

**In Good Measure:  
Heidegger and the Question of What is Proper to Us Humans**

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*Abstract*

In this talk I wish to discuss both the difficulty as well as the inescapability of the question of what is proper to us human beings, especially in terms of what we produce and what we consume. The question of doing or having “less” or “more” arises in different ways and different forms, such as the reduction of carbon emission, the call to simplicity of life, accumulating less of things and instead gaining more “experiences,” cutting down on work hours and adding more hours for leisure, “enhancing” our bodies with wearable or implantable technologies, or else avoiding them, or at least regulating them. All these ultimately and implicitly point to some basis according to which we human beings determine what is excessive or deficient, and what is “just right.” At what point are we able to say, “This is too much” or “We’ve gone too far”? I argue that we human beings should not use science and technology to simply (and naively) aim for what merely happens to be “faster, higher, stronger,” as the Olympics slogan goes, but must constantly engage in reflexive thinking, and see how we could possibly determine the measure according to which we can say that something is excessive or deficient. In this regard, Heidegger’s reflections on technology, *Gelassenheit*, and human dwelling remain to be ever important in addressing the question of what is proper to us as human beings.