On

Reprinted with slight emendations in translation are: (1) "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" (whole), done by Joan Stambaugh; (2) "Building Dwelling Thinking" (whole), done by Albert Hofstadter; (3) "The Origin of the Work of Art" (in substantial part), also by Albert Hofstadter; (4) a selection from What is a Thing? (pp. 66-108) by W. B. Barton, Jr., and Vera Deutsch; and (5) selections from What Calls for Thinking? (pp. 1-8, 48-52, and 79-86).

Professor Krell discussed the selection of texts for this volume with Martin Heidegger during 1974-75, even though, as he writes, "the plan adopted here cannot be called an 'authorized' one" (p. xiii). The principles governing Krell's selection of these essays were, first, that the entire collection should offer an insight into the whole of Heidegger's thought from his magnum opus of 1927 through his latest writings; and, secondly, that each reading should be autonomous, accessible, and focused on issues of special significance.

The selection is important from a number of viewpoints, one of which is pedagogical. In the past, teaching Heidegger was rendered even more difficult than one might reasonably expect, due to the lack of such a comprehensive and reliable volume as this. (An earlier project for such a collection by William J. Richardson, S.J. in the late 'sixties unfortunately did not come to fruition). But with the present work teachers have at their disposal a book which is priced within the student's range, is professionally respectable in its translations, and includes selections that range from Heidegger's early overview of his project in 1927, through the essential opuscula on Nothing and on truth, through essays, almost monographs in themselves, on art and humanism, into the issues of science and the mathematical, technology and the fourfold, and the essence and task of thinking in the age of the end of philosophy.