# After the Absolute:

# Friedrich Hölderlin and the *Synechia* of Truth

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## *Abstract*

In the preface to his only published novel, *Hyperion*, Friedrich Hölderlin provided counsel to his readers, warning against the dual impulse to derive from his work either an absolute system of meaning, or a singular display of aesthetic sensibility: 'those who merely sniff my flower mistake its nature, and so do those who pluck it merely for instruction'. And yet, following a century in which Hölderlin's work fell into near-obscurity, commentators have habitually re-engaged with his thought along precisely these trajectories: as stand-alone literary works which reflect the strands of his research into ancient Greek culture and the nascent literary foundations of German Romanticism, or as part of a holistic philosophical programme which, along with his contemporaries F. W. J. Schelling and G. W. F. Hegel, goes some way towards synthesising the various strands of post-Kantian Idealism into a systematic hierarchy of universal meaning. This thesis seeks to redress this trend, illustrating the manner in which Hölderlin's project, insofar as it can be labelled a "project", uniquely converges around a constellation of otherwise incompatible discourses and practices which, in the selfsame preface, Hölderlin himself described as 'the dissolution of dissonances in a particular character'.

This study argues that Hölderlin's "particular" character sustains and suspends irreconcilable positions upon a horizon of shared presentation in which neither of these activities is of itself suspended or lost, but rather held-together. The Greek word *synechia*, to which this thesis owes a part of its title, represents such a "holding-together". Following the researches of Reiner Schürmann, who made much of the critical function of the "*synechia* of contraries" in the thought of Parmenides, this thesis pursues the practice of "synechic" thinking and the innovative possibilities it opens for those striving for a form of thinking unrestricted by the commonplace assumptions and limitations of Western metaphysics. The dialogue with Hölderlin presented in this thesis attempts to contribute to such apprenticeship, precisely because Hölderlin is receptive to the incompatible "otherness" of the Greek beginning from which *synechia* develops, and because his rendering of a language which "holds" provides the potential for resistance in the face of discourses which otherwise subsume all dialogues beneath their own maximal norms.

# Contents

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# *References and Abbreviations*

All references to Hölderlin's works are cited according to the Michael Knaupp edition of Hölderlin's S*ämtliche Werke und Brief*. Where possible, reference to an English language translation of these works will also be provided. The titles used to designate individual texts will similarly follow the Knaupp edition. English language titles will additionally be provided in reference to the translation cited. In instances where editorial deviations in the attribution of titles are commonplace a further note will be made in the citation.

The following abbreviations are used to refer to the commonly attributed collections of Hölderlin's works, in German and in English translation:


SW      *Sämtliche Werke und Brief*, ed. Michael Knaupp, 3 vols., Munich: Hanser, 1993.

EL      *Essays and Letters*, trans. Jeremy Adler and Charlie Louth, London: Penguin Books, 2009.

ELT      *Essays and Letters on Theory*, trans. Thomas Pfau, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.

SP      *Selected Poems and Fragments*, trans. Michael Hamburger, ed. Jeremy Adler, London: Penguin Classics, 1998.


All other regularly cited works will be fully referenced on the first mention and thereafter referred to in an abbreviated format.

# Introduction

> "I have the feeling that another hundred years of neglect are needed
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> before people start to realise what Hölderlin's poetry holds in store."
>
> Martin Heidegger

The ambition of the present study is to articulate how, and what, Friedrich Hölderlin's thought "holds". However, unlike the century which preceded Heidegger's assertion regarding the future reception of Hölderlin's thought, it will not approach this task from out of another period of protracted neglect.[1] Indeed, in the near-century since Heidegger penned these declarative lines, their authority has been challenged by a sustained proliferation of both literary and philosophically-minded researches which have not only taken Hölderlin's works as their "event" but also as the answer to a polyphony of questions which he himself might scarcely have conceived - to the extent, even, that upon the eve of the twenty-first century Peter Fenves was confident enough to champion Hölderlin as both the twentieth century's 'poet of poets' and also its 'poet of philosophers': the nominal figurehead of those who set out to explicate the fate of modernity and defy the limits of the epoch's self-imposed limitations.[2] Notwithstanding the, at times, bipolar and dissonant allegiances of the incongruous range of disciplines, schools, and factions which have claimed him as their own, the fluctuation of interest in Hölderlin's work has thus vindicated his own insights concerning the manner in which conceptions of the future are continually disrupted and refashioned via the mediation of a remembrance of the past, which is itself unstable and perpetually undermined by the shifting circumstances of the present. And yet, the contours of a condition under which studies of Hölderlin have habitually laboured, defined by

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[1] This statement is how Heidegger, writing from Tübingen in January 1946, ended his correspondence with Rudolf Stadelmann. Quoted in: Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, trans. Allan Blunden, London: Harper Collins, 1994. p. 19.

[2] Peter Fenves, "Measure for Measure: Hölderlin and the Place of Philosophy", in: *The Solid Letter: Readings of Friedrich Hölderlin*, ed. Aris Fioretos, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. p. 25.

frictions over the contested inheritance of Hölderlin's legacy, have often produced the effect of undermining or obscuring the depth and subtlety of such insights. From out of the dizzying conflux of commentaries and interpretations of Hölderlin's thought, which are so diverse and their renderings so contradictory that they often serve to increase confusion and further obscure Hölderlin's already challenging and enigmatic works, contact with Hölderlin himself is once again abandoned. As scholars approach the beginning of the third century since Hölderlin's passing there remains a decisive manner in which Heidegger's statement, in a paradoxical contradiction befitting the lives and afterlives of Hölderlin's work, still stands. A return to the source is necessary. However, from out of such a primary confrontation with Hölderlin's own words, the return presented in this study will not then proceed in an attempt to synthesise the varied and dissonant strands of Hölderlin scholarship into one holistic and unifying "vision" of his work and thought (as if the preceding century had not proved this process unsustainable). Neither will it attempt to carve a midway between the distinct periods of austere suspicion and febrile exultation to which Hölderlin's legacy has been heir. Nor will it attempt to "deconstruct" each of these situations one after the other. Rather, this thesis will attempt to explicate how Hölderlin's innovative rendering of a language which uniquely "holds-together" not only makes such an irreconcilable combination of dissonant voices and modes of existence possible, but also highlights them as the necessary and paradoxical preconditions of all human habitation.

The obscure and unconventional circumstances surrounding the composition, preservation, transmission, and translation of Hölderlin's writings, which has undoubtedly made subsequent research into his works a foggier and variable experience, have hastened the necessity of such a study. Of his literary compositions only one epistolatory novel, *Hyperion*, and small collection of his poems ever reached contemporaneous publication. His translations of Sophocles suffered the double ignominy of being released in a minor publication riddled with editorial and printing errors before becoming the subject of public ridicule from Friedrich Schiller and J. W. Goethe. The theoretical essays and fragments, while clear antecedents in the development of F. W. J. Schelling and G. W. F. Hegel's philosophical systems, remained almost entirely unacknowledged until their rediscovery in the twentieth century. When, several decades after he had been diagnosed as incurably mad, a small yet devoted band of Hölderlin's followers managed

to collate enough of his scattered poems in order to publish a first edition of his collected works, they appear primarily to have aroused interest in those drawn to the tragic spectacle of a life destroyed by madness rather than the power of the writings.[3] The second much-enlarged edition of these collected works, which appeared two decades later in 1846 (three years after Hölderlin's death), passed with little more regard in the literary world than the falling of an autumn leaf, destined to an obscurity analogous to a writer who had spent the last thirty-three years of his life confined to the isolation of a solitary tower upon the banks of the river Neckar in the Tübingen home of his carer, Ernst Zimmer. In such fashion did a lifetime, dignified with only the slenderest of acknowledgement or reward, oblige the preservation of its legacy for future generations of scholars interested in the rich reservoir of artistically and philosophically significant work contained within. In English-speaking countries, where translation and interpretation of Hölderlin's works remained either elusive or non-existent until well into the twentieth century, these omissions are felt even more acutely, giving way to a range of biases and misconceptions in common and popular treatments of the works which have habitually relied upon a small but influential circle of Hölderlin devotees and commentators - often parroting and perpetuating the historical and ideological concerns of these pundits more so than of Hölderlin.

The potential researches into those who die either young, neglected, or misunderstood (of which it has been claimed that Hölderlin, in a fashion, did all three) possess something of the enigmatic qualities of a headless statue - the romantic allure of innumerable unfinished, discarded, or unpublished manuscripts, unburdened with the concretisation of a final product, twinned with a mute silence which professes no decisive schema, intention, or motive behind works which did reach a contemporaneous audience.[4] Such a combination of forces necessarily solicits theoretical freedom for and from those attempting to elucidate their subject. In turn, such freedoms permit commentators to curate a version of their subject in keeping with, or even as a posthumous endorsement of, their own theories. Most conspicuous in this respect is the influence of Friedrich

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[3] Following the survey of Hölderlin's posthumous reception in: Eckart Förster, "Foreword", in: *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 1 - 5.

[4] Born in 1770, Hölderlin didn't *actually* die young. Nevertheless, Hölderlin scholars have customarily overlooked the second-half of his life and writings from period (post-1802) relating to the onset of his "madness". Friedrich Beißner, for instance, suggests that this period represents a 'terrifying degree of oblivion', in: Friedrich Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke (Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe)*, ed. Friedrich Beißner, 8 vols., Stuttgart: Cotta, 1984. 3:328.

Nietzsche who almost singularly kept Hölderlin's flame alight in the second-half of the nineteenth century and, in so doing, laid many of the theoretical foundations for his rehabilitation in the twentieth. Indeed, it was perhaps not until a young Nietzsche discovered the second edition of his collected works that Hölderlin gained his first sympathetic and critically-engaged commentator. Nonetheless, when a sixteen-year-old Nietzsche wrote a perceptive assignment in defence of his 'favourite poet' his efforts were initially rewarded, in a tone reflective of Hölderlin's general standing, with a grade of B- and instruction to devote his energies to the elucidation of 'healthier' poets.[5] Characteristically, Nietzsche defied such instruction. Given his standing in more "conventional" arenas, is it perhaps unsurprising that Hölderlin's insights pertaining to a contemporary crisis in values (most prevalent during the transitions between a culture in dissolution and its replacement) found common ground among fellow intellectual "outsiders" such as Nietzsche who saw it as their duty to prevail against a complacent intellectual orthodoxy holding back Europe's cultural and spiritual renewal. Thus, in the 1873 edition of his *Untimely Meditations*, Nietzsche evoked 'the memory of the glorious Hölderlin' as remedy to the 'cultural philistines' of the German bourgeoisie who had taken the Prussian military victory in the Franco-Prussian war as a legitimation of the superiority of their popular culture and ideas.[6] While Nietzsche would later claim to have repudiated Hölderlin (often conflating his criticisms of Hölderlin, somewhat haphazardly, as part of a broader critique of the dynamised cultural nationalism that flourished under the influence of Richard Wagner) and abandoned poetry and art altogether, the latent affinities between the two thinkers, and the shadow of Nietzsche's philosophical enterprise to realign the axis of Western philosophical speculation altogether, has nonetheless led to an ever-present reverberation, often unacknowledged, of Hölderlin by the way of Nietzsche.[7]

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[5] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Selected Letters*, trans. Christopher Middleton, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1969. pp. 4 - 6. Further commentary in: David Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute: German Idealism and the Languishing of God*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005. pp. 407 - 409.

[6] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. pp. 12 - 13.

[7] While much research has been committed to explicating the Nietzschean elements *in* Hölderlin, a great deal less has travelled in the opposing direction. Recent attempts to resolve this include: Sylvia Mae Gorelick, "Songs of the Last Philosopher: Early Nietzsche and the Spirit of Hölderlin", in: *Senior Projects Spring 2013*, New York: Bard College, 2013. Smaller surveys include: Dennis J. Schmidt, *On Germans and Other Greeks: Tragedy and Ethical Life*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001. pp. 191 - 224. Also: Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute*. pp. 391 - 432.

When the petrified solitude from and into which both Hölderlin and Nietzsche's works addressed the world was radically transformed at the dawn of the twentieth century, it was perhaps natural to assume a theoretical concord between the two thinkers. Amidst the convulsive intellectual atmosphere and concomitant "revaluation of all values", idiosyncratic "outsiders" such as Nietzsche and Hölderlin, who both addressed a world in which humankind was seen to have become an enigma to itself and gave voice to a "tragic time" which recognised the discordance at the heart of a world in dissolution and the birth of a new culture, simultaneously found common cause among increasing numbers who saw no place for themselves amidst the unstable tensions inherent in an increasingly mechanised and secular Europe. The poet Stefan George and his circle of followers, for instance, turned to Nietzsche's account of spiritual and cultural renewal in an attempt to disrupt the trajectory of European culture through a programme of mythological-aesthetic proclamations. However, when lamenting in a poem of 1900 that Nietzsche 'should have sung, not spoken', George also paved the way for Hölderlin to adopt the role, *avant la lettre*, of angelical announcer of a Nietzschean revival.[8] Such messages landed on fertile ground, for by the time George wrote a short essay on Hölderlin two decades later declaring him 'the prophet of a new god', no fewer than four revised editions of Hölderlin's collected works had been issued.[9] The third of these editions prepared by Norbert von Hellingrath, while displaying its indebtedness to the George school, went a long way towards reorienting Hölderlin scholarship, for the first time, in the more firmly rooted tradition of philological specialisation (later expanded by Friedrich Beißner and Emil Staiger). It was Hellingrath who first communicated the force of Hölderlin's Sophocles and Pindar translations, argued for the technical and conceptual significance of his later hymns and fragments (hitherto regarded solely as the dangerous products of an unstable mind), and furnished Hölderlin's legacy with scholarly theoretical and historiographical detail. Alongside the canonisation of Hölderlin as a major poet, however, Hellingrath also campaigned as George before him, with an amplified ideological bias

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[8] '*sie hätte singen / Nicht reden sollen diese neue seele*!', are the closing lines from George's poem "Nietzsche".
[9] These editions were edited by: Berthold Litzmann (1896), Wilhelm Böhm (1905), Norbert von Hellingrath (1913-23), and Franz Zinkernagel (1914-26). Each publication built upon the legacy of its predecessor, adding previously unpublished works and supplementary materials. George's 1919 essay, "Hölderlin", was published in the magazine *Blätter für die Kunst*, see: Stefan George, *The Works of Stefan George*, trans. Olga Marx and Ernest Morwitz, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1974. p. 219.

common in wartime scholarship, for Hölderlin's "outsider" status to be elevated to the status of a national mythos. In other words, the significance of Hölderlin's message, despite being explicable 'only to a select few' endowed with comparable spiritual and intellectual energies to discern the 'innermost ember' embedded in the 'deepest level' of the 'German essence', was, above all else, its function as mediator and exemplar in the emergence of the invisible spirit of a 'secret Germany' forever 'impenetrable to non-Germans'.[10]

Hellingrath's Hölderlin 'hit us students like an earthquake', Heidegger later recalled.[11] As Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe has recorded, the entire question of the commentary on Hölderlin after Hellingrath's death at Verdun in 1916 was preoccupied with how this earthquake could be translated into a concrete definition of the isolated poet as heroic arbiter in development of a pseudo-Nietzschean national spirit capable of overcoming the desolation of the First World War and finally 'entering into history' - that is, of reorienting Germans in 'becoming Germans, just as the Greeks, with the unprecedented courage to which tragedy attests, became Greeks'.[12] Thus, in Heidegger's own complex, idiosyncratic, and personal commentaries on Hölderlin throughout the 1930s, the poet is once again prophetically proclaimed as the spiritual guide 'of future Germans' who addresses their 'unique historical position and mission'.[13] For Heidegger, however, this "unique historical position and mission" is not cited solely in response to the deracination of a cultural *Heimatlosigkeit* (homelessness) experienced with the onset of modernity, but is also expressed as the culmination of the entire history of Western metaphysics. An entry from the *Contributions to Philosophy*, for instance, gives voice to the full depth of Heidegger's Hölderlin: 'The historical destiny of philosophy culminates in knowledge of the necessity to create a hearing

[10] Norbert von Hellingrath, "Hölderlin und die Deutschen", in: *Hölderlin: Zwei Vorträge*, Munich: Hugo Bruckmann, 1922. pp. 17 - 22. On Hellingrath's relation to the George circle and his role in the creation of a nationalist mythos around Hölderlin, consider: Joseph Suglia, "On the Nationalist Reconstruction of Hölderlin in the George Circle", in: *German Life and Letters*, No. 4, pp. 387 - 397, 2002.

[11] Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz, New York: Harper, 1982. p. 78.

[12] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "Poetry's Courage", in: *The Solid Letter*. p. 80. Hellingrath's compatriot, Friedrich Sieburg, captures the manner in which his friend's passing fortified the fusion of Hölderlin's poetry and national identity: 'We went to war with Hölderlin's illuminating maxim: "Where there is danger, there is also salvation," and the deadly bullet hit the most noble of us, Norbert von Hellingrath, at the moment his face, sunk in the manuscript of the hymns, seemed to turn upward'. Friedrich Sieburg, *Zur Literatur*, 2 vols., ed. Fritz J. Raddatz, Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, 1981. I: 159.

[13] Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Ireland, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014. pp. 201 - 202.

for the words of Hölderlin'.[14] In this case, however, Hölderlin's formerly neglected status is also differentiated from that of a philosopher such as Nietzsche, necessarily a habitual exile from the everyday run of commonplace designations obstinately addressing an absent people, because it serves as a prophetic prelude preparing the ground for an entire people to hear his destinal message. Therefore, even in the period after 1945, when Heidegger had shifted towards a less overtly nationalistic form of Hölderlin hagiography which also claimed to address his 'destinal belongingness to other peoples', he still articulated a historical dimension to Hölderlin's poetry which 'first determines a new time' through its capacity to arbitrate between the death of metaphysics and the birth of its replacement: 'in the no-longer of the gods who have fled and the not yet of the God who is coming'.[15]

Leaving aside the drama of this final statement, the overtly "philosophical" dimension to Heidegger's treatment of Hölderlin set the tone for the post-war interpretation of his poems.[16] In a 1963 talk delivered at the annual conference of the Hölderlin-Gesellschaft, for instance, Theodor Adorno cited the inadequacy of traditional literary analysis (embodied by Beißner and Staiger) in the face of '*das Gedichtete*' (the poetic); the 'truth content' of which 'necessitates recourse to philosophy'.[17] In adopting the term *Gedichtete*, Adorno consciously sought not only to develop and challenge Heidegger's use of the expression in the 1930s, but also to give voice to a speculative concept Walter Benjamin had developed in his essay on Hölderlin two decades earlier, which had remained unknown and unpublished until 1955.[18] While the truth-content of

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[14] Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012. §258, p. 334. Heidegger's "contributions" were composed privately between 1936 - 1938 and remained unpublished until 1989.

[15] Heidegger directly addresses the "international" dimension to Hölderlin in the 1947 text: Martin Heidegger, "Letter on "Humanism"", in: *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. p. 257. Heidegger's remarks regarding the historical destiny of Hölderlin's poetry from the 1959 essay: Martin Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry", in: *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, trans. Keith Hoeller, New York: Humanity Books, 2000. p. 64.

[16] As Frank H. W. Edler has catalogued, the philosophical preoccupation with Hölderlin's works can be said to pre-date Heidegger's interpretations by several decades. Wilhelm Dilthey's 1910 essay "Friedrich Hölderlin" was perhaps the first to identify Hölderlin's philosophically reflexive style. In 1921 Ernst Cassirer followed Dilthey's lead, arguing for the superiority of Hölderlin's writings over those of Hegel and Schelling. Frank H. W. Elder, "Philosophy, Language, and Politics: Heidegger's Attempt to Steal the Language of the Revolution", in: *Social Research*, Vol. 57, No. 1, pp. 197 - 238, 1990.

[17] Adorno's talk, *Parataxis. Zur späten Lyrik Hölderlins*, was delivered in Berlin. A revised edition of the lecture was published in *Die Neue Rundschau* (vol. 75, no. I) in 1964, accessible in: Theodor W. Adorno, "Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry", in: *Notes to Literature: Volume Two*, 2 vols., trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992. II: 109.

[18] The posthumous publication of Benjamin's essay *Zwei Gedichte von Friedrich Hölderlin* (*Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin*) was arranged by Adorno and Gershom Scholem when gathering Benjamin's works into a first collected edition.

Hölderlin's enigmatic poetry evades the capture of philological interpretation by the way of its obstinate refusal to yield to established models of literary investigation, its radical "otherness", nonetheless, can be elaborated through Benjamin's analysis in the mediation of *Gedichtete* which represents 'the synthetic unity of the intellectual and perceptual orders'.[19] For Adorno, the referral to a philosophical *Gedichtete*, as with Benjamin and Heidegger's analyses, does not merely signpost the interpretative "key" to unlocking Hölderlin's individual poems, but rather elaborates the philosophical condition of possibility, or even necessity, of the poetic itself to which Hölderlin, with each individual poem, testifies. Hölderlin's poetry, then, represents an ultimate expression of telling the truth, or the mode of 'speaking in the name of truth' as Lacoue-Labarthe puts it, because, for these philosophers, the condition of the possibility of each individual poem is its attestation of a truth which both recognises and collapses differentiation without deferral to a metaphysical conceptual schema. [20] Thus, proximity with Hölderlin's poetry becomes a mouthpiece through which philosophers can speak of transcending the limits of a philosophy of dialectics all the while deferring back to philosophy, as if trying to leap over their own shadow, to explicate this manoeuvre.[21]

And yet, while the reformation of Hölderlin's image into that of "the poet of philosophers" was gaining momentum, the 1961 edition of Hölderlin's collected works, which published for the first time some of Hölderlin's hitherto unknown philosophical writings, inspired an equally compelling counter-reformation in Hölderlin studies.[22] Far from being the poet whose language had surpassed the confines of dialectical thought, the "rediscovery" of Hölderlin's early philosophical essays pointed in the opposite direction - towards the significant role Hölderlin had played in the development of post-Kantian philosophy. The unearthing, in particular, of a fragmentary essay (commonly titled "Judgement and Being") cast, Dieter Henrich proposed, 'an

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[19] Walter Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin", in: *Selected Writings, Volume 1: 1913 - 1926*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, 4. vols., London: Harvard University Press, 2002. I: 19.
[20] Following: Lacoue-Labarthe, "Poetry's Courage". p. 84.
[21] Familiarity with Hölderlin's work, Fenves writes, 'does not so much grant a would-be philosopher entrance into the sanctuary of dialectics as give philosophers who have experienced this saturation of this sanctuary the chance, perhaps the one chance, to leave it behind'. Fenves, "Measure for Measure". p. 25.
[22] This 1961 4-volume edition of Hölderlin's collected works, the *Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe*, was edited by Beißner who was himself responsible for the rediscovery of many of Hölderlin's "lost" theoretical essays and fragments.

entirely new light on the history of the origins of idealist philosophy'.[23] Thus, as Hellingrath had once lobbied for the recognition of Hölderlin's status as a major poet, Henrich endeavoured to put forward equal claim to his ranking as philosopher. In particular, Henrich's thesis foregrounded the decisive role Hölderlin had played in the transitional period between J. G. Fichte's 1795 *Science of Knowledge* and Hegel's 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit* - a period, Henrich will claim with a notably Hellingrathian inflection, which 'holds the secrets of the true meaning of idealist speculation'.[24] A consequence of Henrich's investigation was a broadening acknowledgement of the necessity for theoretical scepticism regarding certain claims which had previously been made on Hölderlin's behalf. Taking, perhaps, Walter Muschg's axiom that overtly philosophical treatments of Hölderlin had historically been guilty of expressing 'what they think he did not dare or was not able to say', scouring his creative output free from any countervailing historical and biographical contingencies, such investigations exposed the, either wilful or negligent, occlusions, misdirections, and omissions which had characterised Hölderlin's resurgent legacy.[25] Historical studies of Hölderlin ensued. The privilege afforded to Hölderlin's late hymnal poetry, to almost the complete abnegation of the rest of his body of work, was foregone. Interest was taken, as Eckart Förster highlights, in the particular configuration of Hölderlin's influences and colleagues at key stages in the development of his thought, shedding new light on the biographical and social conditions under which his thinking developed.[26] Studies openly challenged, Iris Buchheim writes, a 'persistent rejection of all scholarship' and 'isolation of Hölderlin from his Idealist, indeed "metaphysical context"' in an attempt to bring perceptions of Hölderlin back down to earth.[27]

At the 1968 meeting of the Hölderlin-Gesellschaft, Pierre Bertaux proposed further acceleration in Hölderlin's revised trajectory. In his lecture, "Hölderlin and the French

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[23] The title "Judgement and Being" ("*Urtheil and Seyn*") was attached to the fragment by Beißner. The text had been discovered at an auction in 1930, but had little impact on scholarship until Beißner's publication and Henrich's subsequent essay, *Hölderlin über Urteil und Sein. Eine Studie zur Entstenhungsgeschichte*, published in the *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch* of 1965-66. Henrich quoted above from this essay, in: Dieter Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*, ed. Eckart Förster, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997. p. 74.
[24] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 73.
[25] Walter Muschg quoted in: Adorno, "Parataxis". II: 109. Reinhard Mehring claims that philosophers have been guilty of donning a 'Hölderlin mask' to lend weight to their own speculations, in: Reinhard Mehring, *Heideggers Überlieferungsgeschick: Eine dionysische Selbstinszenierung*, Würzburg: Könighausen & Neumann, 1992. p. 51.
[26] Förster, "Foreword". p. 5.
[27] Iris Buchheim, "Heidegger: Hölderlin als »Geschick«", in: *Hölderlin-Handbuch: Leben - Werk - Wirkung*, ed. Johann Kreuzer, Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2002. p. 437.

Revolution", Bertaux not only teased out the lineaments of Hölderlin's complex Jacobinism and personal proximity to the French Revolution, but also advanced the theory that Hölderlin's work, in a confrontational inversion of the latent Hellingrathian readings, was most readily explicable to non-Germans - specifically, in this instance, those with a 'visceral familiarity with the history of the French Revolution and with the revolutionary pathos that the French possess'.[28] In the wake of Bertaux's affront to the inward-looking tendencies of the Hölderlin-Gesellschaft, which had maintained a monopoly on Hölderlin's reputation since its founding in 1943 under the honorary patronage of Joseph Goebbels, a new wave of Hölderlin scholarship, critical of a literary establishment which had at times constrained and exploited Hölderlin's works, took measure of the intellectual climate to cast Hölderlin, as Robert Savage has recently catalogued, as revolutionary firebrand of the 1968 generation.[29] Three years prior, Péter Szondi's foundation of the Institute for General and Comparative Literature at the Free University of Berlin, a lynchpin in the burgeoning internationalist approach to Hölderlin studies, had laid the groundwork for Bertaux's interventions in broadening Hölderlin's horizons, curating a 'space for theoretical experimentation unencumbered by the territoriality and hierarchy they saw as typical of national literatures'.[30] With the aid of his broad network of contacts, in part made up by those who had been previously exiled from Germany, Szondi opened new dimensions in Hölderlin scholarship, promoting diverse and previously inaccessible literary and theoretical traditions, bringing the work of thinkers as diverse as Jacques Derrida, Paul Celan, and György Lukács to bear on Hölderlin studies, and fostering relations with international institutions working outside the constraints of the German academy. The appeal for a non-nativist approach to Hölderlin introduced depth and colour to his portrait, inaugurating a mode of reception that was capable of

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[28] Pierre Bertaux, "Hölderlin und die französische Revolution", in: *Hölderlin-Jahrbuch*, No. 15, pp. 1 - 27, 1967 - 1968. p. 1. The essay born out of Bertaux's lecture, delivered on the 125th anniversary of Hölderlin's death, was followed by a book published under the same title: Pierre Bertaux, *Hölderlin und die Französische Revolution*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969. Correlation can be drawn between Bertaux's thesis and Robert Vansittart's earlier assessment of Schiller: 'To a foreigner he [Schiller] seems a humanist, a vigorous defender of the faith in human rights and intellectual freedom… That, however, is not always the impression of him that you get, or are even given, if you are a German, or even a foreigner reading him in Germany. The emphasis is laid rather on the nationalistic strain… You may have to re-read him outside of Germany in order to rediscover him'. Vansittart quoted in: William Witte, *Schiller*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1949. p. xi.
[29] Robert Savage, *Hölderlin after the Catastrophe: Heidegger, Adorno, Brecht*, London: Camden House, 2008. pp. 196 - 200.
[30] Quotation and further on Szondi's Institute for General and Comparative Literature (*Seminar für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft*), including Bertaux's relation to Szondi's programme of Hölderlin studies, in: Julia Ng, "Versing, Ending: Hölderlin in 1971", in: *Two Studies of Friedrich Hölderlin*, ed. Peter Fenves and Julia Ng, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. pp. 1 - 18.

challenging the commonplace objection that non-Germans lacked the necessary prerequisite to understand Hölderlin's writings and even, at times, countering such assumptions with recourse to the rhetorical provocation from the outset of Bertaux's lecture: 'What can a German understand about Hölderlin?'.[31]

In recent decades, the new freedoms accorded to Hölderlin scholarship have produced compelling results. Deiter Eberhard Sattler's 1975 edition of Hölderlin's collected works, the *Frankfurter Ausgabe*, was the first to assuage the otherwise ubiquitous editorial practice of presupposing an overarching theoretical paradigm, guided by a systematised whole, in relation to which each of the individual constituents of Hölderlin's *oeuvre* could be reduced. Sattler's edition reflected the growing appetite for a theoretically nuanced and historically sensitive Hölderlin in keeping with the growing appreciation of the demanding abstractions, mercurial paradoxes, and palimpsestic vicissitudes of his work which could not be reduced (or, expanded) into an absolute system of meaning. Following Sattler's careful editorship, the remainder of the twentieth century sought to develop a theoretical outlook up to the challenge of accommodating the complex and at times contradictory constellation forces which arrange and present themselves in Hölderlin's works. Renewed efforts by scholars across Europe (such as, for instance, Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Werner Hamacher, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, and Jean-Luc Nancy) have taken up the interpretive question of the appropriate theoretical "approach" to Hölderlin in lieu of his own writings. Furthermore, the translation and interpenetration of the works of these thinkers, alongside the translation of earlier generations of Hölderlin commentators, has encouraged and even solicited, for the first time, the intervention of scholars working and writing in English-speaking countries. Recent translations of Hölderlin's theoretical writings by Thomas Pfau, Jeremy Adler, and Charlie Louth, have provided the occasion and impetus for critical commentaries (from researchers such as David Farrell-Krell, Peter Fenves, Véronique Fóti, Dennis J. Schmidt, and Andrzej Warminski, to name just a few) which not only interpolate the works of their European counterparts for English-language audiences but also pose the question of Hölderlin anew on their own terms.

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[31] Bertaux, "Hölderlin und die französische Revolution". p. 1.

The proliferation of sustained and expanding interest in Hölderlin is testament to the growing appreciation that his work still has much to yield. For those interested in the unresolved questions of the past, the unacknowledged issues of the present, and the as yet unrecognised problems of the future, Hölderlin continues to draw interest across all backgrounds and disciplines with the promise of stimulating dialogue and, at times, unpredictable outcomes. Nonetheless, the appropriate method of reading required with respect to the textual challenges presented in Hölderlin's writings remains, perhaps necessarily, opaque. Each generation and school of thought has produced its own versions of Hölderlin in accordance with and in reaction to its own ideological movements and intellectual fashions. Most, if not all, have sought to unmask the "true" Hölderlin - either concealed or missed by their predecessors. Such unmasking has often only unmasked another mask. Thus, while many commentators concur with Heidegger's remarks that Hölderlin 'first determines a new time', and if the continued interest in and attempts to think along with Hölderlin up until today must be taken, in part, as evidence of this, few can be said to agree what this determination represents.[32] While the recent trend of eschewing the practice of extrapolating "grand narratives" (which had made that which is conspicuously absent in Hölderlin's work into the foremost condition of its existence) from Hölderlin's writings, or of speaking of Hölderlin by the way of denouncing his "false friends" (those who have supposedly misread, mistreated, or missed entirely, the "essence" of his works), has gone a long way towards reorienting Hölderlin in keeping with firmer academic footholds of impartiality, accuracy, and openness, it remains the case that scholars are only beginning to encounter Hölderlin's work with the level of integrity, patience, and humility required. It is difficult to avoid the impression, as Aris Fioretos writes, 'that we have only really begun to read Hölderlin in the manner his texts demand'.[33] Indeed, if there is something like an appropriate "standpoint" from which Hölderlin's thinking can be encountered, nobody has yet proved definitively capable of standing there.

This study does not propose to have found such a foothold. In fact, it hopes to illustrate that Hölderlin's writings do not have, so to speak, a "situation" at all - that is, they do not reside at a fixed point upon a landscape of contested territories; rather, they perpetually move across a

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[32] Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry". p. 64.
[33] Aris Fioretos, "Introduction", in: *The Solid Letter*. p. 5.

terrain which brings into focus a succession of places, or non-places, both real and imagined, and topographically arranges them within a single presentation through which a confluence of relations, or tensions, between the warring elements of incompatible and irreconcilable positions are nonetheless "held-together" in a theoretical outlook reflective, perhaps, of the literal space of one of the rooms Hölderlin occupied in Homburg whose four walls he adorned with a series of maps covering the four quarters of the earth. Such a reading proposes a critical perspective which does not converge around a single point, but rather represents a mode of theoretical mapping which invites a thinking which journeys, or oscillates, back-and-forth, in a perpetual motion without resolution, between the ideal and the real, past and present, local and foreign, presented, as Richard Sieburth writes, 'as a pattern of vectors or moving energies'.[34] This pattern encourages an existence defined by a series of comings and goings which are both porous and isolated, bound, as Henrich identifies, 'to no specific location' and 'consummated in a thought that encompasses all paths and so settles on a place, but no longer belongs to any particular path of place'.[35] This study, therefore, will not enter into Hölderlin's thinking by selectively foregrounding a particular aspect or site of Hölderlin's thought which is germane to its own critical positions while surreptitiously hiding the others. Instead, it recognises that Hölderlin's thought, as Agamben suggests, 'constitutes its own paradigm' in relation to which the categorial distinctions with which commentators approach it often come up short because it perpetually 'dwells on an undecidable threshold' from which theoretical models cannot be derived nor applied to.[36]

Drawing on the recent researches of Agamben, as well as Hamacher and Henrich, this thesis examines Hölderlin's writings by employing a theoretical outlook receptive to the irreconcilable vectors they host. Primarily, such research addresses the hitherto neglected and ill-understood extent to which such an outlook embodies Hölderlin's own critical perspective. Using the research of Reiner Schürmann as its "point of departure", the terms which distribute the allocation of space in this study are distributed via a system of orientation first given voice to, through Schürmann's analyses, in the thinking of Parmenides - which hosts a constellation of

[34] Richard Sieburth, "Introduction", in: *Hymns and Fragments by Friedrich Hölderlin*, trans. Richard Sieburth, New Jersey: Princetown University Press, 1984. p. 40.
[35] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 225.
[36] Giorgio Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness: Chronicle of a Dwelling Life, 1806-1843*, trans. Alta L. Price, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2023. pp. 327 - 328.

philosophical speculation and poetic revelation in a technique termed by Schürmann as the "*synechia* of contraries". For Schürmann, Parmenides' "synechic" thinking 'consists in making disparate singulars enter into constellations'; however, nothing about such constellations are fixed or absolute, they shift their allegiances and perspectives in a manner analogous, this study proposes, to Hölderlin's own writings which do not bind their content in reference to a single prescriptive genus but across, as Schürmann writes of Parmenides, 'innumerable lines of fissuring'.[37] Such a perspective allows this research to fulfil two criteria. Firstly, the movement towards a theoretical perspective hitherto not directly at play in Hölderlin commentaries necessarily divests itself from the contested territory concerning the rightful, or wrongful, critical inheritors of Hölderlin's legacy. This study does not directly concern itself with arguments towards the defence or criticism of historical paradigms at stake in Hölderlin scholarship - undoubtedly, such conversations have their benefits, however the benefits are not always to the betterment of understanding Hölderlin's own writings. Where and when it addresses such frictions, this research interweaves such considerations within the fabric of its own perspective. Secondarily, this study proposes that what is at stake in Hölderlin's writing and thinking are the limits of human discourse; however, the limits of such discourses are not necessarily mitigated or resolved with recourse to philosophical system, or system of "non-systematicity", but exposed along the lines of fracture between the conflicting studies of those who propose, returning to Lacoue-Labarthe's dictum, to "speak in the name of truth", that is, in the silences between the argumentative monologues spoken in the name of Hölderlin's truth (and of truth itself), which have been established on the basis of ignoring such a silence. This research is not the history of these monologues, but the examination of that silence.

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[37] Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, ed. Reginald Lilly, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. p. 131. Given Schürmann's hasty dismissal of Hölderlin's thought, in a fleeting and casual reference at the outset of his *Broken Hegemonies*, his articulation of a tragic *synechia* nonetheless finds itself, as Fóti has also recently argued, 'in the wake of Hölderlin even when he repudiates him'. Indeed, Schürmann's off-hand rebuttal, which posits that 'Hölderlin locates the good in unanimity, in the unifying unity and locates "the root of evil" in the singular', can be read as an uncharacteristically clumsy reading of Hölderlin's *oeuvre* supported only with a brief allusion to an epigrammatic fragment (titled *Die Wurzel alles Übels*). Instead, as the present project will attempt to illustrate, Schürmann's articulation of the *synechia* holds an unaccounted line of filiation with Hölderlin's own theories of truth - in spite of, or even *from out of*, Schürmann's own dismissive allusion to Hölderlin. Véronique M. Fóti, *Epochal Discordance: Hölderlin's Philosophy of Tragedy*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2006. pp. 25 - 27. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 17.

It is only with 'a changing key', as Celan writes in a 1955 poem, that 'you unlock the house where the snow of what's silenced drifts'.[38] The ensuing chapters of this study present what has been silenced in Hölderlin's synechic thought in a series of "changing keys". The next chapter will set the scene for an investigation into Hölderlin and *synechia*. It will examine the historical paradigms behind the rift, or disjuncture, at the heart of the relationship between philosophical investigation and poetical expression: a rift, this thesis will argue, which collapses under the weight of Hölderlin's thought. This chapter will pursue such an examination in reference to the polemic of the origin, following closely Agamben and Schürmann's analysis of the role of a conceptual and pre-conceptual *archē*, which brings into focus the necessity of a mode of expression up to the task of naming origins. Via the mediation of this investigation of the *archē*, which makes manifest the irreconcilable allegiances of philosophical and poetical modes of speech, the ground to explore the synechic technique will be exposed. This remainder of this chapter will then examine the function of the *synechia*, using Hölderlin's correspondence as primary reference. Chapter Two will investigate Hölderlin's concept of history, before moving toward an examination, following Schürmann's readings, of Parmenides' *synechia* and its function in the pursuit of "truth". This chapter will then explore the transition away from a synechic truth toward a philosophy of dialectics, primarily focusing on the role of art in Plato's philosophical pursuit of truth. It will also intersect with Hölderlin's relationship to Plato and his account of Greek tragic theatre. The remainder of the second chapter will explore the espousal of the dialectical process up to the thought of Hegel and Schelling, bringing to the fore Hölderlin's own philosophical thought and identifying how it gives rise, in turn, to attempts, by Heidegger, Adorno, and Benjamin, to recast Hölderlin as the consummate "post-metaphysical" thinker. The third chapter will then analyse Hölderlin's attempt to grapple with the synechic technique in his only published and yet much neglected novel, *Hyperion*. This chapter will use *Hyperion* as its foundation in order to examine Hölderlin's interaction and break with post-Kantian philosophy under thematic explorations of the natural, the temporal, and the political - each of which

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[38] '*Mit wechselndem Schlüssel / schließt du das Haus auf, darin / der Schnee das Verschwiegenen treibt*'. Celan's poem *Mit Wechselndem Schlüssel* (*With a Changing Key*) published in the 1955 collection *Von Schwelle zu Schwelle*, available in: Paul Celan, *Selected Poems*, trans. Michael Hamburger, London: Penguin Books, 1990. pp. 88 - 89. Also following: John Felstiner, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995. pp. xviii - xix.

constitute hegemonic paradigms in the pursuit of dialectical truth. A new reading of *Hyperion*, which suggests that the nature of the critical rupture evident in Hölderlin's later writings is a recurring and willed theoretical position throughout his *oeuvre*, will be offered. Following on, the fourth chapter will examine one of Hölderlin's later poems, *Half of Life*, which, this thesis will argue, represents the crystallisation of Hölderlin's decisive separation from Idealism and Romanticism and most explicit expression of his technique of *synechia*. Finally, the concluding chapter hopes to offer an account of *synechia* for thinkers in and of the future, hinting at where such investigations may also lead for those who wish to spend more time in the rewarding company of Hölderlin.

# Original Poems

Once upon a time, all beginnings were poetic. As the recent research of Marcel Detienne has illustrated, at the same time sculptors experimented with the earliest portrayals of walking figures, and long before Parmenides journeyed with the first philosophers along the paths from darkness to light, the poets of archaic Greece cultivated hitherto untrodden routes leading to the origins of all things.[1] The language of poets, being both more flexible and durable than either stone or science, possesses a unique capacity to bring forth and hold-together formerly irreconcilable positions: the dual potential to announce acts of creation and acts of destruction, symbolising the form of an invisible mould from which the Greeks cast their world. Herodotus recalls how the poets set the Hellenes upon their feet, who made a theogony, name, and foundation for all other beginnings.[2] As if to express this fact, Agamben highlights the manner in which the Greek word *poiēsis* (from *poiein*, create) communicates the process of bringing into presence that which was previously concealed, the exercise of putting forth something once hidden, of making darkness visible.[3] Plato, too, gives voice to the full resonance of *poiēsis* as that which moves 'from nonbeing into being'.[4] Inasmuch as this originary *poiēsis* underscores each and every time something is brought forth upon the horizon of unconcealment and into the light of presence, then, the entirety of nature (understood as *phúsis*) becomes possible and thinkable for it has the character, like a bud blossoming, of *poiēsis*. Recalling, therefore, the manner in which *poiēsis* shares the same Indo-European cognate as the Sanskrit word *cinori*, meaning to "gather together", this chapter will first attempt to illuminate how the creative capacity of poetic origins are

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[1] Marcel Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*, trans. Janet Lloyd, New York: Zone Books, 1999. pp. 15 - 33.

[2] Poets 'taught the Greeks the descent of the gods, and gave the gods their names'. Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, trans. A. D. Godley, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920. p. 341 (2.53.). Additionally, the hexameter of Xenophanes: 'Since the beginning all have learned in accordance with Homer', in: Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996. p. 23, fr. 10.

[3] Agamben itineraries the history of *poiēsis* in: Giorgio Agamben, *The Man Without Content*, trans. Georgia Albert, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. pp. 68 - 93.

[4] Plato, *Lysis. Symposium. Phaedrus*, trans. Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022. pp. 186 - 187 (*Symposium*, 205b.).

intimately tied to Hölderlin's attempt to render a *synechia* of language which "holds-together" the disparate.[5]

However, this beginning also evokes absent counterweights. Ever since Plato appealed to the so-called 'ancient quarrel' between philosophy and poetry in order to banish the latter from his city, a repudiation has underscored the common understanding of the creative capacity of an originary *poíēsis* - to the extent, even, that in many cases philosophical appeals to poetry not only wilfully concede or ignore this repudiation, but also habitually fail to notice that a repudiation is taking place at all.[6] As such, *poíēsis* remains a subterranean economy in the subsequent history of Western thought, and many studies pointed towards the extrapolation of a philosophy of poetry can be said to remain oblivious to the extent to which they begin, as Agamben writes, 'by forgetting its own origin'.[7] It is perhaps not until Hegel's statements, delivered throughout 1820s in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, to the effect that art in its 'highest vocation' represents 'a thing of the past', that the full weight of this philosophical repudiation of *poíēsis* is brought into the full light of day.[8] What, then, does it mean when Hegel says that art has become "a thing of the past"? Does it mean that humankind has finally ascribed to *poíēsis* its fate, forestalled ever since Plato sent the poets into their lonely exile, which, as fate does, only resides in the past? Has the creative capacity of the poetic word to announce origins descended into the darkness of a twilight from which there is no returning daybreak? Undoubtedly, the last century has seen substantive efforts to counter such claims. Efforts to "retrieve" a conceptual *poíēsis*, to derive from it, even, increasingly complex networks of ontological determination which could both confront Plato's analysis on its own level and forge an imperishable bond between philosophical thinking and poetry have proved influential.[9] This study does not propose to add to that debate. As Hamacher

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[5] Etymological relation between *poiein* (ποιέω) and *cinori* (चिनोति) demonstrated in: Carlos Quiles, *A Grammar of Modern Indo-European: Language and Culture, Writing System and Phonology, Morphology, Syntax*, Badajoz: Asociación Cultural Dnghu, 2007. p. 352.

[6] '*palaia tis diaphora philosophia te kai poiètikè*'. Plato, *The Republic: Books 6-10*, trans. Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013. pp. 436 - 437 (X: 607b.). Aesthetics 'begins necessarily with the forgetting of art', writes Agamben in: Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. p. 43.

[7] Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. p. 45.

[8] 'art, considered in its highest vocation, is and remains for us a thing of the past'. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fire Art*, 2. vols., trans. T. M. Knox, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. I: 139.

[9] This allusion is pointed towards Heidegger's critiques of the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition. Heidegger's analyses of *poíēsis*, which for him represents a more authentic (*eigentlich*) form of thinking, come to the fore in the 1935 lecture, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, and remains central throughout the rest of his *oeuvre*. In brief, Heidegger's *poíēsis* attempts to unite his philosophy of language, technology, and environment under one ontological determination of

distinguishes, the efforts to derive such a programme, pointed towards the construction of a logic of *poíēsis*, from Hölderlin's writings 'falls back within the terrain of Idealism and of original synthesis, whose deconstruction is the aim of Hölderlin's texts'.[10] Rather, Hölderlin's works illustrate how, within the process of *poíēsis*, any attempt at construction: is intimately tied to the processes of its countervailing deconstruction; how, within a single passage, incompatible categories of meaning, or non-meaning, are nonetheless "held-together" in dual trajectories, between an absolute system of meaning and a singularising undertow which resists and sabotages such categorisation - not as two paths which start and end at the same destination, but as innumerable lines of fracture which cross, distort, and interpenetrate one another perpetually without resolve. The "logic" of such a system cannot, therefore, be determined with recourse to a synthetic consistency of meaning; rather, perhaps akin to Horace's direction that the poetic need only 'hang together', it begins and ends only at the word which "holds-together", the creating word.[11]

But *how* does it all begin? Unlike Heidegger's investigations which point towards "the open" (*das Offene*) which 'grants first of all the possibility of the path to presence, and grants the possible presencing of that presence itself', the emergence of *poíēsis* is fraught with indeterminacies which cannot be reduced to determinations, but instead allows for a constellation of potential relations whilst also sowing the seeds of their own negations—it is such a capacity that grants a porosity which allows for a transition of opposites into one another—which are nonetheless held-together, first of all, in the language of poets.[12] As Schürmann writes in an essay on Hölderlin, the poem thus succeeds where categorical thinking cannot: 'when the natal origin,

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poetic "dwelling": 'it is of the utmost importance that we think bringing-forth [*poíēsis*] in its full scope and at the same time in the sense which the Greeks thought it'. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology", in: *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt, New York: Harper, 2013. p. 10. For further on Heidegger's *poíēsis*, consult: Alexander Ferrari Di Pippo, "The Concept of Poiesis in Heidegger's An Introduction to Metaphysics", in: *Thinking Fundamentals*, IWM Fellows Conference, Vol. 9, Vienna: Institute for Human Sciences, 2000.

[10] Werner Hamacher, "Version of Meaning: A Study of Hölderlin's Late Lyric Poetry", in: *Two Studies of Friedrich Hölderlin*, ed. Peter Fenves and Julia Ng, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. p. 40.

[11] '*Sit quod vis, simplex dumtaxat et unum*'. Countering recourse to any presupposed underlying philosophical "unity" derived from translation of this quotation, Charles Brink writes: 'All the time he seems to be "thinking" in his poetry, and yet his thought processes cannot be identified with conceptual and argumentative procedures… of "philosophical argument"'. See: C. O. Brink, *Horace on Poetry: The 'Ars Poetica'*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971. p. 56; p. 448.

[12] Martin Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy", in: *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, New York: Harper & Row, 1972. p. 68. Here developing Hamacher's critique of the Heideggerian "open", in: Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". pp. 39 - 40.

the mystery of birth, becomes language’.[13] Such statements, then, call into question the very capacity of the *possibility* of the categorical situation of *poíēsis*: of beginning itself. To situate something is to raise the question of its beginning, the origin from which it comes to be.[14] Yet the indeterminacy of beginning itself undermines its own situation. Heidegger is perhaps correct to point towards Hölderlin’s essay, “Becoming in Passing-Away”, and its emphasis on the experience of the “between” inherent in the work of art as passageway through such an enigma:

> dissolution is necessary and holds its particular character between being and non-
>
> being. In the state between being and non-being, however, the possible becomes
>
> real everywhere, and the real becomes ideal, and in the free imitation of art this
>
> is a frightful yet divine dream.[15]

However, as Hamacher explicates, Hölderlin’s emphasis on the “between” does not offer recourse to a categorical “open” which first grants the emergence of a beginning, but rather affirms the disjunctive nature of a “between” as both ‘the possibility of synthesis and its hinderance’.[16] The incompatible drives at the heart of a “between” travel in opposing directions, fluctuating between being and non-being, real and ideal, beginning and ending, in related and yet isolated trajectories which do not teleologically arrive at a situation, but rather, as Hölderlin’s passage indicates, are only made visible as a beginning “*in-between*” through the ‘terrible but divine dream’ of a poetic language which exposes their singularity within an absolute configuration which it also, in the same gesture, undermines. What is original in Hölderlin’s writings, then, is their proximity to an origin (literally *orior*, to rise, to appear, to come forth) which they also necessarily call into question as a site of determination.

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[13] Reiner Schürmann, “Situating René Char: Hölderlin, Heidegger, Char and the “There Is””, in: *boundary*, Vol. 4, No.2, *Martin Heidegger and Literature*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1976. p. 526.

[14] The poetic question of the site is raised throughout Schürmann’s exchange with René Char and Hölderlin. Ibid. Additionally, Anselm Haverkamp attempts to unravel the historical and philosophical precedents at work in the notion a “situation”, in: Anselm Haverkamp, “Art Awaits Its Explanation: Recent Interest in Adorno”, in: *Productive Digression: Theorising Practise*, Boston: De Gruyter, 2017. pp. 14 - 33.

[15] Heidegger, “Remembrance”, in: *Elucidations of Hölderlin’s Poetry*. p. 136. Hölderlin’s essay, “Becoming in Passing-Away” (*Das Werden im Vergehen* - the title attributed by Beißner upon its first publication), dates from around 1800, and is also referred to as “Becoming in Dissolution” and “The Declining Fatherland…”. Thomas Pfau traces the influence of Fichte in this essay, note the following from *The Science of Knowledge*: ‘The characteristic form of reciprocity in the relation of efficacy is a *coming-to-be through a passing-away*’, in: J. G. Fichte, *The Science of Knowledge*, trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982. p. 165. Hölderlin, “*Das untergehende Vaterland*”, in: *SW*. II: 72-77. Hölderlin, “Becoming in Dissolution”, in: *ELT*. pp. 96 - 100 (Pfau’s note can be located on: p. 172).

[16] Hamacher, “Version of Meaning”. p. 39.

Hölderlin's texts both recall and anticipate beginning. However, they also doubt the stability of beginnings themselves. So much is attested to in a line from Hölderlin's poem *The Rhine*, 'An enigma are those of pure origin', which, as Paul de Man has described, not only attests to the fact that the 'pure origin' presents an enigma, but also, in a reverse of subject of predicate suitable to the interpenetration and discordance of opposites, that the enigma *is* the origin.[17] In this sense, the world which the poem opens is itself an enigma to the internal logic of the poem. This logic can be even extended to the extent that, as one commentator describes of Celan's readings of Hölderlin, the "origin" ultimately functions as little more than 'a metonymy for the sense of something lost; it is nothing other than a fiction'.[18] What emerges from the synthetic function of the poem as origin is also a repetition which challenges the originality of the origin itself. With this in mind, the attempt to derive an overarching philosophical programme of origins, beginnings, or *poíēsis*, from Hölderlin's writings, and thus construct from them a legislative and binding genus which subsumes and answers all other considerations, is fated to failure. In reality, Hölderlin's thought maintains the essential ambiguity inherent in the processes of *poíēsis* - which itself merely brings to the fore an un-coordinated cluster of relations, like a carousel upon which the forces that flow and follow each other back and forth in a secret series of gyrations, which takes them now closer together and now further apart, at times in harmony and at others in dissolution, that can only be held-together and made visible through the rhythm of the poetic word, which, in its counter-acting tensions and melodies, is perhaps itself something like a synecdoche for the unreconciled and unreconcilable rhythms of life itself.

It is within such a rhythmic movement, filled with diverging counter-rhythms, suspensions, and inversions, therefore, that the initial question of originary situations and of Hölderlin's situation necessarily multiplies, becoming several questions, which themselves perhaps eventually coalesce and, in the end, shape and arrange themselves back into one: "what

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[17] '*Ein Räthsel ist Reinentsprungenes. Auch / Der Gesang kaum darf es enthüllen*', in: Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*", in: *SW*. I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine", in: *SP*. pp. 196 - 209. Paul de Man's comments in: Paul de Man, "The Riddle of Hölderlin", in: *Critical Writings, 1953-1978*, ed. Lindsay Waters, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989. p. 210. As the title of de Man's essay indicates, he renders Hölderlin's poem using "riddle" in place of "enigma" (the latter is Hamburger's preferred trans.), this, however, is reminiscent of a calculative process to be "worked-out" and thus not in keeping with Hölderlin's reservations regarding origins.

[18] Charles Bambach, "Hölderlin and Celan: A Fragmented Poetics of Remembrance", in: *MLN*, Vol. 135, No. 3, pp. 635 - 657, 2020. p. 635.

can be said, *originally*, in the work of Hölderlin?". The procedure at work in approaching this question, however, is not concerned with constructing a methodology toward the reconstruction of the genesis of "what is original". Exposure to Hölderlin's thinking, this study proposes, fundamentally eludes this way of posing the problem. Rather, Hölderlin's writings subvert the interpretive terrain upon which such questions themselves can be posed. Consequently, the present chapter intends to illustrate how Hölderlin opens a landscape upon which the function of an origin, which in his writing operates as a form of synthetic apparatus (or, "between") made legible in the work of art, is itself merely to unfold an interpretive terrain upon which divergent phenomena can be maintained and "held" together in their necessary divergence. However, in order to articulate the scope and significance of Hölderlin's perspective, it will be necessary to develop an understanding of the role of origins within the history of philosophy. The next section of this chapter, therefore, will primarily use the philosophical researches of both Schürmann and Agamben to itinerary the philosophical application of the origin in order, in turn, to orient the meaning of the question of Hölderlin. Which is to say that to address Hölderlin, to interrogate both the sites from which he speaks and also approaches, requires historical exposition, explicitly so, to start, in relation to the Greeks from whom philosophical thought derives, or "begins", in so far as such things can be explicated, its first philosophy of "first philosophies".

What is more, the attempt to historically situate or deconstruct what has been taken to be absolute and immortal in thought still operates within a conceptual framework wherein, for instance, any attempt to return to a "pre-metaphysical" or "non-philosophical" expression of beginning in something like *poiēsis* remains irrevocably bound to a form of thinking which it claims to repudiate; namely, the dialectical tradition which originates in the logical schemas of Plato and Aristotle. Contact with Hölderlin's works does not "overcome" such traditions. Nor, however, does it attempt to discreetly fold away the embarrassing problem of the indeterminate. Hölderlin's works do not attempt to resolve or flatten the enigmatic status of origins, but to participate in them. Perhaps, indeed, Hölderlin's writings solicit the reader to pose the question of philosophy's relationship to origins and, moreover, why this relationship appears to be irrevocably bound to a type of legislative thinking which accepts no inconsistencies or mutabilities. With such questions in mind these opening remarks are oriented not only in the

direction of historiological and philosophical distinctions, but also point towards what appear to be problems and concerns in contemporary culture, which finds itself not only in the midst of a ceaseless period of expanding change but also a decided uncertainty, which has haunted its categories of meaning for over two millennia, about the uneasy status of beginnings. Beginning, therefore, with Hölderlin, the poet who perhaps above all poeticises the elusive question of beginning, requires a particular attentiveness from the outset, to the categories of meaning which have sustained Western philosophy's capacities for beginning and questioning (which are the same thing) for over two millennia.

With this in mind, however, any concluding "all-encompassing" question of origins must itself not be overlooked without suspicion, for Hölderlin's writings address the manner in which no foundation can ever stand absolutely in isolation, but always grows out of a rupture in foundations themselves and, in a shifting relation to this rupture, perpetually develops new beginnings, questions, and problems. Indeed, it is Hölderlin who articulates, in a language which is perhaps only now beginning to show itself, that it is the labour of the poet to operate *between* ruptures in a manner which commits to no fixed identity but rather allows a series of identities to enter into a network of relations which are necessary for commune. Following the next section of this chapter, which will return to the earlier statements regarding the historical friction in Greek thought between and the poetic and philosophical status of beginnings, the concluding section will therefore proceed by situating the perspective from which Hölderlin's texts allow the reader to confront such disjunctures, introducing how Hölderlin's texts present a form of synechic thinking which "holds" difference. From out of the encounter of these two strands of investigation, further questions will be exposed which establish the topography of the ensuing chapters before they themselves finally accede to the question which will be broached at culmination of this enquiry: how is one to indicate the origins which are still to come, as in, the origins which Hölderlin gestures towards and perhaps still lie ahead of us in the twenty-first century - the potentialities that lie and live within his works and which encourage his readers to rethink the situation of the creative capacity today and perhaps also the necessary situations to come?

*In the Name of the Origin:* Archē*, the Original Concept*

From the time before even Homer spoke, the word *archē* has designated that which is "at the beginning".[19] The verb *árkhein*, which Homer himself adopts regularly, is representative of both a common and bifold action: "to come first," "to lead," and "to open," in both battles and in discourses.[20] Similarly, *archō* suggests both "to begin," "to be prior'" and "to rule," "to command", while the *archōn*, literally "the one who begins", was the supreme magistrate in Athens. Thus, Cicero later records how the Greek muse Archē represented both beginning and originality.[21] Poetic speech for the Greeks, which formed part of the web of practices responsible for making explicable the presence of *poíēsis*, therefore invoked the muse Archē as part of the poetic duty to make record of the origin of things. In Hesiod as in Homer, the muses are invoked and enter '*ex archēs*', "at the beginning", presiding over the world's creation, the genesis of the gods, and the birth of humanity.[22] In this manner, the semantic function of the poetic *archē* did not simply fix events within a sequential temporal network of interrelating matters; rather, it determined and ordered, as Jean-Pierre Vernant's studies have illustrated, 'the very foundation of being, to discover what lies at the origin, the primeval reality from which the cosmos emerged'.[23] The poetic annunciation of beginning as *archē* is thus both temporal and speculative: it gives voice, in a movement which sustains two incompatible models of meaning within a single act, to both that which is temporally "at the beginning", as in the first in a sequence of interrelated events, and the order and ordering process inherent in the cosmic foundation of phenomena. *Archē* is both an "origin" and "command". In their archaic configuration, both of these regions of knowledge remain inaccessible to mortals outside of the languages of poets, kings, and priests, who are uniquely privileged with dispensing the interrelated and contradictory discourses of mortals and

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[19] cf. Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. p. 252.

[20] Following Schürmann's analysis of *archē* in: Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990. pp. 97 - 105. Also following commentary on *archē* in: Giorgio Agamben, *Creation and Anarchy: The Work of Art and the Religion of Capitalism*, trans. Adam Kotsko, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. pp. 40 - 51.

[21] Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*, ed. Arthur Stanley Pease, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955. 3.54, pp. 1100 - 1101. For broader analysis of the muses and *poíēsis*, consult: Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. pp. 39 - 52.

[22] Hesiod. *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*, trans. Glenn W. Most, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018. pp. 4 - 5, 10 - 11 (45 and 115). Agamben illustrates the extension of the bifold resonance of *archē* (as temporal configuration and divine commandment) into the Bible: the Greek translation of Genesis opens "in the *beginning (en archē)* God *created* the heavens and the earth". Agamben, *Creation and Anarchy*. pp. 40 - 42.

[23] Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*, New York: Zone Books, 2006. p. 119. For further analysis consult: pp. 115 - 138.

immortals, manifold singulars and a univocal universal, in a single voice.[24] Within this form of presentation, however, what beginning *is*, in a purely conceptual manner, remains something of a riddle and free of ontological significance. Which is to say that *archē*, in and of itself, did not confer an abstract *concept of beginning*. When does a beginning "begin"? Moreover, when does it end? Under which laws does it operate and how does it manifest itself? Such questions, perhaps necessarily left in the hidden hands of the divinities in the archaic configuration of *archē*, encompass the dual and irreconcilable aspect of ancient poetic *archē* as both temporal and speculative, as both starting point and commandment, bilaterally sustained in an incompatible reciprocity through a movement which turns simultaneously away from and towards itself to articulate both the past and future in an space which never completes or closes, but which nonetheless holds-together in the enigmatic words and worlds of poets.

However, at the moment in which philosophical method becomes concretised and impresses itself upon society, these questions are raised and understood in an entirely new fashion. Anaximander, who suggested that 'the origin [*archē*] is everlasting and ageless', was perhaps the first to formulate the question of beginning in a "philosophical" manner.[25] That is to say, Anaximander not only invoked origins and beginnings in order to paint a picture of life but also sought out, in order to understand, their underlying causes and "principles". Thus, in the subsequent writings of Plato, philosophers are routinely distinguished from poets by virtue of their philosophical faithfulness to the beginning of "things themselves" in their uniform process of evidential *self*-revelation. Where the poem once brought forth, held-together, and sustained a threshold upon which divergent registers of meaning could be in turn affirmed and proposed without an overarching rule of law presiding over such declarations, the philosopher attempts to 'reason' and 'calculate' a beginning prescribed from the law of reason which makes itself its own ground, its own call and response.[26] In a certain sense, however, it took the intervention of

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[24] cf. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. pp. 37 - 38.

[25] 'ἀρχήν τε καί στοιχεῖον εἴρηκε τών όντων τό ἄπειρον', in: Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. p. 19. cf. G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1977. pp. 105 - 108. Emphasis is laid on the expression "perhaps" in the above, for a distinction arises in the thought of Aristotle, who understood (or at least taught) Anaximander's theory as an anticipation of his own doctrine of *archē*. See: John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1952. pp. 53 - 56. Also following: Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. pp. 98 - 99.

[26] '*tou logistikou ergon*'. Plato, *The Republic: Books 6-10*. pp. 420 - 423 (X: 602e.).

Aristotle, who was the first to note the previously irresolvable tension in the ancient configuration of *archē*, to transform the formerly "poetic" transmission of *archē* into a philosophical concept and foundation.[27] Archeology, the investigation of an *archē*, is invoked under Aristotle's tutelage in order to transpose the abstract and irreducible poetic configuration of *archē* into a unified and ageless hierarchical system of metaphysical origin. Upon new terrain opened up by these Aristotelian interventions *archē*, previously the mental space opened by the emergence of a *poíēsis*, now connotes the first principle of a physicalist model which underpins the entirety of "being" itself and thus also provides, in the same movement, the conceptual ground upon which the 'principles and causes' of all phenomena can be deduced.[28] Whereas Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet's studies highlight the fact that the Greeks had 'no idea of absolute law, founded upon definite principles and organised into a coherent whole', the philosophical tradition is, nonetheless, born out of an approach to the origin which claims an authority higher than that of a preamble to the emergence and disappearance of the everyday and numberless goings-on of mortal life, but rather as that which sustains, legislates, and orders the development and distribution of the processes by which life occurs.[29] Aristotle's *archē* can thus be taken, in short, as first the apparatus through which a dominant collective comprehension of the rational truth of "what is" comes to be articulated and, therefore, also the primary designation of what beginnings, and the beings they form, are *essentially*.

The transition in which the project of making the world uniformly understood, through the application of human directives which conceptually transpose *archē* into something like a 'permanent, irreducible substrate of things', also institutes a mode of world-building born out of the gradual displacement of a prior network of meaning.[30] For Agamben, the distinction between the formerly poetic configuration of *archē* and an emergent network of philosophical meaning are most readily explicable though a close analysis of the second book of Aristotle's *Physics*.[31] In his reading of Aristotle's elaboration of the difference between *poíēsis* and *praxis*, Agamben

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[27] Here following: Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. pp. 98 – 105.
[28] Aristotle, *Metaphysics, Volume I: Books 1-9*, trans. Hugh Tredennick, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933. pp. 10 - 13 (I. ii: 982 a6).
[29] Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, New York: Zone Books, 1996. p. 38.
[30] Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. p. 98.
[31] Here following genealogy of *poíēsis*, in: Giorgio Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. pp. 59 - 93.

articulates the shifting allegiance of *archē* and the ensuing implications for the role of the work of art in the naming of beginnings. Whereas *poíēsis* formerly conferred to humans the entire experience of presence itself, the facticity of something passing from non-being into being which nonetheless held the two irreconcilable positions of absence and presence in a network of shared poetic presentation, *praxis* (acting) finds its expression solely as a direct product of human "activity" or "doing".[32] Thus, under Aristotle's nascent regime of causal representation, a creative work, formerly part of the free movement of that which emerges out of itself (denoted by the notion of an origin as an event of *phuein* with its play of interpenetrating opposites), comes to signify a practical *telos* (end), rather than a commencement or opening, which fixes visibility and determination to a preconceived immortal *eidos* (idea). Within this movement, as Schürmann describes, 'Aristotle understands becoming as the process by which the *edios* is rendered entirely and durably visible'.[33] The motion of *archē*, in this manner, is as an inception always already identified with its prefigured *telos*. *Archē* is understood as the law, subservient to ideas, which commands human and natural production: it is both *beginning and end*. Understood as an incipient principle, Aristotle's *archē* therefore conceals the former processes of poetic presencing: because every "thing" must have causal relation to and derivation from something else, the contradictory nature of the emergent and yet obscure ground which allows phenomena to pass between concealment and unconcealment, non-being and being, becomes obscured. In short, every-thing must be derived from some-thing else and words are merely signposts upon the road to a universally valid and absolute destination: the concept or idea.[34]

Throughout the course of the succeeding millennia, Agamben argues, the Western cultural tradition has progressively flattened the distinctions between *poíēsis* and *praxis* which Aristotle set into motion - to the extent, even, that the former configuration of *poíēsis* becomes

[32] cf. Aristotle, *Physics, Volume I: Books 1-4*, trans. P. H. Wicksteed and F. M. Cornford, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957. pp. 96 - 97 (192b.).

[33] Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. p. 102.

[34] For Heidegger, a distinction here enters thought which subverts representation - humans are no longer 'looked upon by that which is' and 'gathered toward presencing', but confer representation to phenomena in looking "upon it". Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture", in: *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt, New York: Harper Perennial, 2013. p. 131. This gives clarity to Heidegger's position vis-à-vis truth as *alétheia*. For Heidegger, the "archaic truth" of *alétheia* becomes concealed with the arrival of metaphysics. The narrative of Heidegger's relationship to *alétheia* is difficult to catalogue for the devoutest Heideggerian, however, as Detienne concedes, Heidegger is correct to stress that before Plato the poets of Greece were "the masters of truth", and thus, *alétheia*. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. pp. 26 - 28.

almost entirely obscured.[35] Initially, the translation and transmission of Greek thinking into Latin radicalises the Aristotelian distinction to the extent that Aristotle's *poíēsis*, which linguistically still connoted a spontaneous self-arising coming to presence, is transposed into *agere*, a direct action which puts into work an *operarius*, operation.[36] Schürmann will highlight how this movement is further underscored by the transposition of *archē* into *principium* - a self-evident "first" proposition from which other propositions are derived which also, however, differs from Aritstotle's *archē-telos* dichotomy in the sense that *principium* connotes not only a "becoming" in the chain of cause and effect but rather 'the supreme cause of all things'.[37] Thus, the Latin translations of the New Testament also come to translate *archē* through *principium*, and while phenomena still come into presence, they do so through the mediation of a timeless first "principle", that being a conceptual "God" (or, God *understood as Idea*).[38] Theological thought, Agamben continues, thus 'ties to Western metaphysics the interpretation of being as actuality and act'.[39] However, by the time 'this process is completed in the modern era', the distinction between *poíēsis* and *praxis*, which was nonetheless still held-together in the Christian figure of a Godhead who sustained two counter-acting trajectories, is erased to the extent that 'the central experience of poiesis, pro-duction into presence, is replaced by the question of "how"'.[40] This "how", for Agamben, conceals an experience of *poíēsis*, in the sense of a self-arising coming into presence, to the extent that an origin is understood merely as a productive activity which manifests a concrete effect. In short, the ability to distinguish between *poíēsis* and *praxis* becomes almost entirely erased. Building upon Hannah Arendt's analysis of the *vita activa* (active life), Agamben suggests that within the process of convergence (between *poíēsis* and *praxis*), work, formerly 'the lowest rank in the hierarchy of active life', is necessarily elevated, becoming the highest value and common denominator in all human creativity:

> This ascent begins at the moment when Locke discovers in work the origin of
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> property, continues when Adam Smith elevates it to the source of all wealth, and

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[35] Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. pp. 68 - 93.
[36] Ibid. pp. 69 - 70.
[37] Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. pp. 106 - 107.
[38] Consider how in the scholastic coinage *principium* also comes to imply "philosophy", as in a doctrine of principles.
[39] Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. p. 70.
[40] Ibid.

reaches its peak with Marx, who makes it the expression of man's very humanity.[41]

From out of this nexus, the distinction between work, purely a "technical" question of producing a final concrete effect or condition, and aesthetic experience, in which *poíēsis* indicated its power through the processes which bring phenomena into being, is suppressed. What once expressed the entirety of being and its origins in the poetic practice of *poíēsis* becomes instead a question of the creative production of origins, a matter of "how" - that being, the process by which an effect has been, or can be, produced. In short, presencing becomes production and art becomes art-work.

Following Agamben's thesis to its conclusion, a productive capacity underscores all thought: humans are 'understood as the living being (*animal*) that works (*laborans*), and, in work, produces himself and ensures his domination over the earth'.[42] At particular moments in history, however, the unimpeachable focus from which certain categories of thought situate and sustain their categories of meaning becomes obscured to the extent that the unthematised dimension which has allowed such thinking to manifest itself becomes, for the first time, thinkable.[43] Within such U-turns, the starting point and origin of thought which had previously sustained and legislated the series of relations that take place within thinking itself becomes thinkable again, and yet, paradoxically, it only through the mediation of this, now unstable, origin that the question of foundations itself can be raised anew. The basis of all foundations, as Hölderlin will instruct in a fragmentary essay written in support of his Sophocles translations, 'are most readily grasped on the basis of paradox'.[44] Indeed, as Hölderlin will delineate in the ensuing lines, 'no original appears as actual in its original strength: rather, it genuinely appears in its debility alone'.[45] From out of such debility, a whole series of relations which had hitherto sustained a mode of thematising production becomes once again thinkable and questionable. Therefore, when, in an earlier essay, Hölderlin appears to have grasped and delineated the reduction of life to what he describes as

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid. p. 71. Or, as Arendt puts it, the 'human condition of labour is life itself'. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed., Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998. p. 7.

[43] Following: Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. pp. 25 - 32. 'As an epoch comes to an end, its principle withers away. The principle of an epoch gives it cohesion, a coherence which, for a time, holds unchallenged. At the end of an epoch, however, it becomes possible to question such coherence. In withering away, the supreme referent of an age becomes problematic'. (p. 25.).

[44] Hölderlin, "*Die Bedeutung der Tragödien*", in: *SW*. II: 114. Hölderlin, "The Significance of the Tragedies", in: *ELT*. p. 89. (Translation modified).

[45] Ibid. Following trans. in: Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute*. p. 54.

'sheer serviceability' he not only critiques, as Farrell Krell describes it, 'the Faustian confidence in technique and mastery, or the reduction of nature and nature's gods', but also the magnification of a fantasy conferring total control in thought and nature which can provide stable, immortal, and absolute origin for thinking itself - that is, the very facticity of an origin which is not also and in the same gesture a demise.[46] Whereas, then, Farrell Krell will directly supplement Hölderlin's riposte to absolutism by posing 'the question that troubles us most is whether Faust can be held accountable for the mess we are in', the next section of this chapter will highlight how Hölderlin develops a poetic language which attempts to overcome a dualistic polarity which confers categorical tension to any given situation, but rather, to turn to the central refrain of Goethe's *Faust*, attempts to illustrate the enigmatic and necessary fragility at the heart of the pursuit into that which 'holds the world together at its innermost core'.[47]

*Like the Greeks, Only More So: Hölderlin and* Synechia

The slow but sure refinement of life into language preserves a creative connection between words and being. Nonetheless, the previous section illustrated how philosophy is born out of a critique of the hitherto ubiquitous power of poetic language to represent the nature of things as they "really" are. In a short essay on Plato, Goethe remarked that:

> Difficult though it might be to detect it, a certain polemical thread runs through
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> any philosophical writing. He who philosophises is not at one with the previous
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> and contemporary world's ways of thinking of things. Thus Plato's discussions
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> are often not only directed *to* something but also directed *against* it.[48]

To recap: denunciation, directed against a *poíēsis* of language, becomes the foundational movement in the dialectical philosophy of Plato and his successors. Why did Greek philosophy develop in such a manner? Why was dialectics resistant to the poetic relation between word and

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[46] Hölderlin, "*Grund zum Empedokles*", in: *SW*. I: 868-881. Hölderlin, "The Ground for "Empedocles"", in: *ELT*. pp. 50 - 61. Farrell Krell's commentary in: Friedrich Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles: A Mourning-Play*, trans. David Farrell Krell, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008. p. 288.
[47] '*Daß ich erkenne, was die Welt Im innersten zusammenhält*'. J. W. Goethe, *Faust*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, London: Anchor Books, 1990. pp. 94 - 95 (382-383.). Trans. modified.
[48] J. W. Goethe, "Plato als Mitgenosse einer christlichen Offenbarung", in: *Goethes Werke*, ed. E. Trunz & H. J. Schrimpf, 14 vols., Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982. XII: 244-249. Goethe's lines are offered as motif to "Plato and the Poets", in: Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeneutical Studies on Plato*, trans. P. Christopher Smith, London: Yale University Press, 1980. pp. 39 - 72.

thing - and, moreover, why must resistance itself become a *raison d'être* of philosophy? To start, the researches conducted by Hans-Georg Gadamer into the development of philosophical language, in particular, the analyses in his 1960 *Truth and Method*, have illustrated the manner in which the dialectical movement begins, more or less, with the insight that words themselves are only names, that the correspondence between a word and a thing's true being, so patent to the poetic world of archaic Greeks that *ónoma* conferred both word and proper name, formed a barrier to the truth of phenomena in themselves.[49] Thus, when Plato wishes to demonstrate the nature of dialectical thought, as he does for instance in the excursus of the *Seventh Letter*, language is understood as an instrumental phenomena which the dialectician must leave behind.[50] Words are 'more plastic than wax', and ideas themselves are silent, accessible only through the internal "dialogue of the soul with itself". [51] Dialectical philosophy is founded upon a necessary repudiation of the relationship between words and things, speech and thought, in the pursuit of an idealised summation of truth which is resistant to the relationship between language and phenomena in the network of relations in which the speaker lives, the chain of custom and network of interrelated and at times contradictory meanings which binds people to their everyday representations.

From its earliest inceptions, dialectical thought fought against the *ónoma* inherent in archaic language as both 'a source of seduction and confusion of thought', as Gadamer argues, endeavouring instead to sculpt language into a totalising model of ideality through the postulation of a primary grammar capable of directing all other grammars.[52] The direction of language, then, becomes the labour of the philosopher, who produces commanding grammars, a phenomena Schürmann identifies as 'semantic maximisation': the attempt to render an ultimate determination of meaning, like an umbrella, beneath which all discourses may shelter.[53] Born out of repudiating falsehoods, therefore, dialectical thought must always and everywhere labour under the condition

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[49] cf. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. pp. 406 - 434. For *ónoma* (ὄνομα) consult: Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. p. 1268.
[50] Plato, *Timaeus. Critias. Cleitophon. Menexenus*, trans. R. G. Bury, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929. pp. 534 - 535 (*Seventh Letter*, 342ff.).
[51] Whether Plato considered the fact that thought, conceived of as a *dialogue* of the soul, itself implied an intimate connection with language shall have to be overlooked for the moment. Plato, *The Republic: Books 6-10*. pp. 376 - 377 (IX: 588d.).
[52] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. p. 417.
[53] Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, ed. Reginald Lilly, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. Consider the references to 'semantic maximisation' in: pp. 26 - 37, 513 - 515.

that the unconditioned and unconditionable must be banished from words and deeds. The aphorism of the church father Lactantius, 'the first step of wisdom is to recognise the false; the second is to know the truth', it has been said, provides origin and purpose for those embarking upon this pursuit.[54] Indeed, in G. E. Lessing's estimation, Lactantius' maxim becomes something like a manifesto for the project of Enlightenment critique: 'First let him find someone to argue with; he will thereby gradually find his way into the subject matter, and the rest will follow of its own accord'.[55] Is philosophy, then, a resistance, orchestrated through a series of self-imposed oppositions and reconciliations, representing a struggle against the irreconcilable and contradictory vicissitudes of everyday human life which, as Hölderlin's writings illustrate, are themselves embedded in the poetic nature of the word (which itself creates, or at least concretises, out of this difference)? Unlike the language of the dialectical philosopher, which binds beginning in a conceptual *archē* and in so doing forecloses critique into its own categories of meaning and architectonic foundational propositions, the remainder of this section will illustrate the manner in which Hölderlin addresses speculative thought from the vantage of a counter-acting theory of discourse in which philosophical questioning is itself brought into question through a language whose speech is always new and the origin from which it speaks never fixed.

For Schürmann, therefore, Hölderlin's writings offer the first 'great awakening' of an ongoing investigation 'to better understand how the normative hold is coming undone around us'.[56] Such an investigation—which Schürmann will also describe as occurring during the period (between Hölderlin and the dawn of modernity) in which 'hegemonic fantasms have suffered a polymorphous suspension'—places philosophers in the midst of a question whose orientations are perhaps only beginning to be mapped out in the face of 'the unnameable', as Derrida describes it, 'which is proclaiming itself and which can do so, as is necessary whenever a birth is in the offing'.[57] How, then, might Hölderlin's work present an attempt to hold-together in language that which is both "undone" and "unnameable"? If Hölderlin's texts present an illuminating window

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[54] Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes: Books I-VII*, trans. Mary Francis McDonald, Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008. p. 93 (1.23.).
[55] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, "Hamburgische Dramaturgie", in: *Werke*, 4 vols., ed. Herbert G. Göpfert et al. Munich: Hanser, 1973. 4: 558-559.
[56] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 515.
[57] Ibid. p. 513. Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass, London: Routledge, 2005. p. 370.

into 'a certain condition of being becoming obvious in this late modernity', as Schürmann will claim, how can a dialogue with them also contribute to the apprenticeship for a new theory of holding which can also wrest a notion of truth from the lineage of certain philosophical phantasms? An unravelling of the Greek word, *synechia*, "holding-together", confers the departure for such an investigation. Synechic thinking, which this study argues initially arises in the work of Parmenides, presents such a programme because within its orbit each intervention of language is neither maximised nor surrendered to an absolute categorical representation, but rather held without resolve between such judgements and their own necessarily impermanent and singularising thrust. Only an itinerary which is 'neither abstractive nor dialectical', as Schürmann will write, can lead to the synechic 'holding together of contraries without subsuming them and thereby universalising them'.[58] While dialectical philosophy proclaims that where forces clash and divide, a greater force must be imposed upon them to control and organise the disequilibrium, the *synechia* of language at play in Hölderlin's works illustrates how human dialogues are not sustained through a bifold disjunction between two counter-acting positions which can then be synthetically synethesised through the imposition of a universalising force, but by the innumerable and numberless goings-on of life, each one of which both follows up and yet provides a *non sequitur* to the preceding, building up gradually, just as a swallow builds its nest upwards from the bottom, a world which humans can inhabit, made up of sometimes interrelated and interconnected, and at other disjunctive and dissonant, bits and pieces, which go together to form a textured assemblage of materials and not a uniform mechanism.[59]

In Hölderlin's writing, this synechic movement initially manifests in his relationship to the epistolary form which awakens the possibility of 'an entirely different kind of discourse', as one commentator puts it, receptive to the 'mutual exploration of otherness'.[60] On the 9th of November 1795, Hölderlin writes to Johann Gottfried Ebel to 'communicate' the force and function of the epistolary mode in bringing forth a synechic form of expression:

> You know, spirits must commune, must share of themselves wherever a living
>
> breath stirs; unite themselves with everything that must not be expelled, so that

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[58] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 124 - 125.
[59] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 30.
[60] Edgar Pankow, "Epistolary Writing, Fate, Language: Hölderlin's 'Hyperion'", in: *The Solid Letter*. pp. 143 - 144.

out of this union, out of this invisible church militant, may arise the great child of time, the day of all days, which the man of my soul (an apostle, whom those now parroting his words understand as little as they understand themselves) names *the advent of the lord*. I must stop, otherwise I'll never stop.[61]

The art and act of communication, of rendering into language an exchange, enacts a sacral duty that takes language beyond its rigid and systematising confines because, where and when such a speaking announces itself, it also addresses itself to another "living" spirit. To start, a correlation can be found with Friedrich Kittler's distinction that German poetry itself is immediately distinguishable in its 'trying to insert Man into the empty slots of an obsolete discourse network'.[62] In other words, the poetic act, imagined as communion, destabilises an established hierarchy of scholarship which reproduces the dialectical tension in the relations between productive author and consuming reader, inanimate sign and living spirit, which, as Kittler describes, 'systematically prevents the fortunate occurrence that a living Spirit could manifest itself to another Spirit'.[63] In this fashion, Hölderlin's letter to Ebel, appears as a direct descendant of Schiller's unambiguously titled distich "Language" (*Sprache*):

> Why cannot the living Spirit manifest itself to the Spirit?
>
> Once the soul *speaks*, then, oh!, it is no longer the *soul* that speaks.[64]

However, whereas the soul in Schiller's poem is confronted with an empty alienation in the presence of a language which blocks it, Hölderlin's theory of communication attempts to hold-together what the distich declares impossible: a "union" of spirit communing with spirit. If the poetic act reproduces a mode of divine speech (perhaps the only one still possible), the elevation of everyday words in an epistolatory form also attests to the mission of rending a bridge along which mortal beings can travel in two divergent and unreconcilable directions: between a

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[61] Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 598-599. Hamacher uses the letters cited in this passage to frame his commentary on Hölderlin's poetic temporality. See: Werner Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls: Mediacy and Temporality, Late Hölderlin", in: *Two Studies of Friedrich Hölderlin*, ed. Peter Fenves and Julia Ng, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. pp. 117 - 164. Trans. of the letter above (and connecting letter below) provided by Anthony Curtis Adler in that publication (p. 117.).

[62] Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800 / 1900*, trans. Michael Metteer and Chris Cullens, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990. p. 4.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Friedrich Schiller, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Gerhard Fricke and Herbert G. Göpfert, 5 vols., Munich: Hanser, 1963. I: 313. Also cited, with trans., in: Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800 / 1900*. p. 3. Kittler highlights how Schiller's *Sprache* 'contains and transforms' the "*ach*!" of the soul's sigh, thereby 'enacting the alienation of the soul in language that the distich states thematically'. p. 376, n. 2.

universal unity, and to the singularisation of individuals who think and communicate for and between themselves in words which embody their own "living breath".[65]

To a similar end, Agamben highlights Moses Hess' critique of the syllogistic philosophy which, in its attempt to 'eliminate the difference between divine and human', surreptitiously reintroduces their divisions by attempting to overcome them: 'the last philosophers, who have eliminated the invisible Church… yet have put in place of the heavens the "absolute Spirit," "self-consciousness," and *Gattungswesen*'.[66] For Hess, the philosophical absolute fails to recognise the synechic lacing together of a communication which cannot be rendered within its own syllogistic embrace but rather undermines such unity. Writing three years later to his brother, on the 28th of November 1798, Hölderlin further clarifies the centrality of the epistolary form for an act of synechic holding-together :

> So we must still bring a sacrifice from time to time for the deity that exists between you and me; namely, the easy pure sacrifice of speaking to one another about it; of celebrating the eternal being that unites us in these dear letters— letters that have only become so rare between us because they come from the heart, and not, like so much, from the pen.[67]

Here, letters form not only products of an abstract system of language "from the pen" which blocks and defers communion, but also living embodiments of "the heart" from which they derive. In such tones, Hölderlin broaches the function of a *synechia*: the holding-together in a poetic language the continuity of incompatible discourses without a legislating and binding genus which attempts to secure an ultimate "why" of their absolute and unified meaning. Where disparate forces clash and divide, a greater force is not exerted upon them; rather, they are held-together in their discontinuities in a way that neither consoles of consolidates. The act of synechic language, of bringing forward names, holds-together finite singulars without elevating them to universals. In letters, Hölderlin's language holds a *life* of its own, a "living breath" which "comes from the heart" and communicates without the coercion of the instrumental practices of dialectical thought.

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[65] This "living breath" is reminiscent of Martin Luther's statement: 'One cannot separate the voice from the breath'. Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966. p. 38.
[66] Moses Hess, *Die letzten Philosophen*, Darmstadt: Leste, 1845. pp. 1 - 2. Quoted in: Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. p. 82.
[67] Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 715-717. Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 117.

Hölderlin's *synechia* of communication flattens the distinctions between the traditionally divergent trajectories inherent in different modes of exchange all the while preserving and maintaining the disequilibrium of contrary formations of existence which they bring and hold-together—divine and mortal, temporal and eternal, united and separate—and thus, in this fashion, presents a reversal of a dialectical paradigm of knowledge which is all at once systematising, universal, and unimpeachable. In his letters, Hölderlin's texts follow a course which bear both the quotidian and singular "easy, pure sacrifice of speaking to one another" and the absolute negation of time itself, the "*advent of the Lord*".[68] Hölderlin's *synechia*, then, is at once both temporally mediated, in communication which levels the distance between writer and reader, speaker and listener, as expressed in the "living breath", and eternal, representing the "day of all days", from out of which the "the great child of time" appears. In a fragmentary "theoretical" letter dating from a similar period, Hölderlin's conscious blurring of the distinctions between different forms writings and communing, which can nonetheless hold-together difference itself, acquires further clarity.[69] Addressed directly and ambiguously to a "you", Hölderlin's letter initially conceives of religion in a manner akin to that of a "pre-philosophical" formation of language, as essentially 'poetic in its essence'.[70] Latent, therefore, in this poetic capacity is a synechic ability to represent and hold both the singular and universal perspective; 'where each one celebrates his higher life and all together celebrate a communal higher life, the celebration of life [as such]'.[71] That is, while each and every absolute "principle" of religion forecloses an inherent 'standstill of *real* life', rendered in the form of unimpeachable dictates and duties, a synechic language which holds-together the scattered and at times incorporeal and uncoordinated shapes of things past, present, and future, both removed from life yet at the same time also resonant with things real and imagined, establishes commune without subsuming or systematising conversations: both mortal and immortal. 'On one hand', Hölderlin writes, 'due to their continuous, reciprocal, appropriate

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[68] Hamacher identifies the unnamed "man of my soul", the "apostle", from whom Hölderlin also adopts the tropes "invisible church militant" and "*advent of the Lord*", as Paul. In his first letter to the Thessalonians (I Thess. 3:12-13), Paul speaks of the *parousia tou kyriou* which Luther translates as *advent of the Lord*. Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". pp. 118 - 119.

[69] Hölderlin, "<*Fragment philosophischer Briefe*>", in: *SW*. II: 51-57. Hölderlin, "On Religion", in: *ELT*. pp. 90 - 95. The date of the text remains unclear, most commentators attribute it between 1796 and 1797. The English language title, "On Religion", is a later acquisition adopted under the editorial direction of Beißner.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

restriction, none [of the theses] stands forth too much' and thereby also retains its 'autonomy'.[72] 'On the other', however, in the synechic movement, 'each part goes a little further than is necessary', in order that they may be seen and shown, in an inconsistent double-movement which, in a modulation of their systemic incompatibilities, both shows and holds-together two irreconcilable motifs in the same gesture without relinquishing their inseparable oppositionality.[73]

The act of communing necessarily yokes together two irreconcilable positions: absolute and singular. Indeed, as preserved in the earliest Greek lexical manifestations of *archē* as both a legislative commanding principle or a unique moment "in time", the two forces are intimately intertwined and yet irredeemably irreconcilable. The juxtaposed status of Hölderlin's epistolatory writings, which both intercede a transition between persisting conventions and yet transcend such parameters by holding them together with something entirely exterior, present a formation of language synonymous with the route designative representations take when humans arrange phenomena according to a language they can "share" in the mediation of an antagonistic union of simultaneous legislation and transgression. By designating names to phenomena in order to commune, humans simultaneously maximise and separate - arranging a world through semantic divisions which uproot the present from absent and then reinscribing them into abstract logical schema.[74] However, in the movement of the *synechia*, the structure which is prescriptive, namely the of naming of names, exhibits itself as the purely generative process, it itself *is*, as Hamacher describes, 'the exhibition of its exhibiting, *poíēsis* of the *poíēsis*, making of the making'.[75] Since it brings into relation the possibility of all possible relations, the *synechia* shows how each relation is sustained by the empty space which it also unfolds: it expresses both the difference between being and beings, and the conjunction of presence and absence inherent in *poíēsis* which makes such contraries necessary. The *synechia* holds-together two contrary forces while preserving them as contrary: holding them in a tangential coexistence without synethesis or resolution. Unlike a synthesised system of singular meaning, the synechic moment bears witness to confused impurities in language, the amalgamation of prescriptive designations that go together to make

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[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 93 – 94.
[75] Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 121.

up a "world", the use and disuse of present names and the active betrayal of absent ones, the footprints and fingerprints which linger upon all phenomena and which soil any absolute conviction of meaning. The *synechia* which occurs in Hölderlin's epistolary writings is not a synthesis of two diametrically opposed theses of equal weight and measure, but rather a holding-together of two vectors which cannot occupy the same theoretical terrain. In such letters, the originary contrariety of thought imparts its meaning to humans, poetically, in synechic variations of what Hölderlin calls 'the One differentiated in itself'.[76]

To acknowledge a law of contrariety that underscores all synechic designation requires an approach different from that of a dialectical philosophy which wishes to synthesise such contradictions under the rubric of an overarching systematicity of all things. If Hölderlin's writings can be distinguished from the traditional German lyric through its willed abnegation of the personification of what Kittler describes as the 'pure soul', it does so because the ongoing dialogue that such "souls" share in permits no final conclusion and no absolute identity or "living spirit" - indeed, Hölderlin's writings give voice to an oscillation between poetry and thought which comes into being at the precise juncture of post-Kantian philosophy which, as Kittler concurs, cannot 'join together in complete unity because the two discourses are not even close to being able to write down the points where they cross one another'.[77] Similarly, Henrich's summation of Hölderlin's writings with "life" also points to a process which:

> can never be wholly satisfied in any of its orientations or tendencies, since a
> renunciation of what is essential is what constitutes each of them. Conscious life
> must therefore encompass a whole that straddles this opposition, comprehending
> and affirming all its tendencies but not thereby relinquishing the knowledge of
> order, origin, and truth. Such knowledge is not bound up with just one of those
> tendencies but rather admits of entering into all of them.[78]

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[76] Hölderlin attributes this phrase to Heraclitus (although provenance of this attribution remains unverified). Hölderlin, "Hyperion", in: *SW*. I: 609-760. Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]". Hereafter, all references to *Hyperion* provide numerical reference for each letter as citation. This study follows the recent English editions by Howard Gaskill, Ross Benjamin, and India Russell (cited in Bibliography).
[77] Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800 / 1900*. p. 14.
[78] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 222.

The life of the synechic encounter, then, like life itself is apportioned in fragments, separated from each other, estranged parts dispersed by the currents of incompatible networks of juxtaposed meaning, which however, bring and hold forth a series of disconnected meanings which make up their own lives.

Hölderlin's writings present to the reader, in a series of synechic holdings, the disparate elements which sustain human conversations. 'Since we are a dialogue', as Hölderlin writes, this conversation dictates that humans are not only *in* dialogue, but rather, as Nancy writes, 'we are our dialogue… we are this between-us that is language, and, likewise language is the between-us'.[79] Out of fidelity to the synechic holding-together of the betweenness which sustains dialogues, the 'blessed give and take' (as Hölderlin writes) of differing singulars, Hölderlin's writings do not live and direct themselves to the reader alone, but rather represent nodal points of entry into a dialogue which one may trace back and forward in different directions at the same time.[80] Konrad Nussbächer writes that Hölderlin's texts are sustained by the passages of exchange between diverging trajectories of meaning, mediated directly by a 'conversation with you'.[81] 'For', as a line from the poem *The Titans* instructs, 'no one can bear this life on his own'.[82] While this chapter, therefore, has distinguished the lineaments of the synechic technique as they manifest in Hölderlin's writings and the historical developments which necessitate such a form of writing, the next chapter will begin by tracing the synechic conversation first given voice to in the thinking of Parmenides. Building upon the analysis and commentary of Parmenides' synechic technique in the work of Schürmann, the chapter will also trace the ensuing inscription of human referential consciousness into the lineage of the phantasms which have guided history since the displacement of *synechia* by dialectics.[83] The next chapter will then trace the history of the *synechia* in the other direction, explicating the manner in which a philosophical dialectics gives rise to a truth process which itself eventually necessitates a return to *synechia* in Hölderlin's writings.

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[79] Jean-Luc Nancy, "The Calculation of the Poet", in: *The Solid Letter*. pp. 46 - 48. The line 'Since we are a dialogue' from '*Seit ein Gespräch wir sind und hören voreinander*' in: Hölderlin, "*Friedensfeier*", in: *SW*. I: 361-367.
[80] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXIX]".
[81] Konrad Nussbächer, "Nachwort", in: Friedrich Hölderlin, *Gedichte*, ed. Konrad Nussbächer, Stuttgart: Phillip Reclam, 1997. p. 205.
[82] '*Denn keiner trägt das Leben allein*'. Hölderlin, "*Der Titanen*", in: *SW*. I: 390-392. "The Titans", in: *SP*. pp. 282 - 287.
[83] For Schürmann's Parmenides, consult "The One That Holds Together (Parmenides)", in: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 49 - 136.

# Holding Truth

What is truth? Or, *is* truth? What happens when 'the science of truth' seems no longer capable of answering these questions?[1] When the regimes of religion, 'the spirit of truth', and art, 'the true content of phenomena', seem outwardly less assured of operating within their orbit?[2] When, as Schürmann puts it, 'a nightfall has descended upon the primary facts' and, for those seeking to understand this fact, only Hölderlin's writings speak amidst the 'quarrelling gales which rage in an icy bleak night'?[3]

As Schürmann claims, philosophers are well aware that the age old 'doctrine of principles' seem somewhere to have been robbed of their authority.[4] Ever since the 'line of demarcation' represented by deaths of Hegel and Goethe, Schürmann continues, philosophers have gazed into this night as if 'stricken by the oldest of obvious facts—that of the mortal labor that exerts the disparate on life'.[5] However, if such indeterminacy plunges any absolute position into 'the night in which all cows are black', as Hegel himself calls it, who is there to announce such a night - how is such a night known as night?[6] Heidegger, claiming the authority of one who can speak for and lament the necessity of such a question, is eager to cite Hölderlin's invocation of a 'time of need' in repose to it.[7] Heidegger's nocturnal time of need stands in the 'double not' between 'the time of the gods who have fled *and* of the god who is coming'.[8] From out of this "double not", therefore, Hölderlin's language holds the betweenness of both of these absolute "nots" with their negative: the *not* not. However, Hölderlin's works also hold a line of filiation between 'the long night into which western culture has fallen with the end of metaphysics'

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[1] 'Aristotle himself said that first philosophy is the science of truth'. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, trans. Anton C. Pegis, New York: Image Books, 1955. p. 28 (Bk. 1, C. 1.). Hegel's writes: 'The first question is, what is the object of our science? The simplest and most intelligible answer to this question is that the *truth* is its object'. G. W. F. Hegel, *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline*, trans. Klaus Brinkmann and Daniel O. Dahlstrom, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. p. 48 (§19.).
[2] John. 14:16-17. Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I: 9.
[3] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 3. Hölderlin, "*An Diotima*", in: *SW*. I: 168. Hölderlin, "To Diotima", in: *SP*. p. 3.
[4] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 3.
[5] Ibid. p. 513.
[6] G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. p. 9.
[7] Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry". p. 64. Heidegger is paraphrasing the poem: Hölderlin, "*Stimme des Volks*", in: *SW*. I: 257-259. Hölderlin, "Voice of the People", in: *SP*. pp. 82 - 87.
[8] '*It is the time of need* because it stands in a double lack and a double not: in the no-longer of the gods who have fled and in the not-yet of the god who is coming'. Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry". p. 64.

enshrined in Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin and Hegel's prior position vis-à-vis the movement of absolute knowledge broached with the departure of the sun.[9] Hölderlin also straddles, or holds-together, a fracture within the movement of philosophy itself, between the culmination of Hegel's system of absolute knowledge and the fragile indeterminacy of a mortal experience which lies in its shadow, which, in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel himself declares may 'need the history of the world in its development through thousands of years' to overcome itself. [10] However, Hölderlin's *synechia* does not simply hold a centre connecting these two divergent positions, but rather innumerable lines of disintegration which expand throughout and beyond philosophical practice itself - for philosophers, as the exergue in Heidegger's *Being and Time* quotes from Plato's *Sophist*, 'who used to think we understood, have now become perplexed'.[11] What can be learned from this loss? What *actually* has been lost? Might it represent a gain? What questions emerge from out of the shadow of a supposed passing: is it still possible for philosophers to speak authoritatively about truth? Can truth be told, as such? Or, must the thinkers of today preserve silence in the face of authoritative instances about which they cannot speak - perhaps with recourse to Hegel's futural 'Pantheon of art' up to the task of speaking in the name of truth, or, solemnly invoking the words of Henrich von Kleist that Heidegger was inclined to quote: 'I come before and behind, the one not yet here, and I bow a millennium before him, before his spirit' … waiting, for the time to come?[12]

This chapter will examine these questions. Initially, from a historical perspective guided and informed by Hölderlin's theoretical account of historical change, it will examine the conditions whereby the technique of a *synechia* becomes possible and necessary - that is, in the rupture between a worldview in dissolution and the birth of its replacement, in the disjuncture between an unimpeachable system of knowledge which grounds an era and an emergent

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[9] Following: Rochelle Tobias, "Introduction", in: *Hölderlin's Philosophy of Nature*, ed. Rochelle Tobias, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022. p. 7.
[10] Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I: 90.
[11] Plato, *Sophist*. 244a. Quoted in: Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010. p. xxix.
[12] 'It is the external actualisation of this Idea that the wide Pantheon of art is rising'. Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I: 90. Heidegger, quoting from: Heinrich von Kleist, "Brief an Ulrike Kleist vom 5. Oktober 1803" in: *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, ed. Helmut Sembdner, Munich: Hanser, 1985. II: 735-737. From Heidegger's scripted television interview with Richard Wisser, transcript available in: Martin Heidegger, ""Only a God Can Save Us": The *Spiegel* Interview (1966)", trans. William J. Richardson, in: *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker*, ed. Thomas Sheehan, Chicago: Precedent Publishing, 1981. pp. 45 - 72.

indeterminacy which gestures beyond the confines of its own time and thus betrays such a system. Beginning by citing a supposed end does not represent the end of thinking. Recalling, however, Schürmann's analyses that 'at the origin, there is *nothing at all*', this chapter will also examine the enigmatic indeterminacy of synechic beginning and ending as such.[13] That is, it will explore how the *synechia* makes possible a mode of thinking truth without recourse to an immovable "first principle". It has been said that "life" itself is without principle - that 'only that which is without principle properly lives', life takes place "without a why".[14] Has not this *why*, however, been foundation of philosophy hitherto? When Hegel claims that in philosophy 'we owe what we are to a tradition which, as Herder has put it, like a holy chain, runs through all that was transient, and has therefore passed away' he paradoxically gestures towards an ever-present "why" from out of the mortal undertow of "life" which also resists, and therefore undermines, such questions of determination.[15] If philosophy is therefore, as Schürmann claims, the academic discipline which 'depends most on its own history', this recognition has also placed thinkers 'in the peculiar position where reflecting upon the historical situatedness of our reasoned convictions has become a major element of the philosophical endeavour itself'.[16] If the presumed closure of a certain epoch of truth establishes the thinkers of the present, as Badiou writes, as contemporaries in a '*new departure* in the doctrine of truth' following the 'dissolution of its relation of organic connection to knowledge', does not such knowledge also compel such thinkers to reassess the contours of the shackles of Herder's "holy chain" which still binds them to a historical relation to truth?[17] Does, or did, "truth" really have beginning and end?

A certain unaccountability is inherent in all origins. It is the nature of beginning that something is instituted which cannot be determined by reason alone. Returning to Hölderlin's essay "Becoming in Passing-Away", the ambiguity of such a process is articulated, perhaps for the first time, theoretically:

[13] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 337.

[14] '*Hoc einem proprie vivit quod est sine principio*', Meister Eckhart in: Michael A. Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsaying*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994. p. 286, n. 24. Schürmann also uses this quote as preface to his *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. The phrase "without why", also drawn from Eckhart, is a recurring motif throughout Schürmann's reflections on ontological anarchism.

[15] Johann Gottfried Herder, quoted in: G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 3. vols., trans. E. S. Haldane, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. I: 2.

[16] Reiner Schürmann, "Neoplatonic Henology as an Overcoming of Metaphysics", in: *Research in Phenomenology*, Vol. 13, pp. 25 - 41, 1983. p. 25.

[17] Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, trans. Oliver Feltham, New York: Continuum, 2005. p. 3.

in this, the newly-originating, the idealistic is undetermined, more an object of

fear, whereas disillusion as such, an existence *per se*, seems more authentic, and

the real or the dissolving is comprehended in a state of necessity between being

and non-being.[18]

As an epoch withers, its dissolution is not initially met with a counterpoised substitute, but rather

an experience of "fear" which predominates in the face of an indeterminacy which presents no

recognisable alternative. Nonetheless, the facticity of such an experience also holds the possibility

of a duration which grants the ground upon which the subject can gain a foothold, or position.

Thus, while Hölderlin will concede that the '*decline or transition*' can only be felt to the extent

that 'the newly-entering, the youthful, the potential is also felt', he also stresses that such a move

is only held together synechically - not in a synthesis of two counteracting trajectories but instead

a holding-together of the 'the comprehending' with 'the incomprehensible, soulless [quality] of

the dissolution and of the struggle of death itself'.[19] More recently, Arendt has developed the these

themes by describing the traits of phenomenal originality as "natality".[20] For Arendt, natality

represents the "source" or "root" of the capacity to take the initiative in beginning over-against

the struggle of mortality, tying together Hölderlin's account of the indeterminability of historical

change with the dual capacity of 'the Greek word *archein*, "to begin," "to lead," and eventually

"to rule"'.[21] Instances of natality are thus moments in which experience becomes contextualised

and conceptualised. Can truth really be said to have become "natal" in this fashion? And, do not

Hölderlin and Arendt, in illustrating the fragility of such a position, also open the possibility for

a synechic account of truth in which the *synechia* does not hold-together two theses in a tangential

and coexistent equilibrium but maintains the necessity of an original position which cannot be

conceptualised?

Did truth occur in a "moment"? To propose so suggests that there was a time when

humans stood *outside* of truth. But has not philosophy habitually taught that humans stand within

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[18] Hölderlin, "*Das untergehende Vaterland*". II: 72-77. Hölderlin, "Becoming in Dissolution". p. 96 - 100.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Arendt links natality with birth and beginning, citing Augustine—'that there be a beginning, man was created before whom there was nobody'—who, in this guise, declared natality an adequate explanation for human existence upon earth. Arendt, *The Human Condition*. pp. 176 - 177. Schürmann cites Arendt's natality in: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, pp. 18 - 19.
[21] Arendt, *The Human Condition*. p. 177.

truth "essentially"? Philosophers have always associated truth, in some way or another, with being. Humans are the 'rational animal'.[22] 'All men naturally desire knowledge'.[23] Such quotations, even if they obscure the ground which solicits humans to *become* "rational beings", point toward truth as the horizon of humanity. Thus, Hegel argues that truth 'is eternal': it 'does not fall within the sphere of the transient, and has no history'.[24] As with Sallustius, who says 'these things never happen, but always are', dialectical truth is *sub specie æterni*.[25] How and when are historical humans, then, *in truth*? And what happens when such distinctions lose their potency? The existence of such questions give credence to Hölderlin's supposition that, at the so-called moments of transition between epochs, a distinct questionability of all things often prevails - particularly so, as Schürmann will write, at the "decisive" moments (from *decidere*, 'to cut off,' 'to set apart') in which a 'very distinct ignorance' underscores all settled opinion and firm conviction.[26]

Even if it must in some way remain to be seen 'what this ignorance bears upon and what is the source of its necessity' the exploration presented in this chapter will highlight how the synechic technique comes to prominence in such indistinct periods.[27] The chapter will begin by examining the work of Parmenides - the thinker who, at the beginning of the first epoch which might be called philosophical, developed a synechic form of thinking which allowed world-views to hold with that which they also refute. It will then illustrate how the *synechia* comes to fruition in the pre- and post-dialectical worlds, linking Parmenides' thought with that of Hölderlin, and explicating how, and why, Hölderlin's thought becomes possible and necessary for philosophers at the juncture in which the dialectical pursuit of truth appears to lose its hegemonic authority. This research does not, however, suggest that the changing conditions of thought at particular epochs are themselves representative of the grand "turning points" of history, nor that *synechia* makes it is possible to analyse and "progress" beyond such moments. Rather, as Bernard Stiegler

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[22] A phrase coined in Porphyry's *Introduction to Aristotle's Categories*. On the history of the *animal rationale*, consult commentary in: Porphyry, *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, trans. Gillian Clark, London: Bloomsbury, 2000. pp. 1 - 4.
[23] Aristotle, *Metaphysics, Volume I: Books 1-9*. pp. 2 - 3 (I. i: 980 a22).
[24] Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. I: 8.
[25] Sallustius, "On the Gods and The World", in: *Five Stages of Greek Religion: Studies based on a Course of Lectures delivered in April 1912 at Columbia University*, trans. Gilbert Murray, 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925. pp. 239 - 268.
[26] Schürmann, *Heidegger On Being and Acting*. pp. 1 - 3.
[27] Ibid.

has recently catalogued, at a period wherein the world understood through the operations of a philosophical dialectics, that is, in a staged series of ceaseless and expanding cycles of opposition and progression, no longer appears to be 'the spontaneous bearer of the future but… seems to lead nowhere', a new form of thinking becomes possible.[28] It is in such a fashion that synechic practice reveals directly how, in the midst of established and decisive systems of knowledge, the practice of thought is above all to be a "beginner". Progress, if it can be called progress, can be found in the journey of deepening or unravelling of such a knowledge - which itself which cannot be "lead". The destination of such a journey, therefore, loses its sense of meaning and the process of journeying itself acquires a particular potency, beginning in this case, with a road.

Such a road is elaborated in the opening lines of Parmenides' poem, which runs not with the rising of the sun heading towards impeding darkness, but rather towards the light which recurs, this study will argue, in a manner akin to the description provided by Jean Laplanche at the culmination of his study of Hölderlin: 'at the moment he suffers from the cone of the shadow projected by the earth, racing against it - not by running away from the shadow but by heading straight for the sun. But we would have to reverse everything in this image, as in a photographic negative in which the sun is black'.[29] Such a sun, then, is not a destinal goal to which philosophers must "progress", but rather represents the obstruction towards fulfilment of such a goal, or the recognition of the impossibility of reaching such a destination, that the road itself is merely, as Hamacher writes of Hölderlin's thinking, 'the attempt to defer the reaching of the goal and to insert between beginning and end, between subject and object, a third term that holds the first two apart from one another and at the same time links them, as a figure of difference', such a road, then, is the technique of *synechia*.[30]

*One For All: Parmenides'* Synechia *of Truth*

How is it that truth could "come to be"? From time immemorial, philosophers have associated truth, in one way or another, with being human. Such a relation, Heidegger remarks, 'animates

[28] Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time, 2: Disorientation*, trans. Stephen Barker, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009. p.1.
[29] Jean Laplanche, *Hölderlin and the Question of the Father*, trans. Luke Carson, Victoria: ELS Editions, 2007. p. 118.
[30] Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". p. 41.

all Western reflection'.[31] What determines this belonging together of truth and being? What holds this belonging together? Or, rather, does this belonging together still hold-together?

Parmenides, it has been said from antiquity, was the first to speak philosophically when he "discovered" the relation between truth and being. When Parmenides instructs that 'it is the same, to think and to be', he becomes, as Schürmann writes, 'the father of philosophy'.[32] Plato calls upon the legacy of 'our father Parmenides' in order to designate, for the first time, the obligation of the philosopher proper: to secure for the lives of mortals a fixed point in the turning world.[33] In this supposed act of paternity Parmenides 'began philosophy proper', claims Hegel.[34] This "beginning", then, paradoxically also offers a conceptual truth which is simultaneously an infinite mooring in the ocean of time (or, as G. E. L. Owen describes, the philosophically 'timeless present').[35] The perceptive understanding of being as "truth" becomes a secure key, beyond all temporal constraints, to *all being*, eternally. The very limits of philosophy itself, Schürmann continues, are prescribed within such a movement, offering a conceptual 'point of reference that lasts, immutably, and that lays down the law, universally'. [36] Parmenides offers the first *philosophia perennis*, subsequently laid down in Aritstotle's injunction 'we ought so far as possible to achieve immortality'.[37] The following section, however, will supplement such claims by presenting a counter measure at the heart of the technique of the *synechia* - through which Parmenides ties and holds-together a mosaic of at times harmonious and at others contradictory picture of truth which is both atemporal and singular, not through a contradictory opposition of two equal forces, but a holding-together of incompatible drives and theses which make up the human condition and cannot be systematised into a whole through recourse to philosophical system.

It is often claimed that Parmenides' foundational insight is to set thought to work in opposing all contradictions, absolutely, so as to posit the universal truth of truth which designates,

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[31] Martin Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, trans. David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi, New York: Harper & Row, 1984. p. 79
[32] Parmenides. 3. Unless otherwise started, Parmenides trans. in: Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. pp. 41 - 46. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 51.
[33] Plato, *The Sophist*, trans. Harold North Fowler, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1921. pp. 355 - 357 (241d.).
[34] Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. I: 254.
[35] G. E. L. Owen, "Plato and Parmenides on the Timeless Present", in: *The Pre-Socratics: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Alexander P. D. Mourelatos, Princetown: Princetown University Press, 1993. pp. 271 - 292.
[36] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 51.
[37] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. pp. 616 - 617 (III, X; 1177b 33).

as one commentator puts it, 'the unicity and totality of the most implacable norm'.[38] Parmenides will call this truth both "one" (*hen*) and "being" (*to eon*). This reference to the unity of truth, it is said, grounds every human action in an absolute position, a movement which Karl Reinhardt describes as 'the reduction of all the world's contents and special distinctions to that ultimate distinction that would encompass all others in itself'.[39] The singular yet all-embracing position, then, is directly instigated in the thought of Parmenides in order to exclude the architects of uncertainty and bring to heel the unsystematic, to bisect truth from error, to partition the person who knows from person who does not. So, scholars of Parmenides are made aware from the outset that, unlike his contemporary Heraclitus who represents becoming, movement, and change, Parmenides is the first thinker of the static atemporality of a, or *the*, permanent truth.[40] Indeed, as Parmenides himself will write: 'How could it come into being? If it came into being, it Is Not; and so too if it is about-to-be at some future time'.[41]

Yet Parmenides never stands still. Much like the synechic thought of Hölderlin in which readers are, as one commentator puts it, 'trained in the dynamics of moving through uncertainty', Parmenides' account of truth is presented via the mediation of both a metaphorical and a literal account of travel, movement, and progressive revelation.[42] Parmenides' text, which like Hölderlin's works is for the most part preserved in a fragmentary assemblage of disjointed material, expounds the so-called first philosophical "system" in a patchy metrical language through the form of a journey. The reader repeatedly traverses inconclusive paths filled with motion and change - a beguiling way of initiating a monistic timeless philosophical enterprise 'petrified by logical rigidity'.[43] Moreover, Parmenides' narrative technique, punctuating the trajectory of his poem with repeated allusion to daytime and night, undermines such

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[38] Kurt Riezler, *Parmenides*, ed. Hans-Georg Gadamer, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1970. p. 54. Also quoted in: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 51.

[39] Karl Reinhardt, "The Relation Between the Two Parts of Parmenides' Poem", in: *The Pre-Socratics*. p. 330.

[40] 'According to this classical interpretation, Parmenides would have taught at one extremity of the Greek world the opposite to what, in the same epoch, Heraclitus said at the eastern extremity of the same world. Heraclitus, as Plato declares, held that everything flows… Parmenides would have adopted the opposite position'. Heidegger in: Jean Beaufret, *Dialogue with Heidegger: Greek Philosophy*, trans. Mark Sinclair, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. p. 32. Karl Reinhardt first dispelled these misconceptions in: Karl Reinhardt, *Parmenides und die Geschichte der griechischen Philosophie*, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1959.

[41] Parmenides. 8.20-22.

[42] Charlie Louth, "Urge for the Impossible: The Complex, Necessary Hölderlin", in: *Times Literary Supplement*, No. 6137, pp. 28 - 30, 2020. p. 28.

[43] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. Marianne Cowan, Washington: Regnery Publishing, 1998. p. 70.

characterisation. In this fashion, it can be argued that Parmenides not only to resists temporalisation and movement but consciously foregrounds it. Thus, even if Parmenides' thought indicates an ineffable, timeless, statically present truth, his poetic speech itself is none of these things. Parmenides' poem is 'both "narrative" and "historical"'.[44] However, as Gadamer stresses, the 'artificial' construction of Parmenides' verbs are also, in spite of the text's apparent kineticism, frequently iterative, repetitive, and enduring, and thus might also be interpreted as indicative of the 'repetitive' nature of 'reflective contemplation'.[45] Is ongoing repetition, a kind of eternal recurrence, then, Parmenides' enduring philosophical theme? To be sure, the poem's protagonist is encouraged 'again and again' to move from the night into the light. He has travelled his road often. Yet, a fork in this road between the poetic and philosophical registers presents two ways of traveling with Parmenides. Which Parmenides is it to be? Or, is it possible to read with Schürmann in 'the *temporal configurations of what is said* an indication that will teach us something about the temporal condition of being as one'?[46] Might such temporal configurations themselves call attention to the necessity and function of the *synechia* in Parmenides' thinking, which holds-together the disjunctive nature of the two practices? A return to the road is required.

'The mares which carry me conveyed me as far as my desire reached'.[47] Thus Parmenides' account begins. Who is this "me"? Does the voice of the narrator (Parmenides) belong to the singular "me"? Parmenides himself uses the term *Kouros* ("the youth") to describe his speaker. Thus, it might be inferred that Parmenides didactically 'avoids giving any details which might connect the *Kouros* historically to Parmenides' own person' to encourage the readers identification with his protagonist; to hear, see, and learn as he does.[48] Perhaps, then, as Nussbächer describes Hölderlin's conversationally 'open' authorial technique, Parmenides' manifests and holds a wider "us" within the singular "me".[49] Before his journey this single *Kouros*

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[44] P. Christopher Smith, "Parmenides and Poetry: Taking Gadamer's Reading one Step Further", in: *Journal for the British Society for Phenomenology*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 265-280, 2003. p. 266.

[45] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*, trans. Rod Coltman, New York: Continuum, 1998. p. 97. Alexander Mourlatos writes that 'duration more than iteration seems to be relevant', in: Alexander Mourlatos, *The Route of Parmenides*, Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2008. p. 17.

[46] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 125.

[47] Parmenides. 1.1-2.

[48] 'It is presumably for this reason that he [Parmenides] avoids giving any details which might connect the *Kouros* historically to Parmenides' own person'. Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*. pp. 16 - 17.

[49] For Nussbächer's comments consult: p. 39.

was among, and upon its completion has now retuned to, the company of this "us".[50] Both he and we are travellers on the well-travelled road. Nonetheless, for a short while this *Kouros* was transported 'far from the path travelled by mankind' whereupon he is instructed in the way of truth, before returning to communicate (to "us") such a 'way'.[51] Could it be that, as his account develops, Parmenides desires that one consider not only the words of the *Kouros*, but also the series of relations which are held-together between this *Kouros*, the divinities he is to encounter, and all other mortals? The truth is thus inscribed as something to be spoken, to be told, relayed, and "passed on" in a series of disconnected assemblage of varied voices and techniques. Such a method gives credence to Parmenides' manifestation of such a recollection in the form of a journey. In the words of Parmenides one encounters an evocation of the truth as a form of journey, of travel and arrival, literally and metaphorically, between the darkness of the night into the light of day. This study will first examine the path of the light.

One cannot help but bump into the epic along the way. The textual parallels between Parmenides' story and the Homeric travelling motifs, of *oudós* (route), *nostos* (return), *pompí* (send-off), give credence to an association which, Alexander Mourelatos highlights, have been 'commonplace for almost a century'.[52] Mourelatos develops this theme, distinguishing five phases within the broader structure of the *Odyssey* which are mirrored in Parmenides' work: '(a) progress on the journey of return; (b) regress and wandering; (c) expert navigation; (d) foolish action; (e) the soliciting of news of return by relatives and friends back home'.[53] E. A. Havelock even identifies Parmenides' *Kouros* as a latter-day Odysseus.[54] Can his journey, and its truth claims, simply be situated within the broader tradition of the Homeric epic? Is Parmenides, then, no more a philosopher than an early link in the 'golden chain of Homer' to which, one commentator argues, the poetic tradition extends unbroken until the work of Hölderlin?[55] The

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[50] The question of Parmenides' intended audience is unsettled. Freeman notes that the poem is 'addressed to his pupil Zeno'. Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. p. 41. Is the poem, then, "a lesson"?

[51] Parmenides. 1.27-28.

[52] Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*. pp. 17 - 18. A. H. Coxon writes: 'It can be shown with reasonable probability that Parmenides drew for much of his phraseology and imagery directly on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*'. A. H. Coxon, "Parmenides' debt to Homer", in: *The Fragments of Parmenides: A Critical Text with Introduction and Translation, the Ancient* Testimonia *and a Commentary*, Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2009. pp. 7 - 13.

[53] Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*. p. 18.

[54] Eric A. Havelock, "Parmenides and Odysseus", in: *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 63, pp. 133 - 143, 1958. p. 136.

[55] cf. Emery E. George, *Hölderlin and the Golden Chain of Homer: Including an Unknown Source*, Michigan: E. Mellen Press, 1992.

manner in which Parmenides' audience is inducted upon and encouraged to pursue the path of truth, however, and the relation between such an induction and manner in which *truth itself* is communicated, also hints at a new departure. While 'Homeric truth lay in a factual *mythos* ("myth"), not a fictive *logos* ("argument")', as Raymond Prier distinguishes, Parmenides' poem simultaneously also reaches beyond the *mythos* to articulate a logical argument.[56] By extension, both *logos* and *mythos* imply the necessity of a human discourse which is recognised as "true". Parmenides' text, however, appears to postulate and hold-together the otherwise disjunctive registers of meaning within the same presentation. In Parmenides' poem, logical certainty is expounded in the form of a recognisable "mythic" event. Thus, Parmenides' maintains a 'direct dependence' on the lineage of the Homeric *mythos* whilst simultaneously hinting at a new provenance for critical discourse in which truth's 'age of innocence', as Jonathan Barnes writes, is over.[57]

The object of Parmenides' text is truth, but a truth apprehended upon the synechic horizon which holds-together the *logos* and the *mythos*. Therefore, incompatible modes of time express themselves in Parmenides' poem. The recurrence of night and day, golden light and the abstruse night, recall the double modalities inherent in a mythic *archē* through the recollection prior events at a singular "moment in time". And yet, Parmenides extends this dichotomy though an argumentative rigidity which appears to present the static atemporality of a philosophical *archē*. In this fashion, incompatible schema are presented and held-together in a text which encourages the reader to cleave a path *between* mythic thought, which draws its energy from the conjunction of 'the preservation of a message from the past and the exigency of a new hearing and a new existence in the presence', and the cold logic of philosophers, which eternally demonstrates the discrepancies of the sacred and the impermanence of phenomena.[58] A correlation is possible from the outset of Parmenides' poem with the opening lines of Hölderlin's poem *The Rhine*. Just as Hölderlin's hymn opens with a descent from the Alpine ranges, which according to mythic thought are the 'fortresses of the Heavenly', and proceeds toward mortal beings with the ambition

[56] Raymond A. Prier, "Achilles *Rheter*? Homer and proto-rhetorical truth", in: *The Rhetoric Canon*, ed. Brenda Deen Schildgen, Detriot: Wayne State University Press, 1997. p. 64.
[57] Coxon, *The Fragments of Parmenides*. p. 7. Jonathan Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, New York: Routledge, 1982. p. 122.
[58] Schürmann, "Situating René Char". p. 519.

of mediating an immortal message of truth, Parmenides' *Kouros* proceeds from the divine absolute to the indeterminacy of the human world.[59] Parmenides' text appears to highlight and yet hold-together a necessarily tangential disequilibrium between diverse origin-al claims, which must also undermine their originality in order to survive synechically. In this way, Parmenides is quick to avoid the accusation of being 'two-headed', of borrowing from and then betraying dual allegiances.[60] Rather, the reader is encouraged to take him at his own words, in both directions, and pursue his *synechia*.

Or rather, not his own words. When Parmenides the man speaks, the divine is to be heard. Truth is told through the application of narrative, symbolic, and devotional techniques. Parmenides may communicate truth, but not as himself. For Heidegger, Parmenides' truth *is* a goddess "truth", that is, '"the truth"—itself—is the goddess'.[61] Parmenides renders truth in the form of a divine being. However, Heidegger's reading also obscures the synechic network of strategies imposed by Parmenides' account of truth, from which each of his "characters" represents a distinct step in a journey which proceeds, and builds up in parts a tableaux, a *synechia*, of truth. This tableaux does not commence, however, in steps but galloping, aboard a winged chariot heading towards the light and guided by the daughters of the Sun. The *Kouros* is then led toward gates guarding the divergent paths of the day and the night, upon the threshold of which the maidens accompanying him symbolically remove the veils which had hitherto concealed their faces. After being persuaded by the daughters of the sun these gates are opened by Diké. Therein, the Goddess receives Parmenides, and provides instruction. Now, this direction must be consulted.

The Goddess initiates her instruction by suggesting that her instruction has no subject, per se, but rather illustrates the problem of subjectivity itself. She aims to illustrate what can, and what cannot, rightly be called a subject - what can be and cannot be thought, shown, or said, in truth. The *Kouros* learns, firstly, that anything in possession of subjecthood already confers its existence, since if it did not exist there should be nothing to talk or think about. 'From nothing

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[59] Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*". I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine". p. 196 - 209.
[60] Parmenides. 6.5.
[61] Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides*, trans. André Schuwer and Richard Rojcewicz, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992. p. 5.

there follows nothing', as Hölderlin's theoretical account of dissolution will posit two millennia later, similarly resisting the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*.[62] Next, a distinction is drawn between what it is "to be" and "not to be", a juxtaposition between 'the one, which is' and 'the other, which is not'.[63] From out of this conjunction, therefore, it appears natural to follow Parmenides' account of truth in the form of a dualism rather than a *synechia*. The truth has two possible propositions (the "it is" and the "it is not") which present themselves in the form of an alternative. Parmenides is thus the first philosopher of truth whose approach, as one commentator writes, 'is purely formal or dialectical'.[64] Parmenides' dialectical "either-or" confers itself on all thought and phenomena, bisecting one from the other as if parting waves. The "one" of truth exists as two - in a series of relations between contradictory propositions, one which affirms what the other must deny. For dialecticians, the implications of understanding are clear: what a thing is cannot be something other than what it is, its "is" cannot be the same as its "is not", its truth cannot also be false. One proposition must necessarily be true and its alternate, by virtue of this, false. Philosophers, therefore, as Schürmann recounts, habitually conclude that Parmenides 'was the first to employ, with an unequaled rigour, the principal of non-contradiction'.[65] The ramifications of such a path are clear: there are two possible ways of telling and they must mutually exclude the other as the true and the false.

And yet, the dialectical panacea does not hold. Firstly, the path of non-being is 'unthinkable' and therefore not really a possible path at all.[66] To posit a truth, however, is not enough in isolation. The realm of positing, of saying and showing, requires a divide in order to move beyond mere affirmation. Along the "true" path of being, mankind encounters the falsity of non-being where it must, in a manner of speaking, learn that non-being *is* in order to understand how it cannot possibly be. The indeterminable path of non-being can only be composed from the conceptual material belonging to the path of being. As Schürmann puts it, 'the hypothetical alternative of being and nothingness can be constructed only at the price of treating nothingness

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[62] Hölderlin, "*Das untergehende Vaterland*". II: 72-77. Hölderlin, "Becoming in Dissolution". p. 96 - 100.
[63] Parmenides. 2.3 and 5.
[64] Coxon, *The Fragments of Parmenides*. p. 21.
[65] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 55.
[66] Parmenides. 8.17. "Unthinkable" from *anoêton*.

as if it were still part of being'.[67] As Hölderlin will take away from his early encounters with Fichte, however, this distinction does not return the reader to a conception of being and truth as one, absolutely and unequivocally bound together in a unitary configuration, but rather underscores the necessity of an 'arche-separation' which maintains fidelity to a forever-divided-one which can never be one with itself.[68] Indeed, the Goddess commands that one must 'ignore the one way as unthinkable and inexpressible (for it is not the true way) and take the other as the way of Being'.[69] However, Parmenides' Goddess further qualifies this distinction in the form of an opposition between those "who know" with those who do not, illustrating the manner in which one can "move into" the truth of the one only by learning that the path of nothingness will lead nowhere because it is not a path at all. Therefore, the *Kouros* is instructed: 'At this point I cease my reliable theory and thought, concerning Truth; from here onwards you must learn the opinions of mortals'.[70] The words rendered as "truth" (*alétheia*) and "opinion" (*doxa*) are the guiding terms for this synechic path of being, that being, the path which concerns "us". They point toward how one can understand what it is to be, or move, in Parmenides' sense, "in" a *synechia* of truth.

How to translate *alétheia*? To begin, *alétheia* is directly associated with "truth".[71] As Schürmann clarifies, following Parmenides' insistence that contradiction must be avoided absolutely, readers may approach his use of the *alétheia* by positing every statement not invalidated by the law of non-contradiction must fall within its remit.[72] The absence of contradiction is the minimal condition for a statement to be true. However, *alétheia* confers more. In Parmenides' time, Schürmann continues, *alétheia* was yet to move *exclusively* into 'the reign of the principles of non-contradiction' and its accompanying dualistic excluded middle.[73] It is more (or, less?) than the bifocal legislature imposed by a dialectical reading of Parmenides' instance of being and non-being. *Alétheia* is, for Heidegger, distinct from and yet vital for

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[67] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 68.
[68] Hölderlin's 1795 essay on Fichte was discovered scribbled on the flyleaf of his copy of *Science of Knowledge*. Hölderlin, "<*Seyn, Urtheil, Modalität*>", in: *SW*. II: 49-50. Hölderlin, "Judgement and Being", in: *ELT*. pp. 37 - 38. Henrich's essay, "Hölderlin on Judgement and Being", provides further: Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 71 - 89.
[69] Parmenides. 8.19-20.
[70] Ibid. 8.50.
[71] cf. Jan Woleński, "*Aletheia* in Greek thought until Aristotle", in: *Annals of Pure and Applied Logic*, No. 127, pp. 339 - 360, 2004. '*Aletheia* is the most important Greek counterpart of our "truth"'. p. 341.
[72] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 60.
[73] Ibid.

dialectical truth 'because it first grants truth as *adequatio* and *certitudo*'.[74] Parmenides' *alétheia* is thus removed, Heidegger posits, from the subsequent developments in philosophy which deliminates the 'essence of truth as correctness'.[75] What is brought to bear as true in *alétheia*, Heidegger concludes, is defined by its 'illumination of what is still unhazarded and therefore not yet at hand', that is, what is brought into presence from obscurity.[76] (The most common lexical interpretations of *alétheia* posit the '*a*' as an instance of a privative, or negative, from *lêthê* which is taken to mean "oblivion", "forgetfulness", or "concealment".[77]) The word *alétheia* necessarily preserves an essential synechic holding-betweeness (of "presence" and "obscurity") in truth. For this reason, as Thomas Cole highlights, most contemporary translations of *alétheia* remain indebted to Heidegger's popularisation of *alétheia* as 'originally and essentially, *to mê lanthanon*', i.e., the "unhidden" or "unforgotten"'.[78] Many scholars continue to translate *alétheia* using something akin to what is now taken to be Heideggerian nomenclature, using variations on: 'the Open that does not withdraw', 'the unconcealed and the disclosing', the 'Open-without-hiddenness'.[79] The inelegance of these expressions is perhaps inevitable given that, as Schürmann reminds us, *vertias* and its modern truth derivatives posit entirely the opposite of an aletheological opening: a closure.[80] (V*eritas* a development of the Indo-European root *ver-*, that is, from *veru*, 'bar' - from that which locks.[81]) *Alétheia* is the bringing into emanation a *poíēsis* of the true, standing over and against the 'primordial crime' of *lêthê*, namely, as Roberto Calasso writes, 'the action that makes something in existence disappear'.[82] Therefore, given the fact that *alétheia* cannot readily be reduced or "locked" into a categorical determination in translation, most

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[74] Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy". p. 69.
[75] Heidegger, *Parmenides*. p. 50.
[76] Heidegger, *Nietzsche*. p. 237.
[77] cf. Jan Woleński, "*Aletheia* in Greek thought until Aristotle", in: *Annals of Pure and Applied Logic*, No. 127, pp. 339 - 360, 2004.
[78] Thomas Cole, "Archaic Truth", in: *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica*, New Series, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 7 - 28, 1983. p. 7. Heidegger's translation of *alétheia* as "unhidden" was expounded by Johannes Classen in 1867. Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott render the translation of *alétheia*, as 'the state of not being hidden', in: Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. pp. 63 - 64. Critique of this translation can be found in Bruno Snells "subjective" reading of *alétheia* as a mental phenomenon retained in the memory - here, *lêthê* represents "forgetfulness" rather than "hiddenness". Bruno Snell, *Der Weg zum Denker und zur Wahrheit. Studien zur frühgriechischen Sprache*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978.
[79] Beaufret, *Dialogue with Heidegger*. p. 39. Heidegger, *Parmenides*. p. 49.
[80] 'Which is why "to open" in Latin is *ap-verio*, *aperio*: "I open the *pertum*, the *verum*," the shutters'. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p.60.
[81] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 60. Heidegger, *Parmenides*. pp. 49 - 54.
[82] Roberto Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, trans. Tim Parks, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993. p. 311.

contemporaneous commentators suggest that a literal and "straightforward" translation of *alétheia* as "unconcealment" remains satisfactory.

And what more explicit demonstration of truth as the origin of unconcealment could be given than its introduction in Parmenides' text by young maidens 'having pushed back their veils from their heads with their hands'?[83] And, subsequently, a pair of gates opening to reveal 'a wide gaping space' beyond their threshold?[84] If Parmenides does adopt just 'one critical approach' to truth, Schürmann posits, 'it will entail a *progressive unveiling*'.[85] Such a reading is already implied by the probable title of Parmenides' poem: *Peri phuseôs*. The Greek verb *phuein*, Schürmann details, expresses the call 'to arise' (just as the Latin *orire* - from where we receive the words 'origin' and 'orient').[86] *Phusis* designates 'rising movement by which something shows itself or manifests itself to another thing'.[87] The movement of *phusis*, therefore, makes and holds-together thinking and truth as a part of being, whilst also maintaining a distance which allows truth to "show itself" to beings. *Alétheia* thus holds within itself an absence from which manifestation arises or is "unconcealed", setting forth the unanimity of the split within being and non-being; truth and error; yes and no. Parmenides preaches a holding-together of contrary representations, that 'one is the manifestation at work in things present and absent. It is, thus, manifestation differing with itself'.[88] Or, to return to Hölderlin's rendering of the phrase in *Hyperion*, 'the One differentiated in itself'.[89] Perhaps this is how, for Parmenides, both *logos* and *mythos*, far from being irreconcilable vectors of truth, may signify a more sophisticated synechic association: *logos* gathers all contradictions together, while *mythos* discloses this knowledge to mortals. In this way, singular and absolute are united in a synechic holding: *logos* is the 'speaking that gathers together, *mûthos*, a speaking that reveals', as Schürmann puts it.[90]

The truth is therefore received. Parmenides' truth is a receiving, facilitated by an opening. Parmenides' truth is not a closure or drawing-in through definition. Thus, the word, *doxa*, comes

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[83] Parmenides. 1.10.
[84] Ibid. 1.19.
[85] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 60.
[86] Ibid. p. 76.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[90] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 83.

from *déchesthai*, to accept or receive.[91] With this in mind, scholars of Parmenides ought to remain steadfast against the all-too-common conception of the relationship between *alétheia* and *doxa* in the sense of an opposition between truth and opinion, a pervasive misreading characterised by one commentator as 'a case of helplessness without any parallel in the history of philosophy'.[92] *Doxa*, Schürmann highlights, 'is not the rival of truth', but a logical realm of contraries, oppositions, and positing, which, though *synechia*, *moves within the realm of truth itself* which is the revealing.[93] Such contradiction, Reinhardt highlights, 'is the essence of *doxa*'.[94] There is no dualism of truth and opinion but rather a scale of gradation. Between contraries, unity is not only thinkable, but it is given. In order to understand, humans posit, they name, as Heraclitus writes, 'separating each thing according to its nature'.[95] To think the true is thus to hold manifold possibilities and contraries which manifest in the 'famous *doxic* burst' together as one, to 'think the absent in the present and the present in the absent'.[96] Mortals, unlike the gods, grope around between contraries. *Doxic* manifestation reveals the reciprocity of these diverging paths. The path of the daytime no longer excludes the path of night. *Doxa* are, Detienne writes, 'the appropriate form of knowledge for a world of change and movement'.[97] One journey prolongs another, and to arrive one must come from where they are not. Anyone who has attempted to articulate "truth" knows that the path of human impositions is, above all, suitable for travel; we stumble and get up, we are right, wrong, at times close, at others far. This path is always open and mortals travel backwards and forward along it. The path of "truth" *is* 'the path of the human condition'.[98]

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[91] Ibid. p. 78. Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*. p. 197.

[92] Panagiotis Thanassas, "How Many *Doxai* Are There in Parmenides?", in: *Rhizai. A Jounral for Ancient Philosophy and Science*, No. 2, pp. 199 - 218, 2006. p. 200. It seems almost futile to document this assertion when the crime is almost universal. Thanassas highlights the paucity of surviving fragments which deal with *doxa* as a possible explanation. Diels proposes that only 1/10th of Parmenides' material dealing with *doxa* are preserved (conversely, just 1/10th of material concerning *aléheia* has been lost). Hermann Diels, *Parmenides, Lehrgedicht*, 2nd ed., Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 2003. pp. 25-26.

[93] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 63. Analysis of the Indo-European root *\*dek-* also solicits this reading: Georges Redard has demonstrated that this root means 'to confirm with what what considers to be a norm' and that the family of *dokos*, *dokein* revolves around the meaning 'to decide to do whatever one judges to best suit the situation'. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 114.

[94] Reinhardt, "The Relation Between the Two Parts of Parmenides' Poem". p. 269.

[95] Heraclitus. DK B1. Unless otherwise stated, Heraclitus cited from: Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. pp. 24 - 34.

[96] Lambros Couloubaritsis, "Les multiples chemins de Parménide", in: *Etudes sur Parménide*, vol. II, pp. 25 - 43, 1987. p. 35. Couloubaritsis quoted in: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 639, n. 19. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, p. 95. In relation to "bursting", consider Diogenes Laertius who speaks of Parmenides' "flourishing". Diogenes Laertius. 9. 23.

[97] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 114.

[98] Schürmann, *Broken* Hegemonies. p. 64.

How are the co-existent contraries implicit in *doxa* "held-together"? Certainly not, as Schürmann explains, 'as half-portions which, brought together, would compose or recompose the one' as if it were a jigsaw puzzle.[99] Rather, the spirit of *doxic* contrariety is held as *agon* (conflict). *Polemos* (strife), Heraclitus teaches, 'is the father of all'.[100] In pursuing the enquiry into truth mortals are invited by Parmenides' Goddess to investigate 'the much-contested proof'.[101] Parmenides' truth holds a 'unity of warring opposites', as John Burnet describes.[102] However, these opposites do not solicit a generic arche-identity - there is no ephemeral sympathy, no coalition of interests or reabsorbing genus, rather theses hold though 'the shaking of a given meaning'.[103] Parmenides' "union" holds the unnamable absent in the present, the possible in the actual, and, therefore, an agonal disputation in all things. Jan Patočka writes that this truth procedure 'need be understood not from the viewpoint of the *day*, of life merely accepted, but also from the view of strife, of the night, of *polemos*'; truth, therefore, becomes possible not only through 'what can be uprooted or shaken, but rather the openness to the shaking'.[104] The present holds the absent, and the daylight the invisible night, 'everything is full' of its opposition while remaining irreconcilable to the terms of its oppositionality.[105] By ascribing names and communicating, mortals necessarily divide and set phenomena against each other, arranging a world made up of divisions and configurations. Such divisions, however, cannot be "resolved" or synthesised, but are rather held-together in 'a peculiar harmony', as Eugen Fink puts it, in a *synechia* of dispute and disjuncture.[106] *Doxic agonal* confrontation, Heidegger posits, 'builds unity' through 'the gathering (*logos*)' which, however, does not maximalise *doxic* claims.[107] It is only in abiding with the agonal disparities present in *doxa*, Patočka concludes, that the truth is 'capable of living without persisting in a conflict with reality'.[108]

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[99] 'It is only in Aristotelean logic that speaking in terms of contraries becomes tantamount to being confined within a genus'. Ibid. p. 72.
[100] Heraclitus. DK B8. 'The *polemos* named here is a strife that holds sway before everything divine and human, not war in the human sense… In stepping apart, clefts, intervals, distances, and joints open themselves up'. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, London: Yale University Press, 2000. p. 65.
[101] Parmenides. 7.5.
[102] Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*. p. 143.
[103] Jan Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*, trans. Erazim Kohák, Illinois: Open Court, 1996. p. 43.
[104] Ibid. p. 44.
[105] Parmenides. 9.
[106] Eugen Fink, *Nietzsche's Philosophy*, trans. Goetz Richter, London: Continuum, 2003. p. 17.
[107] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*. p. 65.
[108] Patočka, *Heretical Essays in the Philosophy of History*. p. 82.

As Hölderlin articulates in his essays on Greek tragedy, such truth claims, conceived in *synechia*, are intimately linked to aesthetic representation. Indeed, the force of an absolute and singular existences clashing, and yet being held in a tangential co-existence without one consuming the other, reestablishing their boundaries in a singular conflux in which each is maintained in disjunction from the other, can only be illustrated in a synechic holding-together which ties mortals and immortals in the same presentation of a 'boundless union purifying itself through boundless separation'.[109] In Parmenides' poem, the coherence of disjointed *doxic* forces are represented by the agents of the Goddess of truth (who perhaps personifies, or is, *alètheia* itself). These intermediaries; Diké, Thémis, Moira, Ananké and Péras, all intervene on behalf of Alètheia. Schürmann suggests that these representatives labour, in different ways, for a unified picture of warring of contraries: they teach 'mortals to see whatever are opposed in terms of their reciprocal belonging together'.[110] Mourelatos posits that these mediators are 'hypostases' of a 'multi-faced' and polymorphic Alètheia herself.[111] In each case, their intercession in our world is designed to provoke in mortals a turning toward "the one".[112] Alètheia's divine mediators are counsellors in human affairs. The 'fearful enormity of God and man uniting', as Hölderlin continues in an essay on the tragic, is in such a manner, both signposted and yet on a deeper level evaded in Parmenides' text through the mediation of a *synechia* which both holds-together the possibility of flattening the distinctions between mortals and immortals, heaven and earth, all the while, on a deeper level, reinforcing them by illustrating the impossibility of such a task.[113] Parmenides does not solely, as one commentator argues, evoke divine revelation in order to 'exploit and at the same time transcend the traditional Greek pieties'.[114] How, then, does divine intervention instruct mortal in the synechic practice of "holding-together" truth?

Diké is the one who holds-together. She is the Goddess of justice and order. The Goddess who, Havelock highlights, represents and holds 'the maintenance of reciprocal relations of

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[109] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*", in: *SW*. II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"", in: *ELT*. pp. 101 - 108.
[110] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 73.
[111] Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides*. p. 26.
[112] A reference from which, Schürmann claims, the Romans derive the name for the world: 'the universe, that which is turned toward the one'. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 81.
[113] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108. Trans. modified.
[114] Charles H. Kahn, "The Thesis of Parmenides", in: *Essays on Being*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. p. 149.

right'.[115] Diké, it is said, 'neutralizes discrepancies', in her holding she holds in all others.[116] *Deiknumi*, Schürmann informs, means 'to show' or 'to indicate' (the same root in Latin gives *dicere* 'to say'), and *dikeîn* means 'to throw'.[117] The holding of Diké can be both a throwing and a showing. Readers might presume, as Schürmann indicates, that their fate is "thrown" towards them, and in so doing is suddenly shown or revealed and held in place. Moreover, Heidegger describes poetic speech as 'the release of a throw by which unconcealment infuses itself into beings'.[118] Diké is the authority who, at the start of Parmenides' poem, grants access to the path of truth, the one who 'pushes back the bolted bar' setting the *Kouros* upon his path.[119] She legislates the way. Indeed, Jane Ellen Harrison refers to Diké as 'the *way* of life'.[120] It is the function of Diké to show a being to its correct place, or its "way"; it is only in this position that it is "held-together". Thus, beings belong to a movement destined, as Hölderlin writes in *The Rhine*, to 'the bounds which God at birth assigned to [them] for [their] term and site'.[121] It is this relation to fate which ensures that beings do not err towards *hubris*. For Schürmann, Diké 'unites the *léthé*, wherein all preponderances confront each other, to the *alétheia*, wherein every side has the same weight'.[122] In such a manner, Schürmann concludes, 'truth holds together'.[123] Diké thus represents a synechic holding-together in thought and in speech: that which holds the present with the absent, the concealed with the unconcealed, and the singular with the absolute. Indeed, upon opening the gates, Diké conveys the *Kouros* to the heart of truth where he is instructed that 'things absent are securely present to the mind'.[124]

Diké is accompanied by her counterpart Thémis. Thémis is *thesis*, the one who "sets in place" (from *tithémi*, to posit). *Thesis* derives from *theoi*, meaning "disposer". Once, all of the

[115] Eric A. Havelock, ""Dikaiosune". An Essay in Greek Intellectual History", in: *Pheonix*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 49-70, 1969. p. 51.
[116] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 85.
[117] Ibid. p. 84.
[118] Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", in: *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell, London: Routledge, 2011. p. 128. *Geworfenheit*, "thrownness", is a recurring feature in Heidegger's work, see: Heidegger, *Being and Time*. (§29, 31, 38, 58, 68b.). Nietzsche talks of 'the time of which we have been thrown' in: Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, New York: Vintage Books, 1968. p. 40. Furthermore, Gadamer prefaces *Truth and Method* with a 1922 poem by Rainer Maria Rilke starting: 'when you're suddenly the catcher of a ball / thrown by an eternal partner'.
[119] Parmenides. 1.14.
[120] Jane Ellen Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*, London: Williams & Norgate, 1913. p. 116.
[121] Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*". I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine". p. 196 - 209.
[122] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 86.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Parmenides. 4.1.

gods (*theos*) were understood in relation to *thesis*, Herodotus instructs, 'because they had "disposed" and arranged everything in due order, and assigned everything its proper division'.[125] Thus, even the Gods are limited by *thesis*; they do not 'dare to undo the things that were fated'.[126] The purpose of theses are, therefore, essentially intractable, and as such are distinguishable from everyday run of *doxic* designations. It is this divine disposition which makes Thémis the 'principle of stable placement' standing over and against 'our transitory dispositions and in doing so makes them possible'.[127] Indeed, Émile Benveniste highlights the etymological proximity of *thémis* to *thémethla*, in the sense of a "base" or "foundation".[128] Thémis, then, is not simply a messenger of judgement upon human affairs, but rather the 'binding force of social imperative'.[129] As absolute judgement Thémis has no antithesis; it is only mortal ephemeral postings which, as Schürmann writes, 'set themselves off from their counter-positions and thereby nourish themselves'.[130] Thémis, meanwhile, 'functions as the law (*sun-*) of law (mortals' postings and conventions)' and therefore holds contraries together in place.[131]

As with Diké and Thémis, Moria is a legislator. She assigns to things their role. Related to *meros*, 'share', and *meiromai*, 'to receive the share that comes to you', Moira is 'share and sharing out, apportioning'.[132] Moira is in this sense, as Liddell and Scott identify, 'the goddess of fate'.[133] E. R. Dodds describes Moira as the arbitrator of the unaccountable, the "it had to be so", in relation to one's unaccountable 'portion' or 'lot'.[134] In this way, Moira ascribes to contraries that each "has its share". To mortals, Schürmann claims, she is also responsible for imparting and holding both 'the thoroughfare of designative representations', and, no less, the path of unveiling itself.[135] Moira 'unfolds the twofold', Heidegger instructs.[136] 'To present things', Schürmann

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[125] Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*. pp. 340 - 341 (2.52).
[126] Pindar, *Nemean Odes. Isthmian Odes. Fragments*, trans. William H. Race, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997. pp. 272 - 273 (*Paean*. vi. 94.).
[127] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, p. 86
[128] Émile Benveniste, *Dictionary of Indo-European Concepts and* Society, trans. Elizabeth Palmer, Chicago: Hau Books, 2016. p. 387.
[129] Sandra A. Wawrytko, "The Interpenetration of Art and Philosophy in East Asian Poetry: The Metaphysical Threat to the Platonic Hierarchy", in: *The Polish Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 32, pp. 31 - 50, 2014. p. 34.
[130] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 86.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. p. 1141.
[134] E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973. p. 6.
[135] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 86.
[136] Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking*. p. 97.

continues, 'she imparts their manifest place, and to absent ones, their hidden place'.[137] Her apportionment to mortals amounts to the 'dispensation of presencing', Heidegger argues, which holds a patchwork of conflicting positions and 'binds' them into a single passage.[138] Thus, Schelling likens Moira's function to an artwork 'operating in silence, the inborn art of the soul'.[139] In this manner, Moira binds and ascribes to being (truth) its completeness.[140] Her allocation touches every aspect of being: Moria is the destiny of truth.

Péras is often translated as 'limit' or 'bond'.[141] Schürmann highlights that this translation should not be taken as indicative of that which delimits being, for instance, being's contiguity with another being or non-being.[142] For Parmenides, being has no limit. Thus, while several commentators have inferred from Parmenides' comparison of being to a sphere that he assimilates and limits being, that true being can be held within the sphere of the world, a counter reading suggests that *Péras* overlooks the crossings inherent in movement between irreconcilable forces.[143] *Péras* evolves from the etymological root *per* (*peràō, peirō, perainō*) which indicates a passage or crossing.[144] Aristotle remarks that *péras* once held the same meaning as *tékmar*, meaning a sign, indication, or guide-mark.[145] From such a "limit" readers should heed the *per-* and read 'permeability' and 'porosity', Schürmann suggests.[146] It was the Romans, Schürmann continues, who conceived of the limits of their empire in *līmes* (a 'boundary' or 'limit'), as that which defined, limited, and closed-in, for whom thinking thought was also 'no longer a receiving, hence, and opening of oneself' but rather a 'closing in'.[147] For the Greeks, borders and boundaries are places of discovery and exchange. Akin to Hölderlin's "between", the border facilitates a

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[137] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 86 - 87.
[138] Heidegger, *Early Greek Thinking*. pp. 97 - 98.
[139] Schelling, in: Naomi Fisher, "The Philosophical Significance of Schelling's Plato Notebooks (1792-1794)", in: *Kabiri: The Official Journal of the North American Schelling Society*, Vol. 3, pp. 46 - 57, 2021. pp. 51 - 52.
[140] Parmenides. 8.37.
[141] Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, trans. Janet Lloyd, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991. p. 287.
[142] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 87.
[143] Leonardo Tarán, *Parmenides: A Text with Translation, Commentary, and Critical Essays*, New Jersey: Princetown University Press, 1965. p. 151. In *Phaedo* (108e-109a, 110b 5ff) and *Timaeus* (40b-c and 62 dff) Plato suggest that the notion of a spherical earth was first established in Parmenides time, the origin of this discovery is often attributed to Pythagoras.
[144] Detienne and Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*. pp. 287 - 288. Additionally: 'The root from which the noun *pêras* is derived also yields verbs such as *perao*, 'to pass across,' *peior*, 'to pierce,' 'to walk along a path from one end to the other,' *peraino*, 'to bring to term,' *peraioo*, 'to translate,' 'to traverse.' It also yields the adverb *péra*, 'beyond''. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 641, n. 63.
[145] Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020. pp. 26 - 27 (I: 1357b 9.).
[146] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 88.
[147] Ibid.

necessary disjuncture, while holding-together disjunctive elements. Similarly, Hölderlin's emphasis on the tragic experience of 'the foreign' which can be assimilated with one's own experience and yet synechically held as exterior so as not to destroy it, correlates with Péras.[148] Such permeability allows contraries to pass over into, belong, and hold-together with one another without destroying themselves.[149] Thus, Péras defines Parmenides' "truth": it has no contrary, only a permeability that allows contraries to flow from each to the other endlessly without resolve.

Each of these figures hold truth (*alétheia*) within a *synechia* of being. Synechic holding is 'the law of mutual belonging-together of contraries without a genus'.[150] This law is represented by Ananké: 'force' or 'necessity'.[151] *Ananké* comes from the verb *agchô*, to hold-together.[152] Again, Schürmann precludes the instinct to read *ananké* as the intertwining or interlocking of the differing phenomena that make up nature.[153] Rather, Ananké holds-together contraries. C. M. Bowra describes Ananké as part of a movement in Greek thought towards an 'ultimate order' which encloses both gods and mortals.[154] Against necessity, Simonides instructs, 'not even the gods make war'.[155] Therefore, Ananké is most often associated with Moira.[156] Moira and Ananké constitute the forces of constraint; while Moira indicates the law of human affairs, Ananké guides the rule of the heavens. 'You shall know the nature of the heavens' instructs Parmenides' Goddess, 'and how Necessity brought and constrained it to hold the limits of the stars'.[157] The rule of necessity, therefore, is 'a blind rule because it is indifferent to reason'.[158] Each time Parmenides speaks of necessity, Schürmann concludes, 'it exercises constraint on the limit', that is, Péras.[159] Ananké, then, is the determination of *peiras*: a beings interchangeability, its

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[148] Hölderlin's theory of the foreign recurs throughout his theory of tragedy. Consult: Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1992. pp. 157 - 174.

[149] The Greeks had 'just one word to speak of both the foreigner and the guest whom one receives'. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 88.

[150] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 88.

[151] Robert Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, 2 vols., Leiden: Brill, 2010. I: 97.

[152] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, p. 88

[153] Ibid.

[154] C. M. Bowra, *The Greek Experience*, Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1957. p. 61.

[155] Simonides in: Plato, *Laches. Protagoras. Meno. Euthydemus*, trans. W. R. M. Lamb, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924. pp. 204 - 205 (*Protagoras*, 345d.).

[156] cf. Plato, *Republic*. 617 c. Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*. 510 ff.

[157] Parmenides. 10 and 10.6.

[158] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 88.

[159] Ibid.

conjunction, and its mutual holding to the other. Ananké holds the 'law of a law', or the law *without* law.[160]

Each of these forces, then, intervene in the service of truth. On behalf of Alétheia (truth) they "hold" ("bear"), "posit" ("thesis"), "share" ("apportion"), "change" ("limit"), and "clutch" ("necessity"). This holding-together, the essence of Parmenides' *synechia* of truth, bears the unequal measure of conflicting structures of meaning, as Schürmann summarises:

> "Holding together" joins contrary beings that it preserves as contraries; a thesis
> puts them in place as present or absent; "apportioning" imparts being to them in
> these opposed places; limit opens the passageway between the present and the
> absent; and necessity, which in beings becomes need, assures *the power* of being
> over against given beings, that is, over against the preeponderant *forces*.[161]

In the words of Parmenides, these truth-telling and truth-holding structures bear names, yet their function is expressed in verbs. Moreover, these verbs bring forth the verb itself which is unconcealment (*alethéia*, truth). Havelock suggests that such a process 'marks the beginning of the internalization of a moral conception hitherto viewed from a purely external and social point of view'.[162] However, such names also recall Ernst Cassirer's suggestion that 'the essence of each mythical figure could be directly learned from its name'.[163] The protagonists of Parmenides' poem are neither Homeric subjects nor Socratic dialecticians. Truth is broken up into something like a *synechia* of different strategies of unveiling and of concealing. Indeed, what is necessary for Parmenides, Schürmann concludes, is the process by which 'the set of traits in being that emphasise difference, givenness, the coming and approach, the permeability of the present to the absent' can be represented, the practice in which they can be shown, told, and held.[164] Such difference manifests how, to return to Hölderlin's phrase, truth is always "differentiated in itself". Through these agents, then, Parmenides illustrates the traits, prior to the transformation of the

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[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid. p. 94.
[162] Havelock, ""Dikaiosune"". p. 51.
[163] Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, trans. Susanne K. Langer, New York: Dover Publications, 1953. p. 3.
[164] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 88 - 89.

essence of *alethéia*, that go together to render truth - made up and held-together in something like a 'texture of events' and made legible in the process of a *synechia* of language.[165]

With this texture one might think of Parmenides' truth as a ceremonial act. The *Kouros* is inducted "into" truth by a goddess in a ritual. The Greek word for a rite, Harrison instructs, is *dromenon*, 'a thing done'.[166] Truth becomes the "thing done" to the *Kouros*. F. M. Cornford highlights how the '"truth" which the *mythos* holds can only be learnt by being experienced'.[167] Truth is performed. It is made manifest. The performative privation of *lethe* is a positive *act*. In order to arrive at what one is not, one must go through the way in which one is not. However, in telling this story Parmenides also introduces a new and different element. The ritual of truth is not only performed, or undergone, but it is also "watched" from a distance. Therefore, while Nietzsche recalls how, in its earliest incarnations, Greek art 'ran without spectators because all participated it in', Parmenides directly addresses an audience which is synechically both present and absent.[168] The instruction would then be clear: to better understand or contemplate truth mortals must also "step outside" the dance of life.[169] Such a distinction also illustrates how the Greek word for theatrical representation, *drama*, is a cousin of *dromenon*, and the word theory shares its root, *theasthai*, with theatre.[170] Recalling, also, the ancient linkage between theory and the *theoroi*, "official" state representatives sent to attend sacred sites and religious festivals, it is even possible to imagine Parmenides' *Kouros* as a pilgrim on the path of truth.[171] Following Schürmann, one might to envisage the *Kouros* as something like an ambassador to a foreign matriarchal court (with its own "official" ministers) attendant to the Goddess Alethéia.[172] Parmenides' poem, then, synechically preserves the manner in which the Greek linguistic instinct

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[165] Ibid.
[166] Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*. p. 26.
[167] F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation*, New York: Harper, 1957. p. 198.
[168] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Introduction aux leçons sur l'Œ'dipe-Roi de Sophocle et introduction aux études de philologie classique*, trans. Françoise Destur and Michel Haar, Paris: Encre marine, 1994. p. 35. Following trans. in: Gorelick, "Songs of the Last Philosopher". p. 216.
[169] As articulated in: Plotinus. *Ennead III*, trans. A. H. Armstrong, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967. (3.8.)
[170] cf. Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*. p. 545. *Theasthai*, to observe, or contemplate. The use of "theory" itself is not found until after Aristotle.
[171] On the *theoroi*, consult: Matthew Dillion, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*, London: Routledge, 1997. pp. 11-18.
[172] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 84. ('At the centre of these is the goddess who guides everything'. Parmenides.12.3.)

maintained an indigenous link between the annunciation of truth and ritual.[173] Particular and periodic rituals are transposed into singular artworks which then live and speak "eternal truths", so that, as Hölderlin writes in an essay on "antiquity", 'in the *primordial foundation of all works and acts of man we feel* ourselves to *be equal and at one with all*, *be they large or small*, yet in a particular direction'.[174] Are philosophy and art born in the same leap out of the ritual dance of life?

Is the birth of synechic truth the birth of the spectator? Is the truth bestowed in Parmenides' *synechia* brought forth as the conjunctural presencing of both appearance and idea?[175] Indeed, 'without *per*ception there is no *con*ception', as Harrison writes of the pre-philosophical Greeks.[176] In Parmenides' work, perception and perceiving require for their own possibility a free and open dimension within which they may encounter, without overwhelming, the other. Schürmann argues that, for Parmenides, a synechic 'undertow' runs through all thinking and being, 'an undertow drawing back toward receptivity in spontaneity, and toward the absence in presence'.[177] As Paul Deussen has highlighted, Parmenides' *synechia* offers *truth as freedom* unveiled through presence and subsequently coalesced in both thought and action.[178] For Heidegger, this receptivity represents a 'primordial and genuine truth' which operates through 'pure intuition'.[179] Whether such intuition can rightly be labelled "genuine" brings to the fore the operations of *synechia* between the active and passive registers of *doxa* and *alétheia*. Upon of path of *doxa*; 'the mind is spontaneous and receptive in the midst of beings that one knows how to name because one is accustomed to seeing and receiving them', while 'along the way of *alétheia*, it is receptive and spontaneous in following the gift and the refusal of being'.[180] As Cornford illustrates, Parmenides maintains a synechic fidelity to truth which is not solely

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[173] Truth is espoused as a 'discourse pronounced by men who spoke as a right, according to ritual'. Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language", in: *The Archeology of Knowledge*, New York: Pantheon, 1972. p. 218.
[174] Hölderlin, "*Der Gesichtspunct aus dem wir das Altertum anzusehen haben.*", in: *SW*. II: 62-64. Hölderlin, "The Perspective from which We Have to Look at Antiquity", in: *ELT*. pp. 39 - 40.
[175] Perhaps akin to Kant's appraisal: 'Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind'. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. (A51 / B76.).
[176] Harrison, *Ancient Art and Ritual*. p. 71.
[177] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 79 - 80.
[178] Paul Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte Der Philosophie: Mit Besonderer Berücksichtigung Der Religionen*, Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1915. Deussen quoted with further commentary in: F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*. pp. 1 - 4.
[179] Heidegger, *Being and Time*. p. 165.
[180] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 78.

'deduced from observation of the world and its natural processes alone' as Aristotle would later claim.[181] Parmenides' truth resists the predilection for highlighting ocularity, above all else, as the device in service of measuring presencing among the Greeks (or, as Bruno Snell calls them *Augenmenschen*, "eye-people").[182] Can one, then, really talk of the "detached spectator"?

Indeed, as one commentator has noted, what is observed upon crossing the threshold of truth is … nothing.[183] There is no vision, only the voice of the Goddess who instructs: 'Come, I will tell you'.[184] Ordinary dealings with the world are described as 'as deaf as they are blind' and 'sightless'.[185] The eye and ear are vagrant.[186] How, then, can "presencing" be left "open" for truth to be experienced? As it represents the *synechia* of the conflicting present and the absent of presencing, Parmenides' thought reveals why human "naming" (speech) is necessary for truth: it is that which through *synechia* ties agonistically the shifting present with the absent. Language colours the representations which take hold of the senses. The *Kouros* is required to hear the account of the Goddess and recount it in speech. These accounts are unveiled in a unifying structure of a universal *logos* which speaks and holds singulars. In the beginning is the word which synechically holds this "between" in a free commune with a choir that cannot die. A *synechia* of language reiterates the only misleading apprehension which Parmenides teaches as erring from truth - that opposites exclude one and the other. Those who fail to recognise this are "two-headed" (*dikranoi*), they follow the coming and going of sensory representations as isolated phenomena.[187] The only path of truth is that which integrates concealing into unconcealing. Indeed, mortals trust in the "famous *doxic* burst" and thus in the appearance of the present. However, the aletheological perspective does not confuse this appearing with the false. It only

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[181] cf. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*. p. 43.
[182] Bruno Snell, *Die Ausdrücke für den Begriff des Wissens in der vorplatonischen Philosophie*, Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1924. p. 69. Following: Jussi Backman, "Towards a Genealogy of the Metaphysics of Sight: Seeing, Hearing, and Thinking in Heraclitus and Parmenides", in: *Phenomenology and the Metaphysics of Sight*, ed. Antonio Cimino and Pavlos Kontos, Leiden: Brill, 2015. pp. 11 - 34.
[183] Andrea Wilson Nightingale, *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy:* Theoria *in its Cultural Context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. p. 33. 'There is no "vision" of truth in this or other philosophical texts of the early period', Wilson concludes.
[184] Parmenides. 2.
[185] Parmenides. 6.7 and 7.3-5. In the second century, Sextus Empiricus advanced an allegorical account in which Parmenides presents a complete departure from sensory evidence altogether. Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Grammarians (Adversus Mathematicos I)*, trans. D. L. Blank, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. 7.112-113.
[186] Thus the English word "mystic" develops from *myein*, meaning to close one's eyes or mouth.
[187] Parmenides. 6.5.

joins to it the absent that does not appear, 'between contraries unity is not only thinkable, but it is given'.[188]

Phenomenal givenness is expressed in synechic speech which brings to presence *alethéia* itself. The work of the hidden is not hidden, it is shown in what is shown in its not being shown: 'everything is full equally of Light and invisible night, as both are equal'.[189] Truth presences, neither as verification nor projection, but by dispensing itself to a language which corresponds to it by "naming" itself in synechic constellations. Parmenides' aletheological speech represents 'the gift of second sight: an omniscience, like memory, encompassing the past, present, and future', as Detienne writes.[190] Language forms a syncretic *kosmos* in which all phenomena are connected and the poetic act opens-up the realm of truth. This unconcealing realm of truth unifies mortals who, following the presencing of what is present, are also united with the word of the Goddess in which they overcome the hiddenness of what is hidden. To this extent, for Heidegger, 'language is the supreme event of human existence', it offers the naming and name of the gods who in turn gift to mortals a syncretic 'world becoming word' which we ourselves are.[191] Unlike Calasso, who elegantly but incorrectly suggests that 'with the alphabet, the Greeks would teach themselves to experience the gods in the silence of the mind', Parmenides' *synechia*, rather, makes immortals appear and, in the divergent languages of philosophy and poetry, holds them together with mortals for, to return to the lines from Hölderlin's *Celebration of Peace*, 'we have been a discourse and have heard from one another'.[192]

*Fighting Talk: Tragic Truth and the Birth of Dialectics*

As with Athena, synechic truth is thus born springing suddenly and fully fledged from the head of its progenitor. Yet it is not immortal. The telling of truth does not remain unchanged. The previous section highlighted how, in the thought of Parmenides, the technique of the *synechia* is instigated to hold the "between" of divergent registers: absolute and singular. In the following

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[188] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 62.
[189] Parmenides. 9.1-3.
[190] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 65.
[191] Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry". p. 58.
[192] Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and* Harmony. p. 390. Hölderlin, "*Friedensfeier*". I: 361-367. Hölderlin, "Celebration of Peace", in: *SP*. pp. 208 - 217.

section, this study will explore the transition whereby Parmenides' *synechia* undergoes a transformative displacement at the hands of a newly emergent philosophical procedure. To recap, in the thought of Parmenides, truth-telling is situated upon a synechic threshold whereby, as if Janus-faced, it is able to represent something of what had been and what would eventually become of the hegemonic criterion of truth. From such a vantage, Parmenides' thought holds and gazes backward towards the *mythos*, stretching back across an unimaginable touch of time; while, desiring to look ahead, Parmenides' perhaps resembles, above all, the Egyptian youths of Sais who venture to unveil the statue of Isis bearing the inscription: 'I am all that has been and is and shall be; no mortal has ever lifted my garment'.[193] At the unveiling on this new horizon, then, a new world of truth becomes possible and actual, taking its bearing from the Apollonian god of Delphi, who in a reverse fashion impels mortals to pursue truth with the commandment to "know thyself". Nonetheless, this new direction is a hard course to follow for, as Heraclitus instructs, it 'neither conceals, nor reveals, but indicates'.[194] Truth is no longer "revealed" in a synechic unveiling, but is "indicated".

In mythological thought, truth is not found or told solely though the observation and contemplation of what is naturally given, or by learning from other men, but in revelation. God alone speaks. Mortals listen and transcribe. The mythic perception and annunciation of truth is thus inherently monologic. The monologue preserves the mutual dependence between truth and the gods who first illuminate a dark world of mutabilities. Transfiguration in the conceptual understanding of truth, then, can only be born out of an act of sacrilege against the imperishable *word* of the old gods. Once humans become the arbiters of the true, truth itself must develop in order to colour and speak to the unanimity of changeable mortals. Nietzsche, for instance, records the social and cultural changes which impress upon the need for such development towards the end of the fifth century, characterised by 'the rise of a new *intellectual* attitude towards the traditional, stable bases of Greek life, above all, its instinctive religious basis'.[195] Thus, the burgeoning philosophical enterprise, grappling with a context which no longer seems congenial

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[193] Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, trans. John Gwyn Griffiths, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1970. p. 131.
[194] Heraclitus in: Plutarch, *Moralia: Volume V*, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936. pp. 314 - 315 (404d.).
[195] M. S. Silk and J. P. Stern, *Nietzsche on Tragedy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. pp. 36 - 37.

to former tradition, must at some point turn over the state of things (where it could otherwise only repeat what it has heard, learn what has already been learned, or reenact what has already been played out). To radically challenge and change the nature of truth humans attempt to prove themselves, in one way or another, of being up to the task of "knowing", knowing themselves and for themselves ... *to know, thyself.*

The injunction "to know" is a drive for individuation.[196] Where once the stable base of the mythic experience represented the collapse of individuation in a collective and universal expression of truth, a burgeoning individuation disrupts what Hölderlin calls the capacity 'to be one with all that lives'.[197] In the mythic experience, it has been argued that humans intuit a spontaneous connection between themselves and the world, as Nietzsche summarises:

> the instinctive externalises itself in an immediate way… forgetting of individuality; allied with the ascetic exteriorisation of self in pain and terror. Nature in its supreme force thus reunites the separated beings and makes them feel as *one*: so that the principle of individuation appears, so to speak, as a persistent state of weakness of nature.[198]

There is no space, in Nietzsche's commentary, for "individuals". All things are one, 'infinite factors, over-ruling and swamping all others', as Gilbert Murray writes, or as lyrically expressed in Hölderlin's *Hyperion*: 'There is an oblivion of all existence, a silencing of all individual being, in which it seems we have found all things'.[199] So, the drive for individuation is also stimulated by a clash between worlds: between the world of the gods and the word of reasoning mortals. The instinct of this disjuncture also runs through the ethical foundation of the Greek tragedy. The 'tragic turning point occurs when a gap develops at the heart of the social experience', Vernant and Vidal-Naquet argue.[200] A split, Nietzsche writes, animated by the awareness of 'the enormous dangers and temptations of increasing secularisation' which drives a wedge (rather than a

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[196] 'The life [of reason] is nothing but the faculty of desire in its minimal exercise', Kant, see: Shürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 12.

[197] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [II]".

[198] Nietzsche, *Introduction aux leçons sur lŒ'dipe-Roi de Sophocle et introduction aux études de philologie classique*. pp. 34 - 35. cf. Gorelick, *Songs of the Last Philosopher*. p. 215.

[199] Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Greek Religion*. p. 20. Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [IX]".

[200] 'This gap is wide enough for the oppositions between legal and political thought on the one hand… Yet it is narrow enough for the conflict in values to be a painful one and for the clash to continue'. Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*. pp. 32 - 33.

synechic holding) between the aletheological (mythic) and logocentric (scientific) pursuits of truth. [201] It is this wedge, as Hölderlin writes, which hereafter underscores the singular changeableness which characterises the pursuit of human reason, as a 1798 letter highlights:

> I have been reading in your Diogenes Laertius. I've also experienced there something that I've encountered before, namely, the fact that the transiency and mutability of human thoughts and systems strike me as well-nigh more tragic than the destinies one usually calls the only real destinies. [202]

The pursuit of secularised truth is the process by which ultimately, Detienne concludes, '*Alétheia* came to be devalued', and, by extension, the *synechia* which holds both positions reaches, in the tragedy, the height of artistic expression before itself becoming eclipsed. [203]

In other words, the tragic experience arose out of a recognition of a crisis at the heart of the hitherto mythical, or aletheological, understanding of the world. For Hölderlin, tragic thinking represents the apex of this conflict and therefore, necessarily, also the synechic experience par excellence: tragedy, as one Hölderlin commentator writes, 'presents us simultaneously with the speculative unity of life and the caesura of the speculative'. [204] Tragic truth identifies and illustrates the altered consciousness arising at the heart of any human endeavour to "progress" beyond the law of the gods as a violation of existence. Moreover, the tragedy identifies how and why mortals must suffer for their attempts at individuation precisely because such acts transgress the unifying ethical law of the old gods; as inscribed, for instance, in Parmenides' *hen* (one), wherein one cannot hope to move beyond the agonistic disjuncture at the heart of "the one" because such a move betrays the contradiction inscribed within the conceptual make-up of the world. In such a fashion, as Hölderlin's writings illustrate, the tragic disposition is inscribed within the pursuit of truth itself. The tragedy does not merely illustrate 'the source and primal cause of all suffering, as something inherently to be rejected', as Nietzsche reads it. [205] Rather, the tragic

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[201] Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. p. 33.

[202] Hölderlin writing to Isaac von Sinclair on Christmas Eve of 1798, in: Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 721-723. Hölderlin, *EL*. pp. 116 - 118.

[203] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 107. Only *alétheia* 'by virtue of its agonic manner of being, makes "tragedy" possible and necessary'. Heidegger quoted in: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. vii.

[204] Schmidt, *On Germans and Other Greeks*. p. 123.

[205] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, trans. Ronald Speirs, ed. Raymond Guess and Ronald Speirs, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. p. 52.

condition represents and holds the unending conflict between the hegemony of the universal and the violent undertow of a singular mortality which withdraws itself from submission to absolute representation. Thus, in Hölderlin's reading, the same mental gesture which might seek to resolve all such contradictions, by virtue of such a seeking, merely foregrounds their insurmountability: in the tragedy such separation is held-together and even celebrated in a language which is itself the cause of separation. In an essay on the tragic, Hölderlin conjectures that, at the 'unity of the parts, wherein their wholeness is felt' the tragic 'transgresses the limits *of the latter* and becomes suffering and decisive separation and singularisation as absolute *as possible*, then the *whole* feels itself *in these parts*'.[206] The tragic experience, therefore, undermines the process of individuation to the point whereby the conflictual character of synechic truth becomes intensified in the figure of the tragic hero to such an intensity that both registers, absolute and singular, are made palpable and held-together in this representation. In his reading of tragedy, Schürmann appears to reiterate Hölderlin's position, suggesting that tragic suffering 'makes non-meaning penetrate into the universal meaning', making possible a *synechia* which holds and makes thinkable the paradoxical 'double prescription' which represents mortals' fate.[207]

To encounter Hölderlin's theory of tragic truth (a reading this study will undertake in the following chapters) it will be first necessary to underscore the conditions wherein the synechic technique is displaced and foregone in a dialectical thinking which transposes the fracture of tragic insight into a horizontal continuum of counterbalanced theses and antitheses. The beginning of the tragedy, as the thesis first identified in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* illustrates, is as metaphysical is as it is sociopolitical.[208] In attempting to move "beyond" the unifying structure of the monoist law of the gods, the underlying reality of unyielding contradictions and excesses are highlighted, becoming, in Nietzsche's reading, the curse of impotent individuals who yearn for the restoration of a former unity. Nietzsche has it that only in a rebirth of the repressed 'Dionysiac' religious experience in art can the unifying structure of the *mythos* be recaptured through the:

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[206] Hölderlin, "*Das lyrische dem Schein nach idealische Gedicht*", in: *SW*. II: 102-109. Hölderlin, "On the Difference of Poetic Modes", in: *ELT*, pp. 83 - 88. Trans. following: Fóti, *Epochal Discordance*. p. 41.
[207] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 622. Trans. modified, following: Fóti, *Epochal Discordance*. p. 7.
[208] Nietzsche's argument is expressed in section 10 of *The Birth of Tragedy*.

recognition that everything which exists is a unity; the view that individuation is the primal source of all evil; and art as the joyous hope that the spell of individuation can be broken, a premonition of unity restored.[209]

A picture is drawn wherein the Greek tragedy attests to the pain of calling things by a name and by so doing distorting and dividing them without a unifying principle.[210] However, as Schürmann highlights, the ability to 'make tragic knowing one's own' also offers a window into how a form of knowledge, represented in a heightened encounter with synechic truth, also becomes possible in this movement.[211] Separation makes the existence of mortals distinct from immortals, as Parmenides illustrates; however, it is also the condition which makes possible a union of both through a mutual recognition of their codependent, yet perpetually hostile and alien, separation … in truth. To reach such an end, mortals engage in a new form of tragic synechic communication, and yet this synechic experience is itself not an end.

The work of Gerald Else has demonstrated, rather conclusively, how open the question of the "true" beginning of the Greek tragedy remains, yet it can be conjectured with confidence, as it has been since Aristotle's *Poetics*, that the decisive element in its formulation was the addition, by Aeschylus, of individuals (or, actors) who begin to dominate the choral lyric performance and thus bring to the fore dialogic (human) speech.[212] Such a movement is perhaps, as James Fraser puts it, part of 'a long attempt to reconcile old custom with new reason', nonetheless it also points toward the necessity of a new tragic knowledge, first theorised by Parmenides, and how such a knowledge also paves the way for its own tragic obfuscation.[213] Following the impetus of Nietzsche's forceful and idiosyncratic accounts, scholars have been keen to develop an understanding of the secularisation of tragic thought along only conceptual and philosophical tracks.[214] However, the work of Brian Vickers, Louis Gernet, Vidal-Naquet, and Vernant, has also asserted the influence of new sociopolitical institutions as decisive factors

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[209] Nietzsche, *The Birth of* Tragedy. pp. 52 - 53.

[210] The work of Max Müller highlights the ameliorative effect of mythology in resolving discrepancies in language. F. Max Müller, "On the Philosophy of Mythology", in: *Introduction to the Science of Religion: Four Lectures Delivered at the Royal Institute with Two Essays on False Analogies and The Philosophy of Mythology*, London: Green and Co., 1873. pp. 335 - 403

[211] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 622. Translation modified, following: Fóti, *Epochal Discordance*. p. 7.

[212] Gerald F. Else, *The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy*, New York: Norton, 1972. pp. 1 - 8.

[213] James Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, New York: Macmillan, 1990. p. 477.

[214] cf. Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy*.

in developing new thought structures.[215] Simultaneously following these two paths along parallel lines, Detienne proposes a provocative reading of the nature of changing thought processes.[216] This account identifies, first of all, the social class who were singularly capable of cultivating dialogic speech for enunciating truth - the warrior class, who had enjoyed a unique status in Greek cultural life from as early as the Mycenaean period. Detienne begins by identifying the practical opposition of two speech forces: 'Magicoreligious speech was efficacious, atemporal, and indissociable from symbolic behaviour and meaning', while the dialogue, in contrast, 'was secular, complemented action, operated within a temporal context, and possessed a unique autonomy'.[217] Unlike the monologic mythos which synechically held between mortals and a world of nonhuman forces, dialogic speech was directly connected with human affairs - it 'preceded human action and was an indispensable compliment to it'.[218] The power of dialogic speech rendered it sympathetic for the unique composition and function of the warrior class within social and mental structures, allowing it to open up a distinct representational field for structures of truth which did not hold-together but instead subdued and then overcame one practice with another.[219]

This field itself contained a precise and significant structure facilitated by the *meson* (middle) - a circular and centred space within which each individual stands in a reciprocal relation to everyone else. This *meson*, Detienne proposes, initially fulfils two functions: it is the most visible site for the assembly, and the most accessible space reserved for the finest loot, illustrating how 'the middle may be equated with whatever is held in common'.[220] Thus, these representations of spatial determination becomes synonymous with two complimentary ideas, of publicity and community, whilst also eschewing the possibility of any transcendental locale. The *meson* 'was the common point for all those gathered in a circle around' and words spoken from this spot

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[215] Perhaps with recourse to Benjamin, who critiqued Nietzsche's metaphysical appraisal as a 'purely aesthetic creation'. In: Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne, London: Verso Books, 2003. pp. 104 - 110.
[216] cf. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. pp. 89 - 106.
[217] Ibid. p. 89.
[218] Ibid. p. 99.
[219] Such functions include; coinciding with neither family nor territorial groups, division into age groups and fraternities, bondage by contractual rather than blood or kin relations, preparation for death, and indulgence in unique institutional practices (initiatory trials, funerary games, distribution of booty, deliberative assemblies).
[220] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 92.

'contained matters of common interest'.[221] In this context, annunciating truth was not only the preserve of an exceptional individual possessed of unique religious insight, but a common right: 'a *koinon* set down "in the middle"', wherein each listener found himself in a 'position of equality and reciprocity vis-à-vis the speaker' and all speech is levelled as if to exist solely upon the same theoretical terrain.[222]

With the development of the new Greek *polis* and its incorporation of citizen-soldiers into institutions, this circular and symmetrical social space, Detienne concludes, was absorbed by the intellectual and institutional organisations of the city itself. The 'distinguishing feature' of the new city-state, Vernant writes, 'is precisely that it appears to be organised around a central point'.[223] Such centrality found its political expression in the social space of the city centred on the *agora* and the ideal of *isonomia*. Thus, by the fourth century, Herodotus writes that to consider the correct course of action is to 'set the matter down in the middle' (*es meson protithenai* or *katatithenai* or *tithenai to prēgma*), to express one's opinion publicly is to 'take one's opinion to the middle' (*pherein gnōmēn es meson*) or 'speak in the middle' (*legein es meson*), and to become a private citizen again after public oration was to 'withdraw from the middle' (*ek mesou katēmonos*).[224] In his commentary on the development of the *dithyramb*, Pindar notes that: 'formerly the dithyramb was stretched out like a rope… Now new gates are open for circular choirs'.[225] Thus, the rope of the *dithyramb* "holds", but only as a circular space which encloses itself in a self-imposed unity. From this moment on, then, dialogue, with its constant interplay and mediation of social and mental phenomena, became the speech form through which truth was annunciated. While in synechic knowledge, as Hölderlin articulates, all mortals 'unite in wrath' through an 'ever-contending… speech against speech' mediated by the divine, dialogic speech also developed the vital components for the construction of a collaborative system of rational thought which broke divisively with mythic structures of meaning, expressing instead homogeneity, centrality, and equality of expression, united through the imposition of an

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[221] Ibid. p. 97.
[222] Ibid. p. 99.
[223] Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*. p. 213.
[224] Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*. 7.8; 1.207; 3.80. 4.97; 3.83. 4.118; 8.21;8.73; 3.83. Following: Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic* Greece. p. 102.
[225] Pindar, *Dithyramb*. 2. See: Armand D'Angour, "How the Dithyramb Got Its Shape", in: *The Classical Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No. 2, pp. 331 - 351, 1997. p. 331.

overwhelming *archē*-force epitomised by the figure of the solider over-above that of the poet of priest.[226]

With such distinctions, it is possible to consider how the interventions of a former soldier (Socrates) and a former tragedian (Plato) combine to articulate, consciously and systematically, a new "philosophical" method, or 'theatre of truth', centred on the dialogue, or dialectic, and how a tragic *synechia* of language loses its facility.[227] Such a theatre introduces 'a new path toward the truth' pursued solely in dialogic speech.[228] The words of Socrates and Plato guide apprentices, in a manner akin to Parmenides' Goddess, upon such a path. However, as R. L. Nettleship conjectures, these words no longer desire to paint an image of the human condition and the fragility of tragic truth alone, but are also 'intensely anxious to reform and revolutionise it'.[229] Such a pursuit crystallises around the search for a common genus which could, as the previous chapter illustrated, tame the bifold allegiances of the word *archē* under a universal and unimpeachable law. So, where does this journey go?

'Where is it you're going and where have you come from?' Thus begins Socrates in the opening lines of *Phaedrus*.[230] A distinction is drawn, coming and going, inside and outside of the city walls. It is an important distinction, for when Plato later has Socrates inform the reader that only city dwellers can teach him, he is articulating the burgeoning dialectical way of truth.[231] In the city, man is forced to confront one another in new and striking ways. Thus, a divergence from pre-Socratic thinkers such as Heraclitus, who 'wandered on the mountains, and there he continued to live', is foregrounded.[232] Indeed, Hölderlin will embrace this disjuncture in his meditations on Heraclitus' contemporary, Empedocles, who lives (and thinks) 'as a solitary man attending to his gardens'.[233] This division is further enforced in Plato's analogy that those who are not suitably

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[226] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.

[227] Jacques Taminiaux, *Le Théâtre des philosophes: La tragédie, l' être, l' action*, Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1995. pp. 24 - 33.

[228] Gadamer, *The Beginning of Philosophy*. p. 94.

[229] R. L. Nettleship, *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*, London: Macmillan, 1955. p. 6.

[230] Plato, *Lysis. Symposium. Phaedrus*. pp. 344 - 345 (*Phaedrus*, 227a.).

[231] Ibid. 230d.

[232] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers: Books 6-10*, trans. R. D. Hicks, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925. pp. 410 - 411 (9. 3.).

[233] Hölderlin, "*Die tragische Ode ...*", in: *SW*. I: 865-881. Hölderlin, "The Ground for "Empedocles"", in: *ELT*. pp. 49 - 61.

initiated in the philosophical life are as if dwelling in a cave.[234] Urban dwellers confront, converse, and attempt to correct that which does not accord with their understanding. Thus, truth is transformed, like the city, into living thing developed by an ever-expanding web of contact and interpenetration between living minds. Truth evolves in a gradual process which develops, step-by-step, through a discussion between people ('not to judge any cause before having heard both speeches').[235] In Plato's city, Alexandre Kojevè argues, truth *only* occurs dialectically, 'where there has been discussion or dialogue—that is, antithesis *negating* a thesis'.[236] Aristotle subsequently endorses this new theoretical process 'which we all share, of relating an inquiry not to the subject-matter itself, but to our opponent in argument'.[237] In Platonic dialogue, Nettleship argues, 'two or more minds are represented as combining in the search for truth, and the truth is elicited by the contact of view with view' which occurs as a natural extension of the expanding network of obligations that envelops the newly secularised urban dweller.[238]

Dialectical truth develops in the interpenetration of diverse and contrary human opinions. No higher authority is required, and mortals alone carry the authority to name and situate an origin which guides thought. Later in the same dialogue, Socrates repudiates the 'divine madness' of the unphilosophical.[239] Perhaps rightly so, for the secular truth-seeker now has a "madness" of his own: Phaedrus' reason can 'charm' and 'enchant' Socrates, who declares himself as frenzied as a Bacchant, or as if possessed by local deities.[240] The episode would give credence to what Benjamin cited as 'the mania of Plato'.[241] Or, a new urban-secular phenomenon described by another commentator as a form of 'philosophic madness'.[242] The reader may, however, also note Robin Waterfield's assessment that Plato is carefully highlighting the drawing of mental

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[234] Plato, *The Republic: Books 6-10*. pp. 106 - 203 (VII.). Following Stanley Rosen: 'The residents of the cave are bound in a ghostly existence that is in no way analogous to the life of the city'. Stanley Rosen, *Plato's* Republic*: A Study*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005. p. 270.
[235] Plato, *Demodocus*. 382E-383A.
[236] Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. James H. Nichols, Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1980. p. 181.
[237] Aristotle, *On the Heavens*, trans. W. K. C. Guthrie, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939. pp. 226 - 227 (294 B7.).
[238] Nettleship, *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*. p. 9.
[239] Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. Robin Waterfield, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. pp. 25 - 26 (244a-b.).
[240] Ibid. p. 79.
[241] Walter Benjamin, "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism", in: *Selected Writings*. I: 175.
[242] G. E. F. Ferrari, *Listening to the Cicadas: A Study of Plato's* Phaedrus, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. p. 18. Ferrari attributes this to the philosophic life, which betrays a character susceptible to the experience of beauty yet determined to "overcome" unreflective worldly concerns.

boundaries.[243] Just as Parmenides before him attributes the realm of knowledge to the celestial sphere and its deities, Plato ascribes the limits of knowledge to the edges of the city walls. It becomes no coincidence, therefore, that Socrates engages in a departure from his customary rationalism only after 'going for a walk outside the city walls', and that Plato foregrounds this departure right at the outset of the dialogue.[244] It is even possible to glimpse the internal logic of this dialectical process itself in the structure of the new city spaces centred on the *meson*. The "middle" space between two theses is the conceptual space in dialectical thought which allows for a resolution of conflict. The intersubjective nature of this process derives from the spatial aspect of the *meson*, the point in the centre at which oppositions collapse and common belief takes precedence in constructing a conceptual synthesis between two hypotheses. Thus, in Robin Smith's guide to Aristotle's *Topics* (the first systemic treatment of dialectical activity), one finds evidence that such 'systems appear to have been based on the memorisation of a series of images of actual locations'.[245] The derivation of the title *Topics* from *topos* (place or location), also points toward this end. Could this be why Plato's readers are repeatedly informed that Socrates rarely leaves the city?[246] Might Plato's imaginary and idealised construction of the new city, with a philosophical *politeia* (state), represent the ground for a new secular unifying universal principle which explicitly withdraws, in both the mental and geographical, from foreign frontiers and boundaries as sources as the unknown and unknowable?

Yet, as Stanley Rosen stresses, Plato's idealised city can never be realised.[247] For Plato, the idealised city only exists in an idealised speech forever separated from the web of mortal obligations. Thus, as Schürmann claims, there is also an 'essential foreignness, the inner exile, of the philosopher in the city'.[248] Kojève attributes this alienation to the practical implications of the dialectical truth process itself.[249] Because the synthesis, or appraisal, of differing arguments must

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243 Waterfield, in: Plato, *Phaedrus*. pp. 79 - 80.
244 The dialogue opens with Phaedrus: 'I'm on my way for a walk outside the wall'. Plato, *Phaedrus*. 227a.
245 Robin Smith in: Aristotle, *Topics: Books I and VIII with excerpts from related texts*, trans. Robin Smith, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003. p. xxvii.
246 'You're not going out of the city either to the border nor, I think, outside the wall at all'. In: Plato, *Phaedrus*. 230d. Additionally: 'you have never gone away from the city for a festival…'. In: Plato, *Euthyphro. Apology. Crito. Phaedo*, trans. Chris Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017. pp. 252 - 253 (*Crito*, 52b.)
247 Rosen, *Plato's* Republic. p. 82.
248 Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 73.
249 Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 181. Plato repeatedly stresses the necessity of dialogic speech for truth, see: Plato, *Republic*. I. 348 A and B, and 350 D and E.

be audited by a philosopher who finally attains the "truth" of the given matter, the philosopher also represents a gap, previously reserved for the divine, in the ever flowing continuity of *doxic* speech.[250] Whereas, for Parmenides (and later Hölderlin), the synechic process draws together the manner in which 'gods and mortals… hold out their hands to the other' to reach the truth across such a gap, for Plato no such holding is necessary.[251] For Schürmann, it is this process which decisively indicates the distance between Plato's conception of truth from that of *synechia*.[252] For Plato, the everyday run of *doxic* speech which fills the numberless goings-on of city life can never develop beyond mere equivocation. In this way, *doxic* speech 'operates halfway between being and non-being'.[253] Indeed, the *Republic* informs that '*doxa* is set over what is between being and not-being' and 'the inferior realm can be referred to interchangeably as the visible or as the object of *doxa*'.[254] Truth itself, in Plato's conception, must be something outside, or beyond, *doxa*. As Rosen concludes '*logos* itself cannot simply be discursive; if it were, the Ideas would be linguistic entities'.[255] Schürmann distinguishes this divergence with reference to the tripartite structures which make up Platonic and Parmenidean truth:

> Platonic threefold division—absolute non-being, doxic non-being (because it is mixed up with being), and being—therefore should not be confused with Parmenidean threefold division: non-being, representations that are doxic (because they are denominations), and being.[256]

Thus, while the attentive reader of Parmenides may also note a similar disdain for the 'uncritical hordes' who, in straying from the path of the Goddess' revelations, fall wholly under the sway of their *doxic* representations, unlike Plato, the Goddess does not take these divergent positions to be a challenge to truth.[257] How could there be any competition between 'the condition and the conditioned'?[258] Thus, while the Goddess disparages would-be dialecticians who attempt to articulate nothingness in their search for truth, she also encourages the flow of distinctions which

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[250] Following: Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 181.
[251] Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*". I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine". p. 196 - 209.
[252] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 73.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Plato, *The Republic: Books 6-10*. (VI: 478e and 509d with 510a.).
[255] Rosen, *Plato's* Republic. p. 265.
[256] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 73.
[257] Parmenides. 6.7.
[258] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, p. 72

arise upon the various digressions the wandering mind takes upon the path leading to her: 'to err is human; to forgive, divine'.[259]

For Parmenides, aletheological unconcealment and *doxic* denominations arise before being rendered legible in *synechia* which conjoins them, though disparity, with theses. Platonic truths, however, must be "worked out" and synthesised through the mediation of an overarching *archē* concept. Unlike Socrates, who must continually break and start anew, undertaking a 'second voyage' even, in his pursuit of understanding, Parmenides' truth arises along a single track of *doxic* manifestation.[260] Parmenides 'does not discover any new being that would be "over there" (*ekeî*), or other, or more true, or more originary' than "what is".[261] Unlike the spontaneous and instinctive process at hand in Parmenides' *synechia*, nothing in Plato's truth process finds correspondence in the "real" world. The dialectical method is precisely that: a method, and its movement is a movement of human thought alone. This method, then, preserves the etymological relation between a synthesis and the synthetic: it measures the world according to principles which refer exclusively to a fictitious world. Nietzsche argues that this "transcendent" element of dialectical thought represents a yearning for amelioration in the midst of the suffering adhered to in Greek tragedy.[262] Dialectic is born in an attempt to reconcile painful agonal oppositions and, in turn, tragic thinking becomes 'overgrown with *philosophical thought* which forces it to cling tightly to the trunk of dialectics'.[263] After Plato, Nietzsche concludes, art must present a visible connection to knowledge embodied by the spirit of the Socratic maxim: 'Virtue is knowledge; sin is only committed out of ignorance; the virtuous man is a happy man'.[264] Or, as Calasso writes, the 'first enemy of the aesthetic was meaning'.[265]

The success of this dialectical programme leads to a new form existence embodied by 'the archetype of *theoretical man*'.[266] Dialectical truth gives birth to the notion that thought is

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[259] Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*, ed. John Churton Collins, London: Macmillan and Co., 1896. p. 16 (525.).
[260] Plato, *Euthyphro. Apology. Crito. Phaedo*. pp. 454 - 455 (*Phaedo*, 99d.). Frustrated by Anaxagoras' teaching, Socrates embarks on a "second voyage" - a new argumentative method stimulated instead by the theory of Forms. According to ancient interpretation this second voyage (*deuteros plous*) is a reference to the use of propulsion by oars in the absence of fair wind.
[261] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 65.
[262] cf. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. §14-15.
[263] Ibid. p. 70.
[264] Ibid. cf. Plato, *Laches. Protagoras. Meno. Euthydemus*. pp. 226 - 227 (*Protagoras*, 352c.).
[265] Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. p. 241.
[266] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. p. 72 - 73.

capable of penetrating, by virtue of its own endeavour, 'into the deepest abysses of being, and that it is capable, not simply of understanding existence, but even of *correcting* it' and thus protecting 'against the practical ethic of pessimism'.[267] Hereafter, Schürmann writes, 'practical reason receives its architecture from pure reason'.[268] Looming over the inherent pessimism of Greek tragedy stands the theoretical optimist, who responds to the power of error in human affairs—which amount Reinhardt says "to a sort of original sin" of pre-history—with the ambition to liberate knowledge from illusion, to create humans without illusion.[269] While *doxic* speech, for Parmenides and Hölderlin, forms a necessary division between singular beings and immovable truths, Socrates, as Fóti highlights, attempts to participate 'in a higher reality', even engaging in the ultimate betrayal of human discourse though his pursuit of 'the philosophical "practice of dying"'.[270] Socrates, then, is the first being capable of living (or, dying) by the law of scientific rationalism.

Vidal-Naquet and Vernant have illustrated the manner in which the 'historical moment of tragedy in Greece', coincides with the period in which Greek society begins an attempt to catalogue, regulate, and systematise all of the hitherto incompatible notions of legislative assembly, *Diké*.[271] The tragedy is founded as a site of *synechia*, a place where these incompatible tensions, between divine law and the appropriate legislature of a democratic *polis*, hold:

> What tragedy depicts is one *dikē* in conflict with another, a law that is not fixed, shifting and changing into its opposite… It takes as its subject the man actually living out this debate, forced to make a decisive choice, to orient his activity in a universe of ambiguous values where nothing is ever stable or unequivocal.[272]

The figure of Socrates, therefore, appears as one "living out" and transcending this debate, and finding therein a foundation which the Greeks did not previously have - an absolute law, founded upon non-negotiable principles, organised into a coherent system and beyond the reproach of all other principles. In this movement Socrates becomes, Gadamer describes, a new form of

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[267] Ibid.
[268] Schürmann, *On Being and Acting*. p. 3.
[269] Reinhardt, *Parmenides und die Geschichte der griechischen Philosophie*. p. 26.
[270] Fóti, *Epochal Discordance*. pp. 33 - 34.
[271] Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*. pp. 23 - 28.
[272] Ibid. p. 26.

'mythical figure in whom knowledge of the good ultimately coalesces with knowledge of the true'.[273] As in Plato's *Phaedrus*, the Platonic-Socratic consciousness (or, subconsciousness) of the mythic penetrates at such junctures, recalling Hölderlin's theories regarding the uneasy status of beginnings, which must always bear witness to a prior and unaccountable origin: 'whatever dwells / close to its origin is loath to leave the place'.[274]

Although it is possible to conjecture that the initial force of Socrates' influence expunges the synechic relation between the hitherto poetic religio-mythic-aesthetic worldview and truth, Hölderlin's articulation of the nature of historical change also encourages a more sophisticated association between Socrates and Plato's relation to truth, art, and the mythos. To begin, it is possible to find a guide in this terrain by first investigating the curious phenomenon often invoked as the '*daimonion* of Socrates'.[275] Socrates is visited, not infrequently, by a divine voice which manifests to him and provides counsel. There are sharp and varied differences of opinion in scholarship regarding this phenomena; however, that Socrates' revisionary conception of the role of the gods in the function of the intellect is, in a divergence form the tragic worldview, entirely rational and therefore "good" is widely accepted.[276] As Nietzsche highlights, the fact that when Socrates' *daimonion* appears it '*warns* him to *desist*' is noteworthy.[277] In Socrates' case, wisdom 'manifests itself in order to *block* consciousness'.[278] That is, the "daemonic" unrest which otherwise drives mortals into tragic knowledge through ecstasy, immoderation, renunciation and even, at times, self-destruction, is tamed by Socrates' into wholly rational counsellor and guide. Socrates manifests a reversal of the instinctive wisdom of the mystic into logical clarity.[279] The devout application of this mechanism reveals itself a with a sincerity only found previously in the most dominant of irrational forces. With the zeal of the convert, then, Plato embarks, with

[273] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Idea of the Good in Platonic-Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. P. Christopher Smith, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. p. 34.
[274] Hölderlin, "*Die Wanderung*", in: *SW*. I: 336-339. Hölderlin, "The Journey", in: *SP*. pp. 182 - 189.
[275] This *daimonion* is sometimes referred to as Socrates' *sign* and, mistakenly, his *daimon* or *daemon*. In English, the word *daimonion* roughly translates as 'the spiritual' or 'the supernatural'. References can be found in: Plato, *Euthyphro*. 3b. *Apology*. 31c-d and 40a-c. *Phaedrus*. 242b-d. *Republic*. 6.496c. *Theaetetus*. 150e-151a. *Euthyphro*. 3b. *Alcibiades*. I: 105e-106a. *Euthydemus*. 272e-273a. *Theages*. 128d-129e. The phenomenon is also noted by Xenophon, Cicero and Plutarch.
[276] Concise overview can be found in: Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith, "Socrates' Gods and the Daimonion", in: *Reason and Religion in Socratic Philosophy*, ed. Nicholas D. Smith and Paul B. Woodruff, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. pp. 74 - 88.
[277] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. p. 66.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Gregory Vlastos argues that Socrates developed a philosophically moralistic conception of the gods, in: Gregory Vlastos, *Socrates: Ironist and Moral Philosopher*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. pp. 157 - 179.

revolutionary enthusiasm, or 'religious devotion', upon a path to change the nature of *poíēsis* so that creativity must be the handmaiden of the rational, to teach the otherwise unteachable word of the "new divinity" that is rationalism.[280]

Poetry however, for Plato, was up to the task of 'telling the truth', appealing even to 'a host of fools'.[281] For Plato, poets are not, as Hölderlin describes, 'holy vessels' in which 'the wine of life' is 'preserved'.[282] Rather, poetry represents a cult of sophisticated flattery which has 'discovered the *artificial* nature of poetic speech'.[283] That which "truly is" can only be grasped in non-sensuous thought which stands higher than art. Rational truth is the only guarantor of aesthetic legitimacy. In this fashion, Plato dismisses the imaginative inspiration of the poet equating it 'with the gift of soothsaying and interpreting dreams', the poet, he continues, 'is unable to compose poetry until reason no longer dwells in him'.[284] Imagined or not, the 'ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry' is invoked as if to prove art 'three degrees removed from truth'.[285] Plato is wrestling to create at art "beyond" the reality of the empirical world, an art greater than art itself, to 'go beyond reality and to represent the idea underlying that pseudo-reality'.[286] The sensuous for Plato, as Heidegger argues, 'is only ever a restrictive "after-image" of what truly is'.[287] The "truth" of artworks must be wholly rational. Art becomes dialectic by other means. Synechic *poíēsis* becomes redundant - the individual who thought that they could, or should, have the final word would make a poor poet indeed.

In such fashion, however, it is also possible to imagine Plato arriving, just as it is said that the bird migrates for the sake of its return, at the positions from whence he departed. If the experience of the tragedy had evolved, quite naturally, from the mythic and ritual experiences, so too was Platonism a blend of all accessible forms and styles so that it drifts, against its own

[280] Bowra, *Ancient Greek Literature*. p. 169.
[281] Plato, *Lysis. Symposium. Phaedrus*. pp. 148 - 151 (*Symposium*, 194.).
[282] Hölderlin, "Buonaparte", in: *SW*. I: 185. Hölderlin, "Bonaparte", in: *SP*. pp. 4 - 5.
[283] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 108.
[284] Plato's references to poetry in: *Apology*. 22bf. *Ion*. 533e-534d. *Phaedrus*. 244a-245a. Consider also: 'whenever a poet is seated on the Muses' tripod, he is not in his senses… and he knows not which of these contradictory utterances is true'. Plato, *Laws: Books 1-6*, trans. R. G. Bury, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926. (719d). Further commentary in: Gadamer, *Dialogue and* Dialectic. pp. 39 - 72.
[285] Plato, *Republic*. X.
[286] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. pp. 68 - 69.
[287] Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996. p. 24.

impulses, in and out 'of the nature of poetry and of preaching'.[288] Thus, when Nietzsche concludes that 'the Platonic dialogue was the boat on which the older forms of poetry, together with all her children, sought refuge', he also points towards an unresolvable question, as articulated by Simon Sparks, 'of a certain excess, a certain echo of the tragic held in reserve from the very beginning, and so also of a certain echoing of this reserve which philosophy will not have been able to silence'.[289] Is it wholly possible, as Sparks concludes, to exclude tragedy from philosophy without 'passing all too quickly over the trace of the tragic which would lie at its origin?'.[290] Or rather, the tragic trace which lingers upon *all origins*, as such? If Hölderlin's works address the indelible yet uneasy passage between a *synechia* of aesthetic presentation and a philosophical thought which claims to repudiate it, they also hint at the unacknowledged potentialities of a philosophy that itself repudiates its own originary claim to originality. Indeed, in an intriguing passage from the penultimate draft of his *Hyperion*, Hölderlin hints at the possibility of recuperating such a relation from Plato's own thinking: 'Plato, forgive us! You have been gravely wronged!'.[291]

The tragic history of philosophy rests upon the fact that it is itself not free from the tragic. Therefore, while Kojevè claims that in 'becoming a dialectician that the man of myth or opinion becomes a scientist or philosopher', and Benjamin similarly claims this science is born out of 'the war which this rationalism had declared on tragic art', Hölderlin's synechic thinking remains open, as this study shall consider more forcefully in the next chapter, to the possibility of a synechic relation in Plato's (or, philosophical) thinking.[292] It has been suggested that within philosophy there 'resides the perennial temptation of the poetic, either to be made welcome or rejected'.[293] Plato attempts to do both. Occasionally a consciousness of this fact bursts through and threatens to overturn the whole metaphysical structure of the dialectical relation to truth. Perhaps, indeed, Socrates finally succumbs to an imitation of this concealed truth himself while in prison, when frequently told in his dreams to 'cultivate the arts (*mousikē*) and work at them',

[288] Nettleship, *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*. p. 6.
[289] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. pp. 68 - 69. Simon Sparks, "Fatalities: Freedom and the Question of Language in Walter Benjamin's Reading of Tragedy", in: *Philosophy and Tragedy*, ed. Miguel de Beistegui and Simon Sparks, London: Routledge, 2000. p. 203.
[290] Sparks, "Fatalities". p. 212.
[291] Hölderlin, "*Hyperion: Vorletzte Fassung*", in: *SW*. I: 559. Following: Mark W. Roche, "Allusions to and Inversions of Plato in Hölderlin's Hyperion", in: *Literary Paternity, Literary Friendship: Essays in Honour of Stanley Corngold*, ed. Gerhard Richter, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. p. 86.
[292] Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 180. Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. p. 118.
[293] George Steiner, *The Poetry of Thought: From Hellenism to Celan*, New York: New Directions Books, 2011. p. 37.

the only hint that he may have had any scruples about the limits of his logical nature.[294] However, while for Nietzsche Socrates' 'Cyclopian eye', in which 'artistic enthusiasm never glowed', flattened true expression and bound it irrevocably to philosophical rationalism, Schürmann illustrates how this moment of Socratic cyclopticism itself might be reinscribed into the movement of tragic *synechia*:

> Tragedy always maps out something like a sweep of the eyes. The hero *sees* the conflicting laws, and—at the moment of tragic denial—then binds himself toward one of them, *fixing his gaze* on the other… Then an *eye-opening* catastrophe ensues, the moment of tragic truth… Blindness is transformed from denial into recognition. Hubristic sightlessness is transformed into visionary blindness.[295]

The moment of tragic truth, of revelation, does not only occur in Socrates' person, who dies for the fate of rationalism, but is rather deferred and thus elevated into the fabric of philosophy itself. Such a knowledge, indeed, is the nature of the blackened sun to which Hölderlin races toward in Laplanche's commentary broached at the outset of this chapter - a tragic truth perhaps foreclosed for millennia until the "line of demarcation" represented by deaths of Hegel and Goethe. The next section of this chapter will follow the thread of this Cyclopean repression (which overlooks *synechia* and fixes its gaze solely upon Socratic rationalism), before returning to the "the moment of tragic truth" which occurs in Hölderlin's synechic thinking.

*Are We There Yet?: The Metaphysical Conversation*

Are there any mental structures which preserve a link between synechic and dialectical thought after Plato? What happens to the semantic content of *alétheia* once dialectical speech becomes institutionalised? Where does the philosopher of truth *begin* to speak in the name of the universal? Following the thread of the research undertaken thus far in this chapter, this section will attempt to answer these questions.

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[294] Plato, *Phaedo*. 60. *Mousikē* had a wider meaning in Greek than simply "music", covering music, poetry, dance, visual art - usually connoted in modern parlance by "the arts".

[295] Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*. pp. 67 - 68. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 27 - 28. Following: Sparks, "Fatalities". pp. 205 - 206, n. 8.

Where once *alétheia* heralded the manifestation of truth through a synechic *poíēsis*, Platonic metaphysics foregrounds a knowledge which simultaneously conceptualises the past, present, and future in a rational system of universal meaning. It is not without coincidence, then, that Plato recounts the former function of *alétheia* at the conclusion of his *Republic* to offer account of the afterlife.[296] Only upon the 'plain of the *Lethe*' (with its 'Forgetful River') can souls be judged and divided by Necessity (Ananké). The immortal afterlife, devoid from the otherwise unimpeachable chain of reason which binds mortal deeds, is now the only site of divine intervention. The divinities have been tamed to the extent that their impact upon mortal deeds is deferred until the afterlife. In this manner, the philosophical singularity of death is reinscribed within an absolute condition of divinely apportioned conceptual "non-life". The declaration of a life unconditioned by this separation (between mortals and immortals) until its expiration is further emphasised by the eschewing of the *polis* and the *agora* as a space for final judgement in favour of a location by the sea. The sea encloses life, yet it offers no resistance. Indeed, Plato's conception of *alétheia* is reminiscent of the sea: 'wisdom arises out of fluid and shifting circumstances' and 'access to such wisdom entails an immersive initiation'.[297] Philosophers must be initiated, or immersed, into the absolute condition of a knowledge of all life from out of the singularity of death. In this manner, Havelock suggests that Plato's development of the dialectical method inspires a return toward a pedagogical monologue made possible through the supplication of orality with literacy.[298] This movement is underscored when 'an external sourcing of mantic speech is shifted inward in accordance with an authoring-self' which, as Havelock details, 'invented literacy and the literate basis of modern thought' which sits as absolute law on mortal deeds. [299] The dialectical programme attempts to make life's rational facilitates, as one commentator writes, 'a new beginning with books as compass and starting point'.[300]

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[296] Plato, *Republic*. XI: 614 - 621. Plato is recounting the "Myth of Er". Further commentary in: Giorgio Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, trans. Adam Kotsko, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015. pp. 249 - 262.

[297] Andrew Douglas, *The Gait of the City: Oedipus and Impressions of Modernity*, London: Goldsmiths, 2014. pp. 61 - 62. Douglas draws upon: Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. pp. 53 - 69.

[298] Havelock charts the transformation from an "oral mind" to "alphabetic mind", positing Plato as first exponent of an attempt to transcend the limits of orality. See: Eric Alfred Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, New Jersey: Princetown University Press, 1982.

[299] Douglas, *The Gait of the City*. p. 62. Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*. p. 82.

[300] Konstantinos Sp. Staikos, *Books and Ideas: The Library of Plato and the Academy*, New Castle: Oak Knoll Press, 2013. p. 25.

In the tragic experience, a synechic mosaic of truth is maintained though 'an event in which disparate individuals reunite so as, by chance, to compose a world', such a living world, however, is also offered as "truth" by virtue of the abstracted relation between the work and its audience.[301] However, the literary internalisation of the dialectical processes concretised the process of creation to extent that the philosophical author became the sole means by which the pursuit of truth could be undertaken. Speech becomes writing, a movement which represents in its abstracted relation to orality 'a dead being', as Hegel argues, and yet, because it is a "dead being" it can also never die.[302] The mind engages in a dialogue without an interlocutor. Dialogic thought becomes the aporetic method in which 'the solution of the problem results from a discussion (and sometimes from a simple juxtaposition) of all possible opinions'.[303] In contrast to oral culture, the writing and reading of books promotes a mode of thought in which the self-sufficient engagement of a thinker with his own private thoughts are reflected or stimulated by immortal words on a page.[304] Yet this conversation is, paradoxically, as Detienne records, still sustained and 'founded in essence on social agreement manifested as either approval or disapproval' by another correspondent yet solitary thinker.[305] Viewed in this light, Nietzsche concludes, the figure of Socrates represents 'the vortex and turning-point of so-called world history'.[306] Indeed, as Hans Jonas argues, the dialectical movement begun in the work of Plato instigates an 'unchallenged universalism' preached by philosophers which later 'crystallized into a definable doctrine' the whole of the Hellenic religious and philosophic tradition into a single network of unimpeachable thought structures, to the extent even, that the truth process itself 'was for the last time systematised'.[307]

Looking, however, with one eye turned toward the sequences of past events yields more than just providing a history of concepts. In thinking through Plato and Aristotle's truth strategies

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[301] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 130.
[302] Hegel, quoted in: David W. Loy, "Hegel's Critique of Greek Ethical Life", in: *Hegel Bulletin*, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 157 - 179, 2021. p. 171. Further on Hegel's claims regarding 'the privilege of speech over writing' can be found in: Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1982. pp. 69 - 108.
[303] Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 182.
[304] Perhaps most visible in Augustine's description Ambrose's propensity for silent reading (likely the first recorded account of silent reading in Western literature), see: Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading*, New York: Viking, 1996. pp. 41 - 54.
[305] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Archaic Greece*. p. 99.
[306] Ibid.
[307] Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2001. p. 10.

through to their end, this study will investigate the epochal bridge which Hölderlin's thinking, much like Parmenides', holds between changes in thought structures. Indeed, recalling Hölderlin's articulation of how systems of construction are intimately tied to their own dissolution, this section will anticipate Hölderlin's synechic interventions themselves as built out of a disruptive movement within the dialectical truth process itself - which releases forces previously constrained within the epochal thought of the absolute. In this manner, Hölderlin's *synechia* of truth accounts for a 'gap' (as he himself writes) in the between of a rupture within the philosophical process, as articulated in the essay "Becoming in Passing-Away":

> dissolution as a necessity becomes as such the ideal object of the newly developed life, a glance back on the path that had to be taken, from the beginning of dissolution up to that moment when, in the new life, there can occur a recollection of the dissolved and thus, explanation and union of the gap and the contrast occurring between present and past, there can occur the recollection of dissolution.[308]

Hölderlin's thinking provides a *synechia* which operates without a prescribed genus, unlike the dialectical process, in a gap between absolute and singular positions. A memory of the history of dialectics, then, fills a gap, held-together in Hölderlin's *synechia*, between the dissolution of dialectics, and what will become the philosophy of the future. In this manner, the memory of the synechic Greek tragedy operates, as Nietzsche writes, like 'a polished mirror that always radiates something that is not in the mirror itself'.[309] This mirror offers a process of presentation which develops out of a dissonant interplay between the observer and the observed, whose terms are inextricably linked and yet held forever apart in the countervailing processes of construction and deconstruction. The ensuing section will, therefore, follow the history of Greek thinking through the development of the dialectical process to Hölderlin's own time.

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[308] Hölderlin, "*Das untergehende Vaterland*". II: 72-77. Hölderlin, "Becoming in Dissolution". p. 96 - 100.
[309] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. p. 264, n. 218.

In the periods which followed Plato and Aristotle's thinking, the hegemonic presentation of truth rarely returned to a synechic process of unveiling and holding.[310] Readers may take, for instance, Augustine's soliloquy 'I would know you, I would know myself' (*Noverim te, noverim me*) as an updated riff of the Apollonian creed to "know thyself".[311] Or, the influence of the *meson*, perhaps, in the opening words of Dante's *Divina Commedia*: 'in the middle' (*Nel mezzo*). As Schürmann argues, the philosophical pursuit of truth 'runs rather smoothly from late Antiquity to the Middle Ages to Modernity', in the sense that the genealogical law of an *archē* which commands all knowledge becomes 'ultimately a discourse about God' and, as long as it remains so, 'is deprived of real ruptures or breaks'.[312] Across an expanse as broad as from that of Augustine to Dante, there remains a continuity of meaning and process in the pursuit and annunciation of truth. In this way, as Kojève argues, the dialectical process remains preserved in the image of God who becomes for philosophers 'a quasi-Socratic interlocutor', yet with the additional 'advantage of an authorised code and of a settled system of faith', as Max Müller describes.[313] In other words, the Christian God also becomes 'the god of philosophers', as Blaise Pascal identified: a "first cause" from which all other causes develop.[314] The process of rationalising the divine represents, as Benjamin argues, a turning from 'the absolute present as its most immense content' to a 'governing principle'.[315] Throughout the wide expanse of medieval thought, this divine-human form of dialogue is preserved in several hybrid and transitory forms of the literary dialectical method.[316] The word of God also speaks in the written word and all knowledge is conceived in relation to this *logos*, 'for this whole sensible world is a kind of book written by the finger of God', as Hugh of Saint Victor wrote in the eleventh century.[317]

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[310] This is not to suggest that mythological thought structures were not preserved in complex and innumerable ways. For assessment of this preservation, consider: E. M. Butler, *Ritual Magic*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1949. Or: Jessie L. Weston, *From Ritual to Romance*, New Jersey: Princetown University Press, 1993.

[311] Augustine*, The Soliloquies of St. Augustine*, trans. Rose Elizabeth Cleveland, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1910. p. 11 (2.1.1.).

[312] Schürmann, "Neoplatonic Henology as an Overcoming of Metaphysics". p. 26.

[313] Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 182. Müller, "On the Philosophy of Mythology".

[314] cf. Georg Picht, "The God of the Philosophers", in: *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 48, No. 1, pp. 61 - 79, 1980.

[315] Walter Benjamin, "On the Middle Ages", in: *Early Writings: 1910-1917*, trans. Howard Eiland, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011. p. 238.

[316] Catalogued in: Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 182.

[317] Paul Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. p. 63 (*De Tribus Diebus*. 4.3.).

Such was the case in the dialectical process until 'it underwent an internal modification whose most conspicuous index was the moment of certitude in the Cartesian cogito', as Derrida argues.[318] That is, the distant Platonist, René Descartes, "dropped" God and instead took up the conversation with himself, making his own subjectivity the ground and *archē* of truth. Edmund Husserl highlights how the framework for this revolution was already inscribed in Galileo Galilei's logic of an infinite mathematics of deductive thinking, however, Descartes' pairing of Galileo's framework with 'the authoritative *subiectum*' also replaces God, as Heidegger writes, so that the dialectic becomes 'the process of the production of the subjectivity of the absolute subject'.[319] That is, Descartes' *egological* subjectivity 'unfolds' as a 'thinking that thinks itself absolutely'. [320] Thus, dialectical philosophy becomes, as Hegel argues, a 'self-supporting philosophy' in a 'thinking that proceeds from itself'.[321] In this reading, self-consciousness governs the manner by which all phenomena are constituted, as Schürmann summarises:

> spontaneously prescribing its laws to nature just as it does to itself—now here we
>
> have the legislating agent who succeeds where beliefs have only failed, namely
>
> in centering the ensemble of phenomena upon a single focal point such as an
>
> intuition.[322]

Such a singular point represents a radical deviation from the knowledge conferred in the tragic experience, in which the subject undergoes their own subject-hood through a radical divorce from the laws (represented by divinities) which preside over all phenomena, because it also transposes the experience of singularity into an absolute. How could, then, such an infrangible law, as Schürmann asks, 'impose any sort of double bind?' - indeed, such a universal representation of legislative autonomy renders mortals no longer part of a synechic holding of being, but rather, as Kant writes, 'possessors of the world'.[323]

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[318] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997. p. 97.
[319] Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäi schen Wissenschaften und die transzendentale Phänomenologie*, Hamburg: Meiner, 1996. pp. 22 - 34 (80 - 91.). Martin Heidegger, "Hegel and the Greeks", in: *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. p. 325.
[320] Heidegger, "Hegel and the Greeks". p. 325.
[321] 'Descartes made a fresh start in every respect… the formation of reason in modern times, begins with him. The principle in this new era is thinking, the thinking that proceeds from itself'. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. III: 220 - 250.
[322] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 447.
[323] Ibid. Kant quoted ('*Ich, der Inhaber der Welt*') on the same page, from: Immanuel Kant, *Opus postumum*, trans. Eckart Förster and Michael Rosen, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (1. 25.).

Such possession 'announced the season', as Howard Caygill writes, of systematic philosophies which 'attempted to reconcile the work of science with the philosophy of the absolute idea'.[324] A new absolutism, grounded on Kant's egological "possession", entailed a decisive break in the concept of the human being by separating the abstract absolute being from the concrete historical person. Objectivity, after Kant, takes the form of '*representation*, of the *idea*' as Derrida summaries.[325] Heidegger clarifies the new truth processes of dialectical subjectivity whereby 'man comes to be a ground founded on himself, and a measure of the truth concerning beings as such'.[326] Thus, for Heidegger, this new regime directs truth as 'the adequative opening-up of beings through representation' which simultaneously, by virtue of its programmatic authority, solicits the 'character of opening-up and revealing to sink unexamined into oblivion'.[327] Moreover, this "oblivion" itself becomes further negated because 'everything else in which representation as such might still be grounded is denied'.[328] Yet, as with everything forgotten, the history of synechic truth is not nothing. As Heidegger hypothesises, it is an unheeded tragic kernel within the conceptual development of truth which 'alone brings the metaphysics of absolute and consummate subjectivity from its concealed commencement to the point where it shifts to the extreme counteressence'.[329] It is, for Heidegger, the force of this counteressence which necessitates Hölderlin's writings.

New rivers of philosophical thought spring from Descartes' revolution in the dialectical method. For Schürmann, these rivers flowed through various courses in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries before reuniting again in the thought of Kant.[330] It was in the ensuing force, with its gathering momentum, that the great universal "system builders" at the turn of the nineteenth century, led this river to its mouth and to the absolute of the ocean. Perhaps only in Plato's Athens and the birth of the dialectical technique might one have witnessed such a rapid emergence of a whole spectrum of philosophical theories. Indeed, Henrich refers to the emergent

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[324] Howard Caygill, "The force of Kant's *Opus postumum*: Kepler and Newton in the xith Fascicle", in: *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, Vol, 10, No. 1, pp. 33 - 42, 2005. p. 41.
[325] Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. p. 97.
[326] Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes Three and Four*. III: 239.
[327] Ibid.
[328] Ibid.
[329] Ibid.
[330] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 445 - 447.

speculative-idealistic philosophy as a 'dynamized Platonism'.[331] Heidegger calls it 'the old and ancient concept in its most extreme and total completion'.[332] In the brief pursuit of the development of the philosophical concept of truth philosophers have, in some senses, ended up where they began. Kojevè writes that the "modern" systems of Idealist philosophy, which are are 'created out of nothing by their authors without coming from an earlier dialogue', thus resemble mythological monologic speech.[333] The essence of such transcendental and "presuppositionless" philosophies, Hegel writes, have 'no ground' and cast themselves 'into the abyss'.[334] The philosophical absolute is 'groundlessness', writes Schelling.[335] Thus, the question of foundation reappears at the moment foundations appear to have vanished. Indeed, the insurmountability of providing a ground which precedes all ground led Schelling to concede the incompetence of the strictly rational in the face of that which exceeds cognitive capacities.[336] In this fashion is it possible to understand Schelling's statement:

> Philosophy was born and nourished by poetry in the infancy of knowledge, and with it all those sciences it has guided toward perfection; we may thus expect them, on completion, to flow back like so many individual steams into the universal ocean of poetry from which they took their source.[337]

And yet, by refuting or pointing beyond dialectics from out of a dialectical programme, Schelling paradoxically and necessarily calls into question, in a manner which Hölderlin's writings, by virtue of their non-situatedness, are situated to encounter, the ungrounded-ground upon which dialectics stands.

Retuning, then, to the "line of demarcation" represented by the deaths of Hegel and Goethe and the subsequent condition from which Nietzsche would announce that the 'true world had become a fable', philosophers receptive to the knowledge of this fracture, as Schürmann

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[331] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 22.
[332] Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly, Bloomington: Indiana Univeristy Press, 1988. p. 141.
[333] Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. p. 183.
[334] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Difference between the Fichtean and Schellingian Systems of Philosophy: An English translation of G. W. F. Hegel's* Differenz des Fichte'schen und Schelling'schen Systems der Philosophie, trans. Walter Cerft and H. S. Harris, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977. p. 88. Trans. modified.
[335] F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Jeff Love and Johannes Schmidt, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006. p. 21.
[336] J. F. W. J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism (1800)*, trans. Peter Heath, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 2001. Particularly: pp. 219 - 233 (612-634.).
[337] Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*. p. 232 (628-629.).

concludes, have been attempting to answer the same question: 'How could the truth of this suspension, which has become our manifest destiny, be gathered up?'.[338] For many philosophers in the twentieth century, Hölderlin speaks to and addresses such a question - that is, Hölderlin's writings serve as a corrective to a model of philosophy which could only otherwise reach, to restate Schürmann's position, a 'polymorphous suspension' following the philosophical systems of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel's absolute.[339] At the start of this chapter, Parmenides' synechic thought, in which the truth is shown as both a disclosure and an intercourse between the present and the absent in which both registers are reciprocally received and held-together, suspended in a oscillating tension of unresolved, and yet united, agonistic drives, was identified. However, before this study proceeds to examine the *synechia* of truth in the thought of Hölderlin in its next chapter, it will first attempt to illustrate in the next section how and why Hölderlin reemerges as the thinker of truth in the thinking of Heidegger, Adorno, and Benjamin: three philosophers who reach Hölderlin's thinking by the way of a post-Idealist philosophical disposition without wholly surrendering their allegiances to these traditions. The return to the Hölderlin of the twentieth century will, in turn, expose the distance and similarities between the divergent Hölderlin of philosophers, and, more importantly, how his synechic technique exposes the structure which cannot be structured and therefore holds the truth in contradiction without resolution, even, for those prepared to admit into thinking the darkness of an abyss more perilous than Thales' well.

*Daylight, in a Dream: Hölderlin and the "Hidden" Origin*

After the absolute, 'finitude must appear in philosophy in a completely radical way' Heidegger writes.[340] Indeed, Schürmann will label this singularisation 'anarchic isomorphism': a condition in which 'there are only singular beings' and 'life nourishes itself on finite increments, not on infinite maximisations'.[341] Similarly, Nancy will label the new discourse that arises from out of

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[338] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 513. Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, trans. Judith Norman, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. p. 171.
[339] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 513.
[340] Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. James Churchill, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962. p. 185.
[341] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 568.

the isomorphism of a philosophical discipline without *archē* as "a finite thinking".[342] For Nancy, such finitude denotes, primarily, 'a thinking that's finished' through the 'destruction of sense' which brings into play 'the completion and buckling of the West's resources of signification and meaning'.[343] This section, then, will approach such a thinking and why, in the thought of Heidegger, Adorno, and Benjamin, Hölderlin's writings appear from out of, or even press-up against, this singularisation. This study will then proceed, in its next chapter, to illustrate how Hölderlin's synechic thought also disrupts the constructing moment of the phenomenological truth of the singular, by holding to a point beyond such construction: to suggest such an end, as and end, cannot, in itself, be finite. A "thinking that's finished", by virtue of such a claim, cannot wholly be finished. Such singularity 'maximises subjectivity and puts the thetic idea to work' in it, as Schürmann writes.[344] Which is to suggest that the singular which holds is the only true singular: and that such a singularity can be found in the synechic technique at the heart of Hölderlin's writings.

In Heidegger's writings on Hölderlin truth has arrived, at the apparent end of a journey through the history of the philosophical dialectic, somewhere close to its inception in the pre-Socratic Greek world. From out of such a reading, the turn to Hölderlin's poetry instigates a form of philosophical parousia, stimulated by a 'primordial calling… called by what is coming'.[345] Thus, at the perceived end of a period of truth a more originary truth can now be reflectively articulated by philosophers at an epochal turn in thinking. Philosophers must 'turn back to that place where we already properly abide'.[346] For Heidegger, philosophy is at the end of truth because it is at the start of truth. In this original way, the 'essence of poetry, in turn, is the founding of truth'.[347] However, this end also anticipates its beginning as a new departure: "called by what is coming". In this sense, Heidegger's "beginning" continues to be - and yet also idealises "beginning" and "end" so as to betray the sense of a perpetual continuum. In an attempt to secure a foundational *archē* which lasts immutably, philosophy, Heidegger surmises, points towards

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[342] Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. p. 185. cf. Jean-Luc Nancy, *A Finite Thinking*, ed. Simon Sparks, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.
[343] Nancy, *A Finite Thinking*. p. 4.
[344] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 568.
[345] Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry". p. 58.
[346] Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*. p. 84.
[347] Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art". p. 129.

another *topos*, as if in trying to dig and then lay a new foundation for philosophy one has uncovered the remains of some ancient and forgotten statues. Indeed, Parmenides' poem stands, for Heidegger, over and above any subsequent truth claims like an 'archaic Greek statue' which 'discredits the presumed necessity of entire libraries of philosophical literature'.[348] The statue of Parmenides casts a shadow over philosophical reflection and, for Heidegger, discloses a repressed knowledge that the "primordial" interplay between mortals and gods is only the stable basis for the conversation - which mortals, in a sense, *are* - to happen. Nonetheless, as Heidegger will admit, his thesis represents a difficult needle to thread: 'how does this conversation, which we are, begin? Who performs the naming of the gods? Who takes hold of something enduring in torrential time and brings it to stand in the word?'.[349] Without a return to the "primordial" truth of truth, Heidegger suggests that humans are no longer at home in their relation to truth. Nonetheless, such a return points toward a destination to which there is also no sense of direction. Who may serve as guide; who could even name and then ask Heidegger's question? How is one elected for such a task? For Heidegger, each of these questions (indeed, any pronouncement concerning the history and the future of philosophical thought) shape and arrange themselves into one question which can be addressed via the mediation of Hölderlin's poetry.

For Heidegger, the abiding tensions implicit in negotiating a philosophical terrain in which there appears to be no sure-footing are first reignited in the words of Hölderlin. Heidegger's "return to the source" of thought through Hölderlin's poetry reignites a philosophical world, Charles Bambach writes, which 'does not follow the lines of calculative reckoning, but beckons us to the hidden possibility of poetic dwelling'.[350] Hölderlin becomes for Heidegger, Bambach continues, a vehicle, or mouthpiece, for a new (or, old) and radical form of thinking the truth which 'opens up' a language able to '"turn back," "get over," or "recover from" the apparently impotent languages of Western metaphysics.[351] Indeed, it is with such prophetic intonation that Heidegger will suggest that the 'historical destiny of philosophy culminates in knowledge of the

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[348] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*. p. 102.
[349] Heidegger, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry". p. 58.
[350] Charles Bambach, "Who is Heidegger's Hölderlin?", in: *Research in Phenomenology*, Vol. 47, No. 1., pp. 39 - 59, 2017. p. 40.
[351] Ibid.

necessity to create a hearing for the words of Hölderlin'.[352] However, as Schürmann indicates, the very act of identifying and naming a so-called "new" origin in philosophy falls into the trap it suggests it is leaving behind: 'doesn't the passage out of the modern hegemony fail as soon as it has been sketched?'.[353] To initiate a discourse which might sustain a new history underwrites its own phenomenal singularity: it inscribes within the singular beginning a hegemonic principle of beginning. The "metaphysical closure", then, which Heidegger addresses through Hölderlin's words, cannot be claimed as such without recourse to also undermining any such claims themselves. In this sense, it might rather be better to claim that Hölderlin's *synechia*, rather, holds-together *a break inside metaphysics*, rather than a break from it. Indeed, as Schürmann concludes, in order to cite '"another beginning" one must understand a manner of being that always complies with its other, agonal singular'.[354] Citing Heidegger's claim that the 'greatest event is always the beginning', Schürmann concludes, therefore, that Heidegger proposes a linguistic and philosophical ambiguity which his philosophy does not confront: the idealism of raising historical epochs in thought as absolute conditions.[355]

To be sure, there have been other scholars who have similarly met Heidegger's violent reading of history with comparable suspicion, or even at times, outright hostility. For instance, it is possible to recall Muschg's claim that Heidegger's interpretation of Hölderlin is guilty of appropriation - expressing what he thinks Hölderlin 'did not dare or was not able to say' - as part of strategy to stage Hölderlin's thought as part of a broader historical narrative concerning the "history of being".[356] Leaving aside Heidegger's historical claims, it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that the 'interpretive violence' with which he conflated his personal sense of historical "destiny" with his reading of Hölderlin, as Max Kommerell describes, transgressed the established parameters of scholarship.[357] More recently, Henrich expressed similar concern with historical readings which claim to speak with 'the conviction of someone in touch with

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[352] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. p. 334.
[353] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 563.
[354] Ibid. p. 568.
[355] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. p. 46 (23.). Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 562 - 570.
[356] Muschg in: Adorno, "Parataxis". II: 109.
[357] Max Kommerell, in: Bambach, "Who is Heidegger's Hölderlin?". p. 44. What emerges from this encounter, Kommerell writes, is 'the destiny that is Hölderlin reveals itself as that destiny for which you stand'.

Hölderlin's ideas from the outset'.[358] On one level, such comments are unsurprising, given Heidegger's stated early ambition to expose thinking 'to being itself in a new kind of appropriation'.[359] Viewed in this sense, Hedeigger's engagement with Hölderlin, as Bambach concludes, cannot be understood from the vantage of any traditional sense of the word "interpretation", but rather, as Heidegger himself writes, an: '"*Auseinander-setzung*"—a "confrontation" or "critical setting-asunder"—with Hölderlin that does not spring forth from his own reflections but from what he terms "the voice of beyng" (*die Stimme des Seyns*)'.[360] Thus, Heidegger's reading aims at disrupting the foundation of historical and critical methodologies for understanding texts:

> [F]or this thinking about Hölderlin is a kind of "setting assunder" (*Auseinander-setzung*), which again, however, is taken in a beyng-historical sense and not as a wrangling about what is and is not correct. This is a "setting-assunder" of historical necessities in their historicity; in this sense, it is not a "thetically imposed" arrangement (*veranstaltete "Setzung"*) from us but, rather, an obedient listening to the voice of beyng.[361]

And yet, in claiming to transcend a "thetic" imposition in his reading of Hölderlin, Heidegger surreptitiously reinserts a paradigm, with himself as its sole arbiter, of the "beyng-historical". Therefore, as Kommerll concludes in tones similar to Schürmann, Heidegger's Hölderlin claims a singularity it cannot live up to:

> Where is the passage [or "crossing" or "going-over"] where your own philosophy flows into Hölderlin and where out of a description of the human situation it turns in so decisive a way into a metaphysical utterance and into absolute, ultimate certitude—where it finds this certitude out of itself and makes itself one with Hölderlin at this point—and where, finally, it approaches poetry in the specific nature of its utterance?[362]

[358] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 294, n. 94.
[359] Heidegger to Elisabeth Blochmann in March 1933, quoted in: Bambach, "Who is Heidegger's Hölderlin?". p. 41.
[360] Ibid. pp. 42 - 43.
[361] Ibid. p. 43.
[362] Max Kommerell, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen, 1919-1944*, ed. Inge Jens, Freiburg: Walter-Verlag, 1967. pp. 400 - 401. Quoted with commentary in: Andrzej Warminski, *Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987. pp. 46 - 47.

Does, then, Heidegger evade the true nature of the synechic power of Hölderlin's thought, recalling Hamacher's claim that, such readings, even if they point towards the deconstructive essence of Hölderlin's writings, nonetheless eventually themselves 'fall back within the terrain of Idealism and of original synthesis, whose deconstruction is the aim of Hölderlin's text'?[363]

Even if Heidegger foregoes a decisive engagement with Hölderlin's texts as texts, he is not alone is recognising a radical turn, which itself points toward a decisive moment within the history of philosophy, intimated in Hölderlin's poetry. Thus, despite framing his Hölderlin study as an explicit challenge to Heidegger's commentaries, Adorno similarly attempted to illustrate how Hölderlin engaged a "paratactical" method of construction as a technique to dispute the thetic and identificatory logic that had inexorably regulated hegemonic thinking.[364] "Parataxis," a theme Adorno develops from out his readings of Hellingrath's description of the '*harte Fügung* (hard jointure, or *harmoníē austērá*)' (itself a manifestation of Hölderlin's debt to Pindar), becomes in Adorno's reading reflective of a "dead-end" in a philosophical discourse which can no longer sustain a dialectical mirror and synthesis between received thought structures.[365] Thus, beyond a mere stylistic or aesthetic decision, Hölderlin's parataxis becomes, in Adorno's reading, a constitutive dissociation from the hierarchical and synthetic function of dialectical mental operations, 'exemplifying the disintegration of a coercive thetic logic'.[366] So much can be inferred, Adorno argues, from one of Hölderlin's own theoretical fragments from the "Frankfurt Aphorisms":

> One has inversions of words in the period. Yet the inversion of the periods itself,
> then, must prove greater and more effective. The logical position of periods
> where the ground (the grounding period) is followed by becoming, becoming the
> goal, the goal by the purpose, and where the subclauses are always attached at

[363] Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". p. 40.
[364] cf. Adorno, "Parataxis".
[365] Szondi highlights how Hellingrath cultivated the phrase *harte Fügung* to describe Hölderlin's poetology, see: Petér Szondi, "Gattungspoetik und Geschichtsphilosophie Mit einem Exkurs über Schiller, Schlegel und Hölderlin", in: *Hölderlin-Studien: Mit einem Traktat über philologische Erkenntnis*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1974. pp 119 - 169. Following: Julia Ng, "Versing, Ending". pp. 1 - 18, especially pp. 9 - 11.
[366] Beatrice Hanssen, ""Dichtermut" and "Blödigkeit": Two Poems by Hölderlin Interpreted by Walter Benjamin", in: *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 112, No. 5: Comparative Literature Issue, pp. 786 - 816, 1997. p. 787. Henrich echoes this reading in: Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 143 - 150.

the end of the main clauses to which they refer is certainly only very seldom the use to the poet.[367]

The mechanism of such inversion attempts to dispute, Adorno suggests, the 'hierarchical relation between ground and becoming, main clause and subclauses' so that Hölderlin's parataxis becomes constitutive of a broader attempt to derail, as Beatrice Hanssen writes, the 'teleological drift of speculative thought' so as to reimagine the association between language and truth as poetic rather than philosophical.[368] For Adorno, this formal disruption of the dialectical principle is further manifested at the level of content. If on the stylistic level, Hanssen concludes, Hölderlin's poems 'undermined the hierarchical, subject-ing logic of idealism', the level of their content offered a synechic '*anamnesis* of nature'.[369] Thus, Adorno's "anamnesis" refers to a poetic gesture beyond both the interiorising gaze of a self-reflective subject and the absolute of the Platonic *edios*, instead presenting a synechic form of recollection of the *logos* contemplating itself. The paratactic departure (or, 'protest' as Adorno has it) from the customary structures of egological legislation celebrates the singular subject in submission to a *poíēsis* of language in an attempt to abnegate the hubristic stance of metaphysical idealism, and in so doing presents, as Hamacher writes, an 'affront to Idealism's doctrine of the substantiality of meaning'.[370] In Hölderlin's poetry this affront, Adorno writes, 'unsettles the category of meaning for the first time' in order to constitute meaning 'through the linguistic expression of synthetic unity'.[371] In this way, poetic language becomes the arbiter of the true, the word of truth, as poetic, is able, as Hölderlin himself writes in his commentaries on Pindar, 'to hang together infinitely (exactly)'.[372]

Such a reading, then, offers a *synechia* of a synthetic cohabitation of two divided poles, held apart and yet together within the same presentation. Hölderlin's language critiques a tendency in philosophy to stress, as Benjamin analyses, a 'relationship between language and action in which the former is an instrument of the latter': rather, Hölderlin's poems also invoke a

[367] Hölderlin, "*<Frankfurter Aphorismen>*", in: *SW*. II: 57-61. Hölderlin, "Reflection", in: *ELT*. p. 45. The seven maxims, or aphorisms, dating from around 1799 are often titled "Seven Maxims", "Frankfurt Aphorisms", or, in Pfau's English ed.,"Reflection".
[368] Hanssen, ""Dichtermut" and "Blödigkeit"". p. 787.
[369] Ibid. p. 789.
[370] Adorno, "Parataxis". II: 111. Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". p. 20.
[371] Adorno, "Parataxis". II: 136.
[372] '*wodurch sie unendlich* (*genau*) *zusammenhängen*'. Hölderlin, "*Das Unendliche.*", in: *SW*. II: 832-383. Hölderlin, "The Infinite", in: *EL*. p. 337.

language which is 'as poetic, prophetic, objective in terms of its effect, but in any case only as *magical*, that is an un-*mediated*'.[373] Indeed, Adorno's synechic reflections consciously recall Benjamin's writings on poetic theory. The central proposition of Benjamin's Hölderlin commentaries offer an elaboration of the spiritual-intuitive 'structure of the world to which the poem bears witness' which can be brought into a 'synthetic unity of the spiritual and intuitive orders' through the mediation of the poetic word.[374] Inspired by the language of Hölderlin, the poetic, for Benjamin, holds a 'particular configuration' which conjoins 'the intellectual and perceptual orders'.[375] Caygill describes the poetic, in this Benjaminian-Hölderlinian guise, as a 'speculative concept' which 'synthetically unites the absolute ("spiritual order") with spatio-temporal experience ("intuitive order")'.[376] The "Poetic" then, in this sense, enacts a 'transition from the functional unity of life to that of the poem'; indeed, the singular life itself 'determines itself through the poem', it is the synthetic union of contraries, namely those mortal and immortal, singular and absolute, made possible in aesthetic presentation.[377] Poetry contains what Benjamin elsewhere calls, in an echo of Hölderlin's evocation of a poetic hanging "together infinitely (exactly)", 'not an infinity of continuous advance but an infinity of connectedness'.[378] Benjamin's attempt to evoke a union of these outwardly incongruous mental structures renders passages such as the following:

> The forms of the poetic world are infinite and at the same time limiting; according
>
> to the inner law, the form must to the same degree be sublated in the existence of
>
> the poem and dissolve in it, just as the animated powers the living. Even the god
>
> must in the end give his utmost in service to the poem and execute [*vollstrecken*]
>
> its law, just as the people had to be the sign of its extension [*Erstrekung*]. This is
>
> fulfilled at the end: "And from the heavenly ones / Bring one."[379]

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[373] Benjamin, July 1916 letter to Martin Buber. In: Walter Benjamin, *The Correspondence of Walter Benjamin: 1910-1940*, ed. Gershom Sholem and Theodor W. Adorno, trans. Manfred R. Jacobson and Evelyn M. Jacobson, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994. pp. 79 - 81.

[374] Walter Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 18-19.

[375] Ibid.

[376] Howard Caygill, *Walter Benjamin: The Colour of Experience*, London: Routledge, 1998. pp. 35 - 36.

[377] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 19-20.

[378] Benjamin, "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism". I: 126.

[379] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 32. Benjamin cites from Hölderlin's poem *Timidity* (Blödigkeit)

Benjamin's Poetic conjoins the intellectual and intuitive orders through the mediation of a God who in turn is this very principle. As such, the ambition of a successful poem is more than the presentation of truth in correspondence to a given representation but rather what Benjamin describes as "emphatic truth"; that is, the synechic hanging-together of the disparate elements of competing theories, and non-theories, of meaning.[380] Such a process, as David Wellbery puts it, can only hold, or 'preserve', these registers in 'an abstract (as opposed to dialectical)' composition.[381] The "successful" poem for Hölderlin, therefore, must answer the need of the subjective and singular "I" in order, as Hölderlin writes in an essay on poetry, 'to recognise its unity *in* the harmoniously opposed *and* the subjective (harmoniously opposed) in *its* unity'.[382]

Benjamin concludes, therefore, that Hölderlin's writings offer 'a mystery of order, the revelation of its absolute dependence on the idea of art, its eternal, indestructible sublation of that idea'.[383] The Poetic therefore holds agonal disputation in a 'particular and unique sphere' which prevents the poem from tending toward either an incorporeal mechanised rationalism or the pure nature of an other "non-I".[384] Rather, the poem stands for the 'virtual synthetic unification of matter and form'.[385] Hanssen thus identifies how, in his reading of Hölderlin's poem *The Poet's Courage*, Benjamin invokes the Platonic idea of an Apollonian-Socratic rational aesthetic idea as a 'cover-up for the impending threat of death' and the violent undertow of the singular, which undermines any absolute order, it represents.[386] Instead, the Poetic is identified through juxtaposition as a world of 'absolute connections and relations, an intensity of multiple coherences… multiple connections between the intuitive and the intellectual, between the sensual and the province of ideas' within which 'the poeticised stood for absolute synthetic unity'.[387] Therefore, the manifold positions and positings that mortal beings take up as they ascribe names to phenomena are rearranged into a new order congruous with those of the gods who are given form and in and through the plasticity of the singular poetic word-world:

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[380] Benjamin's Hölderlinian rendering of "emphatic truth" analysed in: David E. Wellbery, "Benjamin's Theory of the Lyric", in: *Studies in 20th Century Literature*, Vol. 11, Iss. 1, pp. 25 - 45, 1986.
[381] Wellbery, "Benjamin's Theory of the Lyric". p. 28.
[382] From Hölderlin's longest theoretical text: Hölderlin, "*Wenn der Dichter einmal des Gesites mächtig ...*", in: *SW*. II: 77-100. Hölderlin, "On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit", in: *ELT*. pp. 62 - 82.
[383] Benjamin, "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism". I: 164 - 165.
[384] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 18.
[385] Hanssen, ""Dichtermut" and "Blödigkeit"". p. 800.
[386] Ibid. p. 802.
[387] Ibid. p. 800.

Here before us is the ultimate expression of identity: the Greek god has entirely fallen prey to his own principle, the form. The highest sacrilege is understood as hubris, which, attainable only by a god, transforms him into dead form. To give oneself form—that is the definition of "hubris." The god ceases to determine the cosmos of the poem, whose essence—with art—freely elects for itself that which is objective: it brings the god, since gods have already turned onto the concretized being world in thought.[388]

If, on the surface level of the poem, mortals are invoked and objectified as the material domain, the Gods reside in its deeper formal structure which holds words together. All plural mortal words represent mere responses to the ground of the singular word itself which is the word of the immortals. However, for a God to give itself form is to exercise *hubris* (from *huper*, "beyond"): that is, beyond the bounds set by nature.[389] As Benjamin concludes, if there are any words to which this purely poetic relation, between man and gods, can be given voice, it is that of Hölderlin - as invoked in the lines 'Myths, which take leave of the earth, / … They return to mankind'.[390]

Heidegger, Adorno, and Benjamin, all gesture toward a new foundation for ethical pronouncements which attempt to recognise the 'irreconcilable tensions which render us as beings in kinship with both god and beasts'.[391] Hölderlin, 'himself mad for unifying deeds', as Farrell Krell puts it, redeems and unifies modern thinking through a disjuncture which holds.[392] For Nancy, this Hölderlinian moment culminates in 'nothing other than the end of a metaphysico-theological foundation to mortality *so as to arrive at ethics as the ground of being*'.[393] Thinking anchors itself in a new language, first authorised by Hölderlin, which abandons metaphysical pronouncements in favour of a more poetic means of enunciating truth. To return to Lacoue-Labarthe's appraisal, the twentieth century philosophical surveyors of Hölderlin 'whatever their interpretation of truth' define Hölderlin's poetry as nothing less than a new mode of "'telling

[388] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 32.
[389] Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. p. 1841.
[390] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 36. Cited lines from: Hölderlin, "Der Herbst", in: *SW*. I: 924.
[391] Bambach, "Who is Heidegger's Hölderlin?". p. 46. On the question of Hölderlin's ethics as point of departure for recent philosophy, consider: David Michael Kleinberg-Levin, *Gestures of Ethical Life: Reading Hölderlin's Question of Measure After Heidegger*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005. pp. 21 - 61.
[392] Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute*. p. 216.
[393] Jean-Luc Nancy, *A Finite Thinking*, ed. Simon Sparks, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003. p. 182.

truth" or "speaking in the name of truth"', indeed, Hölderlin poetry becomes 'the *martyr* of truth'.[394]

This truth attempts to disclose itself to mortals in a more "genuine" fashion. The philosophical adoption of Hölderlinian nomenclature attempts to present an originary "non-metaphysical" relation to truth. Hölderlin offers 'a *thinking* experience with language', writes Heidegger.[395] A new singularising foundation in language is ascribed with the name and provenance of what appears in Hölderlin's thought. Through Hölderlin, philosophers no longer attempt to 'achieve immortality' in thought, as Aristotle instructs, but rather follow Epicharmus' dictum that 'mortals should think mortal thoughts'.[396] As such, the life of language becomes synonymous with life, and, as both are understood as intimately poetic (as instructed in the lines from Hölderlin's *Celebration of Peace*: 'when the silence returns there shall be a language too'), they seek to understand and hold-together the disparate.[397] Indeed, Benjamin reflects that the poetic 'pause for breath' represents 'the mode most proper to the process of contemplation'.[398] Hölderlin's poetic thus generates a time in balance or fluctuation, the suspended moment or the still space beyond any linear notion of progress, which Sieburth defines as 'a space in between, an interval of silence in which the "pure Word" may appear'.[399] Words must reach into speech from out of silence, while speech itself preserves this silence. Indeed, Hölderlin's "pure Word", can only be expressed and held-together in the insecticides of a between which occurs at the moment of dissolution, made apparent in what Hölderlin called the 'living breath' of communion.[400]

The poetic discloses the hiddenness of the agonal "tragic" site of truth. This breaks with a dialectical discipline which seeks to erect binding "standards" for abstract human subjects which, Heidegger writes, detaches humans from their specific historical ground, 'uprooting them from the earth and rendering them as useful pieces that fit within a system'.[401] Hölderlin's thought

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[394] Lacoue-Labarthe, "Poetry's Courage". p. 84.
[395] Heidegger, *On The Way to Language*. p. 83.
[396] Epicharmus in: Freeman, *Ancilla to The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. p. 37.
[397] '*wenn die Stille kehrt, auch eine Sprache sei*'. Hölderlin, "*Friedensfeier*". I: 361-367. Hölderlin, "Celebration of Peace". pp. 209 - 217.
[398] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. p. 28.
[399] Sieburth, "Introduction". p. 17.
[400] Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 598-599.
[401] Bambach, "Who is Heidegger's Hölderlin?". pp. 46 - 47.

harbours a porous representational field which attempts to think beyond values, judgements, and worldviews, in favour of a radical openness to the ethicality of being qua being. Hölderlin's poetry is recognised as *a mode of exposing oneself to the nature of truth*. Thus, Henrich explicitly draws parallels between the inwardness invoked in such thought, 'in contrast to thought understood as discourse', which draws close to the religious practice of the devotional (*Andacht*).[402] Such initiative does not, cannot, then, come about by dint of mortal creative power alone. First, a god, Heidegger writes, throws 'the kindling lightning-flash into the poet's soul' which imparts a tragic vision.[403] As in Hölderlin's poem *Mnemosyne*:

> The heavenly
>
> Are not capable of everything. For
>
> The mortals reach sooner in to the abyss.[404]

In Heidegger's "lightning-flash", Hölderlin evokes Heraclitus' fragment 'the thunderbolt steers the course of all things'.[405] Indeed, in a 1802 letter to Casimir Ulrich Böhlendorff, Hölderlin expanded upon this theme, recalling how:

> The violent element, the fire of the sky, and the quiet of the people, their life in the open and their straitenedness and contentment, stirred me continually, and as one says of heroes I can probably say of myself: that Apollo has struck me....
>
> Thunderstorms, not just in their greatest manifestation, but seen as power and figure, among the other forms of the sky, the effect of the light, shaping nationally and as principle and destiny, so that something is holy to us, the intensity of its coming and going....[406]

The thunderbolt is the lightning flash of illumination that brings about the horizon of truth which "happens" to mortals. The poem is the event of an elemental happening which brings forth truth in the celebration of mortals and gods encountering one another and recognising their reciprocal belonging and holding-together through separation and dissolution. When in *As on a Holiday ...*

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[402] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 217.
[403] Heidegger, "As When On a Holiday …", in: *Elucidations on Hölderlin's Poetry*. p. 90.
[404] Hölderlin, "*Mnemosyne*", in: *SW*. I: 436-438. Hölderlin, "*Mnemosyne*", in: *SP*. pp. 258 - 261.
[405] Heraclitus. DK 64 and DK 65.
[406] Hölderlin to Casimir Ulrich Böhlendorff, November 1802. Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 920-922. Hölderlin, *EL*. pp. 213 - 215.

Hölderlin writes 'let the holy be my word', he appears to acknowledge that the encounter of the poetic can only be brought about in the illumination of this paradoxically sacral and singular gift.[407] Indeed, later in the same poem, Hölderlin repeatedly stresses the significance of the moment of illumination between mortals and gods, wherein 'A fire has been lit in the souls of poets' whose duty is made clear:

> Yet, fellow poets, us it behoves to stand
>
> Bareheaded beneath God's thunder-strorms,
>
> To grasp the Father's ray, no less, with our own two hands
>
> And, wrapping in song the heavenly gift,
>
> To offer it to the people.[408]

The thunderbolt is not the symbol or attribute of the gods; rather, as Harrison writes, it is 'itself the divine thing, the embodiment and vehicle of the god'.[409] Truth is the mutual belonging-together of the law of singular and absolute which elevates nor crushes either and the elemental thunderbolt is the "vehicle" that makes this belonging-together possible. Further, in the word of the poet, the bolt offers a between which holds this difference together. It is the responsibility of the poet, then, to gauge needs; both divine and human, absolute and singular. The poets go back and forth between the oracular and communal, perhaps embodying in their works Heraclitus's fragment: 'Immortals are mortal, mortals are immortal: each lives the death of the other, and dies their life'.[410] Indeed, as Calasso is apt to remind us, 'a life in which the gods are not invited isn't worth living'.[411] Well, indeed, as Hölderlin himself puts it, 'for who cares only for things that will die'?[412]

With the commentaries of Heidegger, Adorno, and Benjamin, therefore, this chapter has culminated pointing towards the end of a process which began at the outset of the chapter: the self-reflecting arrangements by which humans construct, arrange, and communicate "truth". If,

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[407] '*das Heilige sei mein Wort*'. Hölderlin, "*Wie wenn am Feiertage ...*", in: *SW*. I: 262-264. Hölderlin, "As on a holiday …", in: *SP*. pp. 172 - 177.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Jane Ellen Harrison, *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, 2nd Ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927. p. 59.
[410] Heraclitus. DK 62. Heraclitus' line echoes in Hölderlin's *In Beautiful Blue* as: 'Life is death, and death is also life'.
[411] Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. p. 387.
[412] Hölderlin, "… *Götter wandelten einst* …", in: *SW*. I: 201-202. Hölderlin, "Once there were gods", in: *Selected Poems*, trans. David Constantine, Newcastle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe Books, 1990.

for contemporary thinkers, Hölderlin's poetry solicits a new origin in this regime, or even calls into question the validity of regimes themselves, it has also offered thinkers the unique historical position of reflecting upon the historical situatedness of hegemonic truth processes, and the processes by which such narratives wither away, leaving behind them something akin to a wave whose high water mark leaves residual line upon the ground by which following epoch must measure and assess itself. However, as this chapter has also introduced, Hölderlin's thinking expresses this thinking in a consummate theoretical language. While Heidegger, Adorno, and Benjamin, and those who enter into this dialogue through their mediation, communicate with Hölderlin in a network of exchange which touches upon a narrow band of his late "hymnal" poetry, therefore, this study will progress in the next chapter by illustrating that such a thinking underscores and extends across, even "holds-together", the entirely of his creative and theoretical output - perhaps best exemplified, as the next chapter will illustrate, in Hölderlin's engagement with the elemental. What is more, the *synechia* of truth which converges in all of Hölderlin's writings can be shown in this manner to extend far beyond the confines of the history of poetry and philosophy, to the very limits of all human discourse.

# Hölderlin's Turn

The attempt in the previous chapter to think about the nature of truth without falling under its spell, if such a thing were possible, discerned a turn, or "nightfall", which develops in twentieth century hegemonic representation. The departure for this event, the last chapter argued, is the perceived completion of a movement in thought begun almost twenty-five centuries ago, with an all-too-tragic denial of a tragic condition which lies beneath all principled constructions.[1] At the beginning and at the end of dialectical discourses, as the previous chapter illustrated, the technique of *synechia*, which necessarily operates "between", holding-together conflicting motifs without subsuming one within the other, takes precedence. Following Hölderlin's theoretical exploration of the manner in which, particularly at the epochal juncture between a culture in dissolution and the birth of its replacement, two both possible and yet incompatible registers can be suspended in an oscillating tension, the previous chapter explored Parmenides' *synechia* and the subsequent juncture at which the synechic moment begins to diminish with the birth of a philosophical *archē* which subsumes all dialogues beneath its maximal norms. However, if ultimates are unquestionable they only remain so temporarily - and at the dawn of the twentieth century, a distinct questionability underscores the dialectical project of ceaseless progression. It is within this denial that Hölderlin's words, with recourse to the lines 'an enigma are those of pure origin', announce themselves to philosophers conscious of the questionable foundation of their discipline.[2] It is at the withering of the absolute origin that *synechia* come to the fore most pressingly, holding a common language without maximising it to ultimate representation. As Hölderlin would write in his only published novel, *Hyperion*, the poetic *synechia* 'is the beginning and end of that science'.[3] This chapter will pursue the expression of *synechia* in Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, and what it has to teach those who deny the essential "enigma" of its *archē*.

As Schürmann argues, this denial itself allows philosophers to gauge more than anything how things stand with the progresses of Western thought in the millennia following Parmenides'

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[1] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 3 - 6.
[2] Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*". I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine". pp. 196 - 209.
[3] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".

*synechia*.[4] Perhaps this progress itself might be comprehended at times as little more than a recurring turn from the tragic obligation embedded in such thought. Perhaps, even, philosophers remain in our own time so filled with a habitual desire only for what they take to be progress in thought that they turn themselves from a necessary step back revealed in this thought which remains unthought; to the extent that they not only wilfully ignore this turning but rather fail to notice that they are even turning at all.[5] And yet, like a wave crashing upon land in the wake of an earthquake that has already struck, this "modern" turn itself is only a secondary phenomena - the aftereffect of a reverberation already undergone which brings to bear the consequences of the polymorphous suspension in hegemonic criterions established almost two centuries ago with the climax of the idealist project. Ever since Hegel prefaced his 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit* with the prophetic declaration that 'ours is a birth-time and a period of transition to a new era', Schürmann claims, a tug-of-war has played itself out between those desperate to wrest themselves of ultimate authorities and bear witness to the "tragic" condition of truth, and various philosophical bureaucracies repeatedly busying themselves with attempts to reorganise and reassert truth under another form of subsuming genus.[6] At the apex of the Idealist project, those who attempt to think the truth are confronted with the double-bind of the 'sunburst which, in one flash, illuminates the features of the new world' and the repressed (and therefore more pressing) concomitant 'dark light', as foreseen by Hölderlin, which also reveals itself at the heart of the Idealist absolute.[7] In this sense, "truth" has come to symbolise a projection of existence into a shadowy, half-concealed light, highlighting the inner plasticity of being aware of the night in order to fully embrace the day.

To suggest that humans walk daily into the night is a truism. However, the night Hölderlin describes also embodies the condition of darkness as a concealed condition of Hegel's light: the juncture from which Hölderlin would declare that he had received from the gods a knowledge heavier than he could digest, a knowledge, as Schürmann claims, intimately tied to 'a certain

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[4] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 6 - 54.
[5] Stiegler, *Technics and Time, 2*. pp. 1 - 11.
[6] Following: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 513 - 515. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. pp. 6 - 7 (§11.).
[7] Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. p. 7 (§11.). The 'dark light' is from the poem: Hölderlin, "*Andenken*", in: *SW*. I: 473-475. Hölderlin, "Remembrance", in: *SP*. pp. 250 - 253.

condition of being becoming obvious in this late modernity'.[8] This knowledge, or *kenosis* (as Schürmann will refer to it), then, belies the authenticity of any ultimate law and stable *archē*, ensuring that any attempt to grab hold of a normative position is also fated to watch that position slip through its fingers.[9] Why Hölderlin? What makes this figure, standing on the precipice of a changed relation to concepts, particularly apt to intuit and hold a path for truth to take in the night as well as by the day? What is it about his thinking that renders darkness visible for those keen to articulate the conditions of contemporary existence? Moreover, how does it correspond with Parmenides' evocation of truth in which 'everything is full equally of Light and invisible night'?[10] Finally, how does *Hyperion*, a work oft-neglected in philosophical treatments of Hölderlin, guide its readers, a decade before Hegel published his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, through a confusion which arises when the sun has set and easy visibility is no longer freely afforded to those unprepared?[11]

In the closing lines of the poem *The Rhine*, addressed and dedicated to his friend Issac von Sinclair, Hölderlin explicitly invokes the darkening night and troubling light as an abiding metaphor:

> … and never from you
>
> The smile of the Ruler is hidden
>
> By day, when all
>
> That lives seems febrile
>
> And fettered, or also
>
> By night, when all is mingled
>
> Chaotically and back again comes
>
> Primaeval confusion.[12]

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[8] Hölderlin, 'I fear now that perhaps my fate will be as the fate of Tantalus of old, who had more of the gods than he could stomach' - effectively a quotation from: Pindar, *Olympian*. I: 54-57. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 513.
[9] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 514.
[10] Parmenides. 9.1-3.
[11] Literary reception of *Hyperion* is more diverse - and already the subject of a full study: Marco Castellari, *Friedrich Hölderlin: Hyperion nello specchio della critica*, Milan: CUEM, 2002. Further surveys also catalogued in: Lawrence Ryan, *Hölderlins "Hyperion": Exzentrische Bahn und Dichterberuf*, Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagbuchhandlung, 1965.
[12] Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*". I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine". pp. 196 - 209.

In the figure of Sinclair, Hölderlin recognises the significance of preserving a vision of immortal jurisdiction in the face of fluctuating mortal deeds.[13] Nature freed from this divine obligation amounts to 'Primaeval confusion' (*Uralte Verwirrung*): a gaping void which confers allusions to the *tohu va-vohu* of Genesis or chaos in Hesiod's *Theogony*, representing the time, or non-time, before even the gods.[14] With such invocations, readers might be minded to recall St John of the Cross's inference of the elementally paradoxical danger and saving power of the darkness, "the All contained in the Nothing" attainable only to those prepared to submit to the 'dark fire' of divine contemplation.[15] Moreover, Hölderlin echoes these sentiments in *Hyperion* with allusion to the 'night of the soul' in which one must 'sign myself in my own flame'.[16] Yet the force of Hölderlin's poem also derives from its conception of light, which makes the world appear 'febrile / And fettered'. Tellingly, unlike the Platonic-Christian ascent in which one is compelled to "raise oneself" towards the light, or the subjectivist reversal of that emanation in which one projects one's own "enlightenment" upon the world, Hölderlin's sun appears to represent a divisive force which makes consciousness possible through splitting nature into individual, and therefore also isolated, phenomena.[17] Nature is cleaved in the same fashion that the tragic obligation bisects subject from object, the particular from the absolute. It is the light that conceals the gods.

Such observations, which broach a reversal in the conditions which enable truth to emerge, may illustrate Hölderlin's originality at a time when his contemporaries are seen to shut their doors on a setting sun. Nonetheless, many commentators have attempted to trace and then subsume Hölderlin's suspicion of first-principles as if footnotes to his early contemporaneous influences; the philosophical-theological landscape during his student years at the Tübingen *Stift* (Storr's New Testament theology and Kantian critiques, Reinhold's *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*, the French Revolution, Fichte's early naturalism, collaborations with Schelling and Hegel), or his later personal proximity to the philosophical climate of Jena (Fichte's

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[13] Although five years Hölderlin's junior, Sinclair contemporaneously enrolled at the University of Jena. The pair went on to develop a symbiotic philosophical perspective (perhaps most evident in Sinclair's *Philosophische Raisonnements*) influenced by their reaction to Fichte. See "On Isaac von Sinclair" in: Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, trans. Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003. pp. 127 - 141.
[14] Following: Tobias, "Introduction". p. 7.
[15] Saint John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, trans. E. Allison Peers, New York: Image Books, 1959. Bk. 1. There is possibly reference here to Hebrews, xii. 29.: 'Our God is a consuming fire'.
[16] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [IX]".
[17] cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 510.

*Wissenschaftslehre*, Schiller's *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, the powerful legacy of Kant's third *Critique*, and Niethammer's *Philosophical Journal*); going further, some commentators have stressed the admixture of the combined popular influences of Winckelmann's Greece with Jacobi's readings of Spinoza as the decisive force behind Hölderlin's writing.[18] In collating these strands, critics have been able to confidently weave together an historical image of the thinker Hölderlin and "his philosophy" and to assign this image its place within the "history of concepts". What often emerges from conflux of these influences is a perceived ambition to reignite and reimagine a rational absolute, in keeping with Schelling and Hegel's studies - an infinitude which could do justice to the philosophical motif of Hölderlin's generation: *hen kai pan* ("One in All"), thought to have been present in Greek thinking.[19]

And yet, the more one attempts to bind together these strands into a seamless picture the more they begin to unravel themselves. Such is the essential ambiguity of Hölderlin's thought. The exploration of *Hyperion* in this chapter, therefore, will remain steadfast against putting too much faith in totalising formulas. For all of these individual avenues of investigation, rewarding as they undoubtedly are to historians, are also departures and diversions upon a road which coalesces in a synechic conflux rather than a synthetic consistency of meaning. Henrich notes how such approaches foster the idea that through logical-philosophical equations and systems Hölderlin's ideas about truth, as is the case with Hegel and Schelling, could be concretely "deduced" or "synthesised" into a unified structure.[20] There is no evidence that Hölderlin pursed such a programme. Quite the opposite: Hölderlin's theoretical texts constitute a patchwork of meditations, arguments, and inquiries, which, unlike the collected works of a philosopher, do not represent a sustained network of mutually corroborating theses, but rather arguments in which ideas are stated, restated, reflected, and refracted, at times abruptly diverted towards unforeseen conclusions so as to reappear, as if reflected upon the surface of flowing water, perpetually

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[18] On Hölderlin's early philosophical development, and commentaries, consult: Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 31 - 118. Also see the detailed genealogy of Hölderlin commentaries in: Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*. pp. 23 - 141.

[19] In correspondence with Moses Mendelssohn, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi claimed that Lessing, inspired by Spinoza, introduced this aspect of Greek thought into German discourse, declaring: 'The orthodox concepts are no longer for me; I cannot stand them. *Hen kai pan!*'. In: Dieter Henrich, *Between Kant and Hegel: Lectures on German Idealism*, ed. David S. Pacini, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. pp. 82 - 96.

[20] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 238. This opinion is reflected throughout Peter Szondi's *Hölderlin-Studien*.

shifting. As Hamacher illustrates, Hölderlin remains resistant to models of literary and philosophical research inasmuch as his thought refrains from any attempt to derive an overarching development of the construction of an internal poetical logic which 'succeeds in demonstrating that the chaos of entangled references and contradictory or merely equivocal forms is structured by a synthesising meaning'.[21] Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, as this chapter will illustrate, holds and demonstrates the essential ambiguities and dissonances *in* texts and the covert suppressions that take place in the minds of those who try to wrest monographic intensions from thought. Such a process is achieved in illustrating the capacity of synechic language to withhold these dissonances, asymmetries, and suspensions, in the absence of a law of synthesis. The truth broached in Hölderlin's work echoes with clarity of a different form, perhaps in the manner of the answered prayer whose answer, as such answers always are, is initially unrecognisable as such.

If Hölderlin's thought unravels in the face of philosophical procedure it also unravels the Gordian knot philosophers had placed around the principle of truth until his time. In so doing, Hölderlin comes to understand, as Parmenides and tragic thinking before him, the unknown darkness as the essential pre-condition to truth. Perhaps this disconcerting acknowledgement is why Hölderlin, unlike many of his predecessors and contemporaries, was deprived of a fate with disciples or followers. As this study has illustrated, Hölderlin is, to all intents and purposes, a thinker of the twentieth century. Hölderlin is not "passed down" via a line of like-minded philosophers and "schools of thought", nor does he follow a teleological development within the history of ideas, but rather, phoenix-like, appears from the ashes of absolutely reasoned convictions. The more philosophers have attempted to strike forth amidst the soft, marshy, insecure ground of "modernity", upon which every new step generates only a fleeting impression, the more they appear compelled to follow Hölderlin's writings to interrogate the deepest roots of their discipline. Surely, as Hölderlin's writings illustrate, the frailties of understanding will prohibit thought from wholly achieving such a task, perhaps they will not however prevent it from attuning itself to the forces behind this failure - wherein one even begin to appreciate the wisdom

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[21] Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". pp. 19 - 20.

in Hesiod's saying that the half is greater than the whole, and, therein, the function of Hölderlin's *synechia* which holds this half with that which is forever beyond its grasp.[22]

If modern thinking supersedes and demands from philosophical thought a justification for its existence, it is Hölderlin's thought which rises to meet the challenge. It rises, firstly, in denying the competence of systematic philosophical procedure with respect to the very problems it engenders. Rather, Hölderlin illustrates how the oppositions at the foundation of these problems can only be held-together in the form of a synechic truth process which diverges from conceptual thought to explain 'the divisions in which we think and exist'.[23] In this sense, systematic thinking is not the only faculty in this pursuit of truth. Perhaps, Hölderlin's procedure requires above all an awareness of the obstinacy of habitual philosophical procedure to impinge upon all matters of truth. Hölderlin does not seek a subjective "deconstruction" of normative authorities, but rather the deprivation of any phantasmic recourse. It is from out of such a process, as *Hyperion* instructs, that humans paradoxically 'find pleasure in flinging ourselves into the night of the unknown, into the cold foreign realm of some other world, and if it were possible, we would leave the domain of the sun'.[24] Such a stance is prefigured in a 1795 letter to Schiller, wherein Hölderlin instructs how those pursuing poetry must learn to 'warm themselves on ice'.[25] This chapter, therefore, will examine how from out of such paradoxes Hölderlin's *Hyperion* teaches that synthetic unity may only be expressed in the abdication of any particular systemic claims to unity as such, and, how the truth process might also respond to what Hölderlin will describe as the most ancient of ambitions: to 'represent man's understanding as walking in the midst of things unthinkable'.[26]

Such observations orient themselves around Hölderlin's theoretical remarks concerning the manner in which insight and dissolution often occur simultaneously during historical transformation - the ways in which, at such moments, the subject is left groundless and yet in the same gesture able to 'say ground'.[27] As *Hyperion* will demonstrate, "traditional" dialectical-

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[22] '*Νήπιοι, οὐδὲ ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντός*'. Hesiod, *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia.* (*Works and Days*, 11.).
[23] Writing to Immanuel Niethammer, 24th February 1796, Hölderlin expresses the ambition to 'explain to my satisfaction the divisions in which we think and exist', in: Hölderlin, *SW.* II: 614-615. Hölderlin, *ELT.* pp. 131 - 132.
[24] Hölderlin, *Hyperion.* Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [IV]".
[25] Hölderlin to Schiller, 4th September 1795, in: Hölderlin, *EL.* pp. 62 - 63.
[26] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*", in: *SW.* II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Antigone"", in: *ELT.* pp. 109 - 116.
[27] 'Say ground. No ground but say ground.' Samuel Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, New York: Grove Press, 1983. p. 8.

philosophical concepts provide multiple resources to pursue this ground, however, Hölderlin's thought demands that the intensity of knowledge broached at such junctures also undermines the legitimacy of such processes themselves. Philosophy, then, requires something more philosophical than itself in order to communicate truth. As with the thought of Parmenides, Hölderlin straddles and holds-together conflicting logical and mythological discourses, suspending them in a vacillating conflux of poetic language. *Synechia* are not just interventions which overcome the immaturity of the sciences in their times, but rather, like a ladder which mortals must use to climb from their singular gestures to commune, the manner in which decisive truths appear to humans, tragically. Moreover, if *synechia* can be said to preserve a sense of the superstitious it is perhaps in the fashion that the curious synchronisms and juxtapositions, physical and moral, in which humans are involved, have a meaning which cannot be made sensible solely through the application of the concept.

In his rendering of a synechic technique Hölderlin enunciates a truth which, as Frank highlights, argues for:

> a conception of the essence of unity as a structure articulated through opposition
> that is not only incompatible with Descartes' and Kant's—but also Fichte's—
> dualistic intuitions, and that, despite its inconspicuous appearance, marks a
> turning point in modern thought.[28]

This turn positions Hölderlin as both a product of his own time, and yet at the same time a thinker whose ideas, as with Parmenides, lace together the concerns of what is past, present, and the not-yet-visible, in a synechic presentation which holds all three within a single yet disjointed continuum. It is perhaps in reference to the particular conflux of Hölderlin's philosophical lineage that his observations on the nature of truth become all the more striking in their ability to hold provocative conversations with the philosophical tradition, and yet take their own course which challenges the precedents of tradition as such. For this reason, the ensuing interpretations of *Hyperion* are guided by the three hegemonic domains of dialectical truth: nature, time, and politics, each of which, this chapter will argue, Hölderlin takes up and challenges as legislative

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[28] Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*. p. 117.

markers. These thematic pillars will girdle the architecture of this chapter, highlighting first their philosophical application, and then, how *Hyperion* presents a synechic technique in response to each of the historically foundational truth categories so as to dispute the law of synthesis which attempts to resolve all disparities. Indeed, an early preface to the draft version of *Hyperion* expresses this process forever held between 'two ideals of existence'.[29] The introductory text of this chapter has hoped to provide a silhouette for what in this chapter will become the body of Hölderlin's claims about the synechic nature of truth in *Hyperion*. In our time, as in Hölderlin's, the question remains: are we ready for such claims?

*To be one with all that lives!: Hölderlin's Elemental Philosophy*

What is it about the nature of truth which requires nature, first of all, to reveal its truth, tragically? The philosophical process begins, Cornford highlights, with the Greek 'discovery of Nature'.[30] It is the natural world which grants humans the license to be "properly" philosophical. This discovery galvanises nothing less than a new intellectual truth regime, a hitherto unknown 'will to truth' even, as Michel Foucault argues.[31] This regime is stimulated by an agency taken to be unique in nature, which makes humans "thinking" beings. Humans are the "rational animal". However, as the recent researches of Catherine Malabou illustrate, thinking beings are also necessarily anarchic beings, representing a chaos unique to the "natural" processes of the world.[32] "Thinking" beings represent the disorder *after* Hölderlin's evocation of 'Primaeval confusion'. The "rational animal" of philosophers appears, in this manner, an affront to the natural world imposed by the primordial Greek understanding of *phúsis*; the immutable natural authority which transcends mortal knowledge. It is this confrontation which first compels philosophers to reassert the apparently absolute order of nature - in "truth". The reclamation of such a truth, however, can only be "discovered"; it must be brought forth and asserted synthetically. The "unity" of nature

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[29] Hölderlin, "Fragment von Hyperion.", in: *SW*. I: 489-510.
[30] F. M. Cornford, *Before and after Socrates*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1965. p. 7.
[31] Foucault, "The Discourse on Language". p. 218. 'I am thinking of the way Western literature has, for centuries, sought to base itself in nature, in the plausible, upon sincerity and science—in short, upon true discourse'.
[32] Malabou has sought to define neural processes in keeping with her understanding of plasticity - a system which perpetually transforms itself, so as to undermine its own laws, from the inside. Thus, Malabou turns to anarchism as a way to understand the brain - which operates with no "centralised" system of power. Consider: Catherine Malabou, *What Should We Do with Our Brain?*, trans. Sebastian Rand, New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.

can only reveal itself to thinking beings through the mediation of disunited thoughts. So, if there is no centralised power and transitory mortality exerts a disparate labour on any truth claims, who or what can claim the authority to decree or deny truth to nature in this manner? Are humans able to grant meaning to the unconditioned? Can Hölderlin's thought answer such questions? Before this section approaches answers to these questions it will be necessary to survey the history which brings them into being.

For the pre-classical Greeks, *phúsis* denotes 'rising,' 'becoming,' 'arrival,' 'growth'; that is, all that shows itself to mortals through the processes of *poíēsis*.[33] *Phúsis*, then, signifies both the phenomenal and the processes by which phenomena come "to be". This semantic ambiguity is crucial, implying more than the anachronistic rendering of Burnet who interprets *phúsis* as 'stuff'.[34] *Phúsis* implies no firm distinction between "becoming" and "being", and thus, as distinguished in a pre-conceptual *archē*, holds and maintains divergent allegiances. As the arrival in presence of what is present, *phúsis* cannot serve for the Greeks as a normative authority of truth - for the simple reason that is it not merely phenomena, but also the ambiguous *experience of showing* in all that shows itself. John Sallis suggests that *phúsis* allows things 'to grow, come to light, to unfold into the open expanse' which however, in order to remain "open" must also remain, in the epistemic sense, unconditioned.[35] For Schürmann, it is not until the translation into the Latin *natura*, that the natural world truly becomes a epistemic site of hegemonic authority: 'For the Latins, this all-encompassing character is what governed meaning; they found in it their tutelary meaning: the meaning of meaning'.[36] The distinction is important. For the Greeks, authority did not derive from "natural law", but from the power of the gods inscribed in nature. Thus, Aristotle instructs that any 'attempt to demonstrate that nature exists would be absurd'.[37] *Phúsis*, then, implies an ordering force which upholds justice beyond mortal jurisdiction. Nature

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[33] G. S. Kirk, *Heraclitus: The Cosmic Fragments*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1975. p. 228.
[34] John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*. Consult "φύσις", pp. 10 -12. Kirk notes discrepancies in modern philology: Diels gives '*die Natur*' as translation; Kranz adds in parentheses '*das Wesen*'; in noting that every becoming involved a passing Gigon's meaning implies something closer to 'hiding'; a development of Heidel's translation which recalls the "primitive" original meaning of *phúsis* as 'becoming'. Kirk, *Heraclitus: The Cosmic Fragments*. pp. 227 - 229.
[35] John Sallis, *Force of Imagination: The Sense of the Elemental*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000. p. 154.
[36] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 192.
[37] Aristotle, *Physics*. 193: A3-4

represents an ineffable force and not a universalising focal truth. Simone Weil has identified this force as the precondition for any reading of the *Iliad*:

> In this work, at all times, the human spirit is shown as modified by its relations
>
> with force, as swept away, blinded, by the very force it imagined it could handle,
>
> as deformed by the weight of the force it submits to.[38]

Weil's reading is illustrative of Schelling's suggestion that 'the *Iliad* is the history of nature'.[39] This force of "nature" is sustained in Greek tragic disposition. Throughout the tragic drama *phúsis* represents an immutable and incommensurable agent, the 'unwritten and immovable laws of the gods', striking down those who attempt to defy, either through hubris or ignorance, the cosmic processes and the synechic technique which holds such processes together.[40] As Weil suggests, *phúsis* is the agent which prevents mortals from cognitive mastery of their environment, but not, in tragic expression, from contemplating the forces by which it also overwhelms them. Thus, Hölderlin writes in his *Notes on Antigone*: '*Greek tragic word is deadly-factual*, because the body which it overwhelms really kills'.[41]

As Schelling writes, the Greek Gods 'were still within nature'.[42] *Phúsis*, for Weil, plays a pivotal role in the vocation to bridge the distance between humans and Gods, a 'mediation in the descending movement by which God seeks man' by holding forth presence.[43] Nonetheless, however well-founded this vocation may be, it nonetheless rests in part upon a voluntary faith in it. Once this faith is in some way "used up", disintegration follows. In the previous chapter, the collapse of the archaic manifestation of aletheological truth was understood as concurrent to the time it enters into a contradiction with the burgeoning city state and civil law. To whom does the city dweller ascribe the law, Plato enquiries in the *Laws*: '*theos ê tis anthrôpôn*', a god or one of the humans?[44] Pointing to *Antigone* as the paradigmatic manifestation of this primordial denial, both Weil and Schürmann postulate that it is the movement toward city life which, in the same

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[38] Simone Weil, *The Iliad, or The Poem of Force*, Pennsylvania: Pendle Hill, 1959. p. 3.
[39] Schelling quoted in: Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama.* p. 167.
[40] Sophocles, *Antigone. Women of Trachis. Philoctetes. Oedipus at Colonus*. (*Antigone*, 441f.).
[41] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*". II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Notes on the *Antigone*". pp. 325 - 332.
[42] F. W. J. Schelling, "Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism", in: *The Unconditional in Human Knowledge: Four Early Essays*, trans. Fritz Marti, London: Associated University Presses, 1980. p. 193 (X: 337, 338.).
[43] Simone Weil, "The Romanesque Renaissance", in: *Selected Essays, 1934 - 1943: Historical, Political, and Moral Writings*, trans. Richard Rees, London: Oxford University Press, 1962. p. 46.
[44] Plato, *Laws: Books 1-6*. (1: 624.).

gesture, initially stimulates the realignment of nature understood as *phúsis* into a hegemonic legislator.[45] Yet Sophocles' play withdraws from commitment to either side in the division between primordial-mythic and civic-logical mental structures. Indeed, just as with Parmenides, this tragic resistance is founded upon a synechic 'chiasm of unilateral positions', a preponderance summarised by *Antigone*'s chorus as *amphinoein*, 'to think from two sides'.[46] As Harrison articulates, in tragic thinking the natural and social orders can never be integrated; 'they stand at the two poles remote and even alien'.[47] Yet, the two forces to do not stand diametrically opposed to each other, as Heidegger illustrates, as 'darkness and light, black and white, guilty and innocent', but rather show what 'is essential to each *is* as it is from out of the unity of essence and nonessence, yet in a different way in each case'.[48] Between the two spheres, mortals must learn to bend or break like the tree in a raging winter torrent, to 'sway with the flood' instead of standing-firm as the stubborn tree which is 'ripped out, roots and all'.[49]

The divisive shift in the understanding of nature is strictly anti-Greek: it comes about in a thesis which posits the hitherto explicitly un-natural, the immovable city state and its laws, as something which is, as Cicero writes, 'in agreement with nature'.[50] For the Latin-speaking theorists of natural law, the natural 'encompasses *both* the city *and* the natural domain'.[51] For the Romans, nature no longer represents, as it did for the Greeks, the divine jurisdiction *beyond* mortals which nonetheless imparted phenomena, but rather becomes an *archē* thesis which determines that which one declares to be "natural" as the ultimate normative authority. In setting *natura* as the law of laws, then, Latinist thought establishes a hegemonic legislative criterion which determines the conditions according to which what is present presents itself to representation. To the contrary, the Greeks had no conception of absolute natural laws but instead

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[45] This juxtaposition appears in Plato's arguments with the Sophists: followers of Protagoras are said to 'speak of justice and injustice… as having no natural basis' in: Plato, *Theaetetus*. 172b. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 196 - 198. Simone Weil, "Human Personality", in: *An Anthology*, ed. Siân Miles, London: Penguin Books, 2005. pp. 82 - 83.

[46] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 197. Sophocles, *Antigone*. v. 376. Sophocles' *amphinoein* recalls the ceremonial feast of *amphidromia* in which a new born is presented to the gods and its family and, thusly, receives its name. Moreover, it is even possible to read Antigone's name "anti - genos" as a subversion of these ceremonies.

[47] Harrison, *Themis*. p. 534.

[48] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "The Ister"*. p. 52.

[49] Sophocles, *Antigone. Women of Trachis. Philoctetes. Oedipus at Colonus*. (*Antigone*, 797 - 800.).

[50] Cicero, *On the Republic. On the Laws*, trans. Clinton W. Keyes, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928. pp. 198 - 201. (*Republic*, III: 22, 23.).

[51] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 191.

a divine justice embodied by the fluctuating, incalculable, and irrational dominions of force.[52] *Natura*, however, 'envelops the individual, the city, humanity, the cosmos, and the gods'.[53] How is one to articulate *natura*, then, as Harrison asks, when to subsume nature under the inorganic is in such manner is to darken counsel, it is 'to deny that very charge and movement which *is* life'?[54]

With the shift into Latin as its primary language philosophy underwent an internal transformation in the confidence that "rational" laws and truths could be ascribed to nature that could never be wholly observed and least of all understood. In this development, Cornford summaries, the intellect assumes 'that the world is intelligible; and that leads naturally to the further assumption that the processes of nature… must move on lines that our own reason might have laid down beforehand'.[55] This rational foundation rebuffs the understanding that in nature all things keep on in everlasting motion of folding and interweaving divine fluctuations which move, fold, and flow together: 'Speeding above, below, in endless dance' to which humans are unsure of the melody and unable, at times, even to control their own steps.[56] A natural world in which 'there is always motion', is inevitably substituted for the primacy of ontological stasis in a stable knowledge of the natural law of God.[57] Thus, for Augustine, nature is 'divine reason or the will of God prescribing that the natural order be conserved and proscribing departing from it'.[58] When Augustine queries the natural world it responds to him: 'Anaximenes is deluded, I am not God… He made us'.[59] Thus, Wilhelm Dilthey postulates that Augustine's Christianity represents the evolution of the primordial sciences into something like an epistemological science of the soul through which the *veritates aeternae* (eternal truths) of nature could be discerned in the absolute

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[52] However, by the fifth century BC one finds exhalations of the virtue of law as protector against nature: 'law and justice rule over people and could not be altered in any way'. See: Iamblichus, *The Anonymous of Iamblichus*. 6.1. *Natura* is also suggested in: '*Law* became the lord and king of men'. Plato, *Letters*. 354c.
[53] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 201.
[54] Harrison, *Themis*. pp. 534 - 535.
[55] F. M. Cornford, "The Unwritten Philosophy", in: *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other* Essays, London: Cambridge University Press, 1950. p. 31.
[56] Lucretius, *The Way Things Are: The* De Rerum Natura *of Titus Lucretius Carus*, trans. Rolfe Humphries, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969. p. 48. Following: Thomas Nail, *Lucretius I: An Ontology of Motion*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018. pp. 1 - 21.
[57] Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption*. (324b35-325a6, a23-b5.).
[58] Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*. 22, 27.
[59] Augustine, *Confessions, Volume II: Books 9-13*, trans. Carolyn J.-B. Hammond, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016. pp. 80 - 83 (X: vi.).

consciousness of God.[60] In this manner, for the millennium and a half that philosophy spoke Latin, nature was inscribed as the obligatory legitimiser all laws of truth.[61]

However, at the moment the medieval nominalists argued that natural law derived solely from the will of God, independent from all intellectual activity, nature was freed from its teleological function as a teacher working by the means of reason.[62] In this void, the subjectivist revolution reversed the principle of *natura* so that being, now no longer the universal arrangement of all things, is accessible only to and from the position of the thinking subject who surveys nature as a collection of objects subject to autonomous laws forming the background to its own activities and concerns. A. N. Whitehead identifies this turn as the birth of a 'bifurcation of nature', a transition in which nature represents the deliverance of a subjects self-awareness. [63] While Dilthey's interpretation suggests that this change is already prefigured in the nascent interiority of Augustine's *natura*, the two positions are not be confused.[64] For Augustine, 'what is inward is better' because it 'gives life' to the soul, the apparatus though which God is to be perceived if not wholly understood.[65] Augustine's inward gaze does not 'sit in judgement on myself', it represents a '*freedom in me which I am not*' which is more intimately present to the subject because it is not it.[66] Similarly, Aquinas echoes Augustine's sentiment when he posits that the divine intellect 'measures and is not measured; a natural thing both measures and is measured; but our intellect is measured'.[67] The shift toward a modern interiority, however, presupposes a cognitive freedom beyond that of the mechanistic necessities and drives that are "in us" naturally, and though which it is even possible to overcome these apparatuses.[68] Cognitive freedom and natural obligation are in an alterity which enfranchises reason as the focal point proscribing laws to both nature and the

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[60] Wilhelm Dilthey, *Introduction to the Human Sciences*, ed. Rudolf A Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, Princetown: Princetown University Press, 1989. p. 139.
[61] Following the section "In the Name of Nature: The Latin Hegemonic Fantasm", in: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 189 - 340.
[62] cf. Otto von Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*, trans. Frederic William Maitland, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913. p. 173.
[63] Alfred North Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920. pp. 26 - 48.
[64] Following: Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Gosetti-Ferencei, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004. pp. 118 - 124.
[65] Augustine, *Confessions*. X: vi. Augustine proposes: if 'you are by nature mutable, transcend yourself', in: Augustine, "Of True Religion", in: *Earlier Writings*, trans. J. H. S. Burleigh, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. p. 262.
[66] I Corinthians. 4: 3, Augustine cites this passage, concluding 'it is in this spirit that I ask to be listed to', in: Augustine, *Confessions*. X: iv. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, p. 653, n.35.
[67] Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de Veritate*, trans. Robert W. Mulligan, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1952. (q. 1, a. 2.).
[68] Following: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 653, n.35.

self in the same gesture. Through such a regime humans are made, for the first time, 'masters and possessors of nature'.[69] As Cassirer highlights, Leibniz provided the first archetype for a process wherein 'every individual substance is not only a fragment of the universe, it is the universe itself seen from a particular viewpoint'.[70] Thus, whereas Augustine's theology had transposed Cicero's natural "Eternal City" into a natural "The City of God", the subjectivist revolution in turn occupied 'the Kingdom of Reason' in which the natural dwelt.[71] To this end, if an emancipation from the authority of the natural world represents a legislative freedom which concurrently prescribes the systematic laws of the universe while challenging their authority, then nature itself must be rethought. Moreover, the newly emergent legislative philosophical spontaneity "independent" from nature must also respond to the question: can humans legislate "naturally"?

In his 1790 *Critique of Judgement*, Kant had attempted to untie the subjectivist knot of this aporetic relationship between material nature and moral judgement within the limits of the medium set by his two earlier critiques. This issue is already summarised in the opening lines of the Preface to the first edition of the 1781 *Critique of Pure Reason*:

> reason has this peculiar fate that in one species of its knowledge it is burdened
>
> by questions which, as prescribed by the very nature of reason itself, it is not able
>
> to ignore, but which, as transcending all its powers, it is also not able to answer.[72]

In short, for Kant 'every empirical cognition' is predicated on an ongoing relationship between human faculties and nature.[73] However, this equation raises the disquieting predicament which renders possible the ground from which thought precedes, the 'unconditioned condition', and how such ground can be represented to mortals, given that it is not really ground but rather the non-ground which makes possible ground.[74] With this issue, Kant broaches the paradoxical properties representative of a crisis in the regime of subjectivist legislative judgement introduced in the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

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[69] Descartes, *Discourse on Method*. Part VI [62].

[70] Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove, Princetown: Princetown University Press, 1951. p. 32.

[71] Kant's pupil, Reinhold Bernhard Jachmann, noted that 'many evangelists went forth [from Kant's lectures] and preached the gospel of the Kingdom of Reason'. Roger Scruton, *Kant: A Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. p. 97.

[72] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. (A viii.).

[73] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. (§77.).

[74] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. (B561/A533.).

there must be some third thing, which is homogenous on the one hand with the

category, and on the other hand with appearance, and which thus makes the

application of the former to the latter possible. This mediating representation

must be pure, that is, void of all empirical content, and yet at the same time, while

it must be in one respect be *intellectual*, it must in another be *sensible*.[75]

This "third thing" which mediates the intellectual and sensible realms must then at the same time

be homogeneous with both but also stand apart; it is 'an art concealed in the depths of the human

soul' from which all knowledge must be derived but which itself cannot be thought.[76] In the

*Critique of Judgement*, Kant highlights the experience of beauty through which it is possible to

trace a harmonious relation between cognitive capacities and surrounding nature without

contradiction.[77] While Kant dedicates most of his attention toward the experience of beauty in

nature, he also posits that nature can be made purposive to mortals through works of art which

replicate nature's freedom from cognitive constraint.[78] In other words, Kant's *Critique of*

*Judgement* can be said to make certain claims about a *remembrance of nature in art* which teaches

humans something fundamental about the relationship between cognition and nature.

However, the architecture of Kant's conception of nature rests upon unsteady

foundations. There is an irresolvable conflict at the heart of the relation between aesthetic

judgement, which has its own law 'free from concepts', and the necessity of a conceptual

discrimination over-above a manifold of particulars.[79] In this critical rupture (or, 'incalculable

gulf') an infinite regress threatens the operations of judgement.[80] Cognitive unification appears

as a signpost to an unreachable destination, for at every turn beauty appears with the promise of

a different order, and yet all the while the road must continue to be taken, for without it unification

manifests as naked tyranny. The spectre of beauty hovers over the legitimacy of human judgement

with a guilty verdict and, up until Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, as Caygill argues, 'the trope of

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[75] Ibid. (A138/B177.).
[76] Ibid. (A142/B181.). Following: Norman Kemp Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason'*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. pp. 334 - 342. and: Howard Caygill, *Art of Judgement*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989. pp. 4 - 7.
[77] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. (§79.).
[78] 'For the beautiful in nature we must seek a ground outside ourselves'. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. (§23.).
[79] Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. (§56.).
[80] Ibid. (§5.).

admitting beauty as an autonomous production only for as long as it enables judgement to take place, and then retracting it characterises modern traditions of beauty and judgement' so that it remains an indisputable paradox of a philosophy of subjective identity to have a irresolvable moment of natural "non-identity" at its base.[81]

Frederick C. Beiser argues that Hölderlin's philosophy of nature initially manifests in the desire for a "ground outside ourselves" as corrective to the systemic unresolved fissures of the Kantian 'subjectivist interpretation' of the relation between cognition and nature.[82] Indeed, Hölderlin began work on *Hyperion* in earnest after having read Kant's *Critique of Judgement* in 1792, later hinting in a 1794 letter to Hegel that 'Kant and the Greeks almost exclusively occupy my readings'.[83] It has been suggested, then, that *Hyperion* offers a revised Kantian notion that the experience of beauty indicates a certain remembrance of a harmonious relationship with nature free from the cognitive faculty. Hegel would later identify the development of Kant's thesis in Schiller's 1794 *Letters Upon the Aesthetic Education of Man* as illustration of how the beautiful might reconcile all oppositions through an "aesthetic consciousness".[84] Indeed, as many commentators have noted, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* begins with an apparent attempt to extend Schiller's thesis so that the experience of beauty becomes the revelation of the ultimate unity of all existence.[85] Perhaps nowhere is this ambition given fuller voice than in *Hyperion*'s opening passages:

> To be one with all that lives, to return in blessed self-oblivion into the All of
>
> nature, that is the summit of thoughts and joys, that is the holy mountain height,
>
> the place of eternal repose, where the midday loses its swelter and the thunder its
>
> voice and the boiling sea resembles the billowing field of grain.

[81] Caygill, *Art of Judgement*. pp. 17-18.
[82] Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781-1801*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002. p. 9.
[83] Hölderlin to Hegel, 10th July 1794, in: Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 540-541.
[84] Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I: 61-64.
[85] cf. Luke Fischer, "Hölderlin's Mythopoetics: From 'Aesthetic Letters' to the New Mythology", in: *Hölderlin's Philosophy of Nature*. pp. 143 - 163.

To be one with all that lives! With these words virtue removes its wrathful

armour, the spirit of man lays its sceptre aside and all thoughts vanish before the

image of the world's eternal unity.[86]

Can one, then, simply view Hölderlin's claims about the truth of nature through a theoretical lens

opened up by his interactions with Kant and Schiller's aesthetics?

Initially, readers may consider the passage above to be Hölderlin's first articulation of the

theoretical principals outlined in the philosophical manifesto, "The Oldest Programme for a

System of German Idealism". This fragmentary, pioneering, and disputed text, dated between

1796 and 1797, represents the earliest elaboration of the philosophical enterprise Hölderlin,

Hegel, and Schelling had resolved to embark upon.[87] Citing Kant as the antecedent who had not

yet exhausted the potentialities of his own project, this text declares that philosophers 'must

possess as much aesthetic force as the poet' for 'the supreme act of reason, because it embraces

all ideas, is an aesthetic act'.[88] It is only in this 'supreme act' that 'eternal unity will prevail'.[89] As

a remembrance of united existence beyond subjective reason, beauty consolidates, binds, and

subsumes all people in an aesthetic act, promoting an order, or even a 'programme for agitation',

beyond that of the legislative expression of subjective reason.[90] With its tentacles reaching out

into and transforming other disciplines and traditions, the programme argues for the rehabilitation

of the 'higher dignity' of the poetic act which acts as the '*instructress of {history} humanity*'.[91] In

brief, the text might be said to preserve a Kantian coupling of ethicality and aesthetic experience

in the service of truth, all the while proposing a programmatic identity which breaks with a system

of conceptual reason through artworks which alone deliver absolute unity.

It might be argued, then, that the position of nature within such a system is akin to a

blackboard upon which the story of human consciousness is written. The position of 'lending

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[86] Hölderlin, *Hyperion.* Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [II]".
[87] Since Franz Rosenzweig's first publication of the manifesto in 1917 much philological back-and-forth over the disputed authorship of the text has continued unabated. Although clearly written in Hegel's hand, the assertive and radical tone is suggestive of either Hölderlin or Schelling's authorship. At times a possible unknown fourth author has also been proposed.
[88] "The Oldest System-Programme of German Idealism", in: *ELT.* pp. 154 - 156. For further commentary, consider: Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute.* pp. 16 - 44.
[89] "The Oldest Programme for a System of German Idealism".
[90] Dieter Henrich, quoted in: Kai Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. p. 76.
[91] "The Oldest Programme for a System of German Idealism".

wings' to physics postulated in the first-half of the text has been read by some commentators as a natural development of the Fichtean egological law of identity which posits self-consciousness as the ground of absolute being. [92] In this guise, the Fichtean position can be read as a "development" in Kantian thought, rendering the self-positing "I" as the 'first, absolutely unconditioned principle of all human knowledge'. [93] Yet, as Henrich delineates, Hölderlin was also the first commentator to stress the fragility of Fichte's ego-*archē*: indeed, Fichte's "I" can only determine itself dialectically through the mediation of a counteracting "not-I" which provides the ground for its condition. [94] Fichte's system, therefore, transposes the fracture at the heart of the Kantian subject-object dualism into a subjective system of split consciousness. As Frank highlights, Schelling was the first to theoretically attempt to integrate nature within the *telos* of Fichte's philosophy of the "I". [95] In his first systematic publications, *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature* (1799) and *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), Schelling gives free expression to a natural philosophy which renders nature as an unconscious series of stages whose ambition is to become a conscious object to itself. In Schelling's natural philosophy, nature strives towards human self-reflection which represents the teleological end-point of its order, reconciling the Fichtean ego and nature:

> The dead and unconscious products of nature are merely abortive attempts that
> she makes to reflect herself; inanimate nature so-called is actually as such an
> immature intelligence… Nature's highest goal, to become wholly an object to
> herself, is achieved only through the last and highest order of reflection, which is
> none other than man. [96]

Caught upon the seas of his own systematic programmatic, the course upon which Schelling sets sail is the same that eventually leaves system philosophy marooned, unable to find a harbour

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[92] Ibid. On the relation to Fichte's philosophy see: Rolf-Peter Horstmann, "The Early philosophy of Fichte and Schelling", in: *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. pp. 117 - 127. Additionally: "Hölderlin and Schelling: Two Encounters with Fichte", in: G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel: The Letters*, trans. Clark Butler, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. pp. 23 - 54 (quote above on p. 32).
[93] J. G. Fichte, *Foundation of the Entire* Wissenschaftslehre *and Related Writngs (1794-95)*, trans. Daniel Breazeale, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. p. 200 (§1. I/2: 255).
[94] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 71 - 89. Hölderlin's position was later elaborated by Hegel in the 1801 essay: *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*.
[95] Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*. pp. 97 - 99.
[96] Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*. p. 6.

which precedes all concepts through the selfsame rational exposition of concepts. Thus, towards the end of the *System of Transcendental Idealism*, Schelling abandons a philosophy of nature altogether, pointing once more toward the experience of beauty in art as the only avenue to the absolute.[97] In other words, beauty represents a metaphysical concept which reveals the hidden unity of subject and object, human spirit and nature, the conscious and unconscious.[98]

Hegel develops this Fichte-Schelling conceptual system, in its general formation and determinations, in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*.[99] Indeed, Hegel systematically outlines a teleological programme in which a "naturally" embedded consciousness raises to the level of a philosophically reflexive one. As Richard Kroener argues, Hegel's reflections do not represent a direct attempt to resolve the insoluble antinomies of Schelling's intuitive reconciliation of nature and consciousness in beauty, but rather a retreat into a Fichtean egological world of 'union of union and nonunion'.[100] For some, Hegel's retreat represents something of a *reculer pour mieux sauter*, a necessary "step back" before attempting to "go beyond" Schelling's system. To be sure, by articulating the role of nature as the unconditioned absolute, Schelling had integrated Hölderlin's critique of the paradoxical relationship of subjectivity and objectivity in Fichte's thinking into his own systematic philosophy. However, in Hegel's reading, Schelling's thesis surrenders the subjective ego into the equilibrium of an absolute objective where identity is absorbed into, and thus destroyed by, the undefined rubric of the One. In other words, the endless struggle between Fichte's "I" and "not-I" is reversed by Schelling into a ceaseless equilibrium of aesthetic beauty. For Hegel, nature represents neither Fichte's endless strife nor Schelling's ceaseless harmony: nature is both a continual revolt and restless redemption. Ever since the move away from *phúsis* as the grounding of nature, the hegemonic philosophical representation of nature had little grounding in nature; in Hegel's thinking a palpable attempt to integrate

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[97] Ibid. pp. 219 - 233.
[98] Ibid. pp. 229 - 233.
[99] 'It seems difficult, if not impossible, to understand the order of experiential levels in the *Phenomenology*… without the pattern of materials inherited from Fichte and Schelling', Michael Vater in: Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*. p. xiv. Hegel writes: 'The shortcoming in the Kantian philosophy was… speculative unity was lacking to the whole system; and this shortcoming was removed by Fichte'. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. III: 244-246.
[100] Richard Kroner, "Hegel's Philosophical Development", in: G. W. F. Hegel, *Early Theological Texts*, trans. Richard Kroner, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971. pp. 20 - 28. Hegel's quotation can be found in the essay, "Fragment of a System", in the same publication (p. 312.).

philosophical method with nature and theory with practice occurs.[101] In order to explain the existence of reason in nature Hegel highlights the dimension of a "historical" time, distinct from the biological or cosmic processes of nature.[102] Thus, Hegel argues that 'Time is the Concept which *exists empirically*'.[103] Such an empirical existence, however, necessitates a repudiation of the role of aesthetic beauty in favour of philosophical enterprise, while natural beauty, representing an unconscious manifestation of spirit, is relegated lower still: the philosopher must endeavour like Socrates to sit in judgement above all of these domains in order to synthesise them into a scientific emanation of reason.[104]

In response to the question formulated by Schelling: 'how does intelligence come to be added to nature, or how does nature come to be presented?' both of Hölderlin's theoretical confederates, then, attempt to systematically conceptualise an absolute realm beyond reflective thought via the means of reflective thought: Schelling in an aesthetics, and Hegel in religion (or, "spirit").[105] However, something else is also set into motion which attunes itself to a new modality in thinking whereby "Absolute" knowledge, as Heidegger argues, is elevated to the paradoxical position of elevating 'the conditionedness of the *ego cogito* into the unconditioned'.[106] The philosophy of absoluteness opens itself to a unconditioned finitude which radically undermines its own position, displacing the relationship between philosophy and truth. In one of his earliest theoretical essays, Hölderlin had already theorised the 'lawlessness' of the 'anarchy of representations' through which the intellect attempts to 'organise' the absolute.[107] In this text Hölderlin articulates how, as Pfau writes, 'the imagination implicitly threatens the alleged systematicity of the theoretical as such'.[108] For Hölderlin, the presencing of nature is made present to mortals in a manner which not only eludes introspection but also transcendental philosophy.

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[101] 'Liberated reason is identical with its action, and its activity is a pure presentation of reason itself'. Hegel, *The Difference between the Fichtean and Schellingian Systems of Philosophy*. p. 113.
[102] On the concept of time in Hegel's *Phenomenology* see: Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. pp. 100 - 150.
[103] Hegel, quoted with analysis in: Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*. pp. 100 - 101.
[104] The 'inner beauty of the heart, not the outer beauty of artistic perfection, provides the model and standard of speculation'. Kroner, "Hegel's Philosophical Development". p. 25.
[105] Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*. p. 5.
[106] Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. pp. 159 - 160 (§104.).
[107] Beißner concludes that the essay, which breaks off suddenly after two pages, was written no later than 1794. Hölderlin, "*Es giebt einen Naturzustand ...*", in: *SW*. II: 46-47. Hölderlin, "On the Law of Freedom", in: *ELT*. pp. 33 - 34.
[108] Pfau, in: Hölderlin, *ELT*. p. 13.

By the time Hölderlin's publishes these ideas in *Hyperion*, he has taken a decisive distance from the views of both of his compatriots' dialectically rigid philosophies and the buoyant optimism of "The Oldest Programme for a System of German Idealism". Indeed, *Hyperion* represents Hölderlin's idiosyncratic and intense reaction to the fluctuations of these philosophical debates, whilst on a deeper level also remaining, as Heidegger argues, 'entirely foreign to the metaphysics of German Idealism'.[109] From the outset, the systemic Cartesian ego-logical self-evidence of absolute principles is refuted: 'man is a god when he dreams, a beggar when he thinks'.[110] Instead, nature appears in the text akin to *phúsis*, a ground which syncretically sustains, in 'harmonious opposition', a series of irresolvable relations between disparate entities: heaven and earth, night and day, man and woman, domestic and foreign, old and new, absolute and singular - all these phenomena, which paint a picture of life upon the canvas of nature, can and do become synechic representations of 'the One differentiated in itself'.[111] As one commentator describes, *Hyperion* renders a paradoxical 'dynamic stillness' in nature which represents the paradigm of a 'eccentric striving [with] static response'.[112] *Hyperion*, then, identifies a poetic experience and deliberation of nature, rather than any attempt at philosophical rationalisation of it, as the agonal *synechia* drawing and holding-together the disparate and divided, as is concluded in its closing lines:

> The dissonances of the world are like lovers' strife. In the midst of the quarrel is reconciliation, and all that is separated comes together again.
>
> The arteries part and return in the heart, and all is one eternal, glowing life.
>
> So I thought. More soon.[113]

So he thought. With emphasis on the past tense - *thought*. In this sense, the "more soon" (*'nächstens mehr'*) can be taken as deliberately provocative … of what? Perhaps an uncanny detachment which resides in the shadow of the true sentiment illustrating how, for Hölderlin, the

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[109] Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh. Athens: Ohio University Press, 1985. p. 190.
[110] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [II]".
[111] Ibid. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]"
[112] Mark W. Roche, *Dynamic Stillness: Philosophical Conceptions of* Ruhe *in Schiller, Hölderlin, Büchner, and Heine*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1987. p. 87.
[113] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LX]".

nature of rational postings are destined to play out 'as shadows to my light'.[114] Indeed, like shadows, such positions are perpetaully flickering or unsettled. For mortals, the retreat to 'whence you came, into the arms of nature, the changeless', as expressed in *Hyperion*'s fist letter, is not presupposed or arrived at "naturally", nature's harmony can only exist for mortals in a paradoxical disagreement with itself.[115] Such sentiments, as gestured to in *Hyperion*'s central motif, can be expressed with recourse to Heraclitus: 'nature loves to hide itself'.[116]

Unlike Fichte's evocation of a primordial unity at the heart of the thinking subject, Hölderlin recognises that subjectivity itself imposes the opposite: a tragic rupture only redeemed synthetically in a series of synechic holdings. Moreover, the evocation of unity cannot be expressed conceptually because it transcends ideas which are, necessarily, disunited - humans can only suggest, gesture, and evoke the semblance of unity through *synechia*. In *Hyperion*, Hölderlin expresses how mortals can be awakened to the universal harmonies of nature though the mediation of a poetic founding which both disrupts harmony and holds in disruption, while at the same time highlighting that the foundations from which the Greeks developed this knowledge have been continually built upon and obscured with competing agencies and doctrines of truth. Further still, "modern" humans are depicted as so far from placing a foot upon the path toward such considerations that they allow their inability to comprehend the initial meaning (and significance) of this fact to fade from their attention as warm breath fades upon a cold window-pane. Nonetheless, as the previous chapter illustrated, the *synechia* which holds presences most forcefully at such instances. Hölderlin gestures toward the historical authority of this recognition in *Hyperion*'s dedication:

> For the most part poets have come to be formed at the beginning or at the end of
>
> a world period. With song the peoples arise out of the heavens of their childhood
>
> into active life, into the land of culture. With song they return from there into
>
> their original life. Art is the passage out of nature into culture, and from culture
>
> back to nature.[117]

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[114] Hölderlin to Neuffer, 12th Novemeber 1798: 'I must take them into myself, so as to set them… as shadows to my light, to reproduce them'. Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 710-713.
[115] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [I]".
[116] Heraclitus. DK 123.
[117] Hölderlin, quoted in: Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*. p. 22.

The *synechia* which holds truth between divergent registers is most visible at the collapse of epochal hegemonies in thinking, particularly so when they are yet to have been properly superseded and thus articulated according to a new hegemonic criterion, such is the knowledge of nature that *Hyperion* teaches.

Nature is a divine force emanating from all that *is*, yet only reveals its mysteries to whose with eyes attuned to 'watching by night' - that is, without recourse to absolute systems of knowledge which reduce or evaluate nature to a, or *the*, "thing".[118] The word of the poet is the only force through which the naming of nature's nature can be shown to mortals, truthfully, without maximalising, or subsuming, it in an absolute system of meaning. This requires a medium which can hold singulars without maximising the representations mortals give them. In an early preface discarded from the final version of *Hyperion*, Hölderlin elaborates the paradoxical ground of this position:

> The blessed unity, Being, in the sole sense of the word, is lost for us, and we had
>
> to lose it, if we were to strive for and achieve it. We tear ourselves free from the
>
> peaceful *hen kai pan* of the world, in order to establish it through ourselves.[119]

What Hölderlin appears to describe is a journey which philosophical thought has taken: the tragic loss of a unity with Being signified by the Greek notion of *phúsis*, embodied for Hölderlin in the phrase *hen kai pan*, and the affirmation of a normatively binding legislative selfhood which puts nature and spirit at odds with one another. In nature, "contraries" hold-together without a legislating genus. Yet, by virtue of their thinking, humans are not *naturally* "in nature". In *Hyperion*, Hölderlin expresses how two conflicting motifs, absolute and singular, which at times harmonise and at others discordantly clash, can only be held without a synthetic agent which binds and subsumes them. By naming and thus dividing phenomena according to how they present themselves, humans resist the purpose of the divine in nature which receives and ties absent with present and thus maintains the unity of truth in being.[120] In this manner, nature shows how the division, dispensation, and stitching-together of mortal positions are only held-together in the

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[118] '*Heilig Gedächtnis auch, wachend zu bleiben bei Nacht*'. Hölderlin, "*Brod und Wein*", in: *SW*. I: 372-373. Hölderlin, "Bread and Wine", in: *SP*. pp. 151 - 158.
[119] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[120] Following: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 90 - 91.

division of the present and the absent - when humans name, they elicit this disunion. Without synechic holding-together humans do not, to return to Heraclitus, 'understand how that which differs with itself is in agreement: harmony consists of opposing tensions, like that of the bow and the lyre'.[121] Indeed, *Hyperion* intimates a synechic philosophy which is attained 'like a lyre on which the master plays though all the tones and blends discord and harmony with hidden order'.[122] If Hölderlin repudiates the agency of a systematic philosophical absolute to ascribe and name nature's nature, it is with recourse to the metrical language of poets in which he sustains and holds such a challenge for 'all is rhythm' and thus 'the mind can only express itself in rhythms' as Hölderlin is reported to have instructed.[123]

    *Hyperion*, then, identifies not only how opposites might hold-together without synthesis, but also how and why humans overlook and forego this holding, 'the bliss that does not suffer is sleep, and without death there is no life'.[124] To acknowledge the law of sleep is to accept the intrusion of the singular, however, the poet must also "watch by night", with clear reference to the 'visionary blindness' of tragic truth.[125] The 'brave person likes to gaze directly into the night'.[126] The function of Hölderlin's eponymous Hyperion can be read akin to that of Parmenides' *Kouros*, the synechic figure who learns what must be done: '*sunechein*, to hold-together together present and absent things'.[127] Hölderlin's attempt to articulate this position in a world in which thought has become prescriptive and which denies the tragic denial of synechic truth, accounts for the fluctuations in Hyperion's manner and tone, as he agonistically attempts to come to terms with a thinking that only prescribes the contrariety of presence and absence in being in a world which recognises no such divisions. Mortals can never recognise the absolute in itself, only of its relations—a variation of holding-together—to beings. Holding-together joins contrary beings which it also preserves as contraries, whereas theses allocate beings a place as

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[121] Heraclitus. DK 51.
[122] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[123] The 'destiny of man is a single heavenly rhythm just as every work of art is a single rhythm… The laws of the mind are rhythmical… poetry is the fact that the mind can only express itself in rhythms'. Bettina von Arnim, *Die Günderode*, ed. Elisabeth Bronfen, Munich: Matthes & Seitz, 1982. pp. 224 - 228. Consider Archilochus as Hölderlin's precursor: '*γίνωσκε δ' οἷος ῥυσμὸς ἀνθρώπους ἔχει*' ('appreciate the rhythm that controls men's lives'). Douglas E. Gerber, *Greek Iambic Poetry: From the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries BC*, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999. p. 167.
[124] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LVIII]".
[125] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 28.
[126] Hölderlin, "*Brod und Wein*". I: 372-373. Hölderlin, "Bread and Wine". pp. 151 - 158.
[127] Parmenides calls this structure *sunechia*, in fragments: 8, 6, 23, 25. cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 92.

present or absent, thus partitioning them. For the tragic Greeks, 'the invisible for man is the visible for the gods'.[128] If it is through nature that humans can evoke a remembrance of a proscribed origin which is perpetually in disaccord with itself, then only in nature is such a memory held-together and made visible, as Calasso continues, 'it was precisely because the Greeks had reduced the difference between gods and men [in nature] to a minimum that they measured the distance still separating them with such cruel precision: an infinite, unbridgeable distance'.[129] It is such a distance that the poet measures by night and holds by day. Indeed, as Hölderlin writes in a letter shortly following *Hyperion*'s publication: 'how often I go around, a smouldering little lamp begging for a drop of oil so I can shine just a little while longer through the night'.[130] In the next section, therefore, this study will pursue this night and the recollective process it fosters, highlighting how, for the poet, recollection represents the constituent ingredient of *Hyperion*'s synechic process.

*Not until youth is gone do we love it: Hyperion as Remembrance*

In *Hyperion*, Hölderlin's poetic speech gives voice to a synechic rendering of nature. Hölderlin draws upon the power of poetic speech to name origins in tragic darkness. Such darkened origins intimate the antithetical and agonal powers which sustain a *synechia* of poetic truth as *alétheia*, namely, *mnēmosynē* and *lēthē*. For Parmenides, the truth process acts through *synechia*: it contains and holds-together the two forces which make up aletheological truth - *mnēmosynē*; the light, speech, and memory, and *lēthē*; the darkness, silence, oblivion. In this field the poet, who journeys 'from land to land in holy night', allocates what should or should not remain 'unhidden of the black mantle of darkness'.[131] The poet labours, as Agamben highlights, for a *poíēsis* in which the recollection of what is always already at hand is made visible.[132] The poem is the poet's *synechia* of this movement, operating from an origin which must remain forever an "enigma".

[128] Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. p. 293.
[129] Ibid. p. 294.
[130] Hölderlin to Susette Gontard, July 1799: Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 779-780.
[131] Poets are 'like the wine god's holy priests, Who journeyed from land to land in holy night'. Hölderlin, "*Brod und Wein*". I: 372-373. Hölderlin, "Bread and Wine". pp. 151 - 158. Bacchylides writes 'unhidden of the black mantle of darkness', in: *Lyra Graeca: Being the Remains of all the Greek Lyric Poets from Eumelus to Timotheus Excepting Pindar*, 3 vols., trans. J. M. Edmonds, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1922. III: 137.
[132] Agamben, *The Man Without Content*. pp. 42 - 44.

The way to such a source, then, is ingrained in experience - mortals must return through the *synechia* of memory as invoked in the language of poets which temporarily illuminates the darkness of the origin, or, rather, *the origin as darkness*. Indeed, this recollective movement is foreshadowed in very Hyperion's name: derived from one of the twelve Titans born of Gaia (the Earth) and Uranus (the Sky), the etymological function of Hyperion held-together the sun, the moon, and the dawn, whom he fathered with Theia, the Goddess of sight and vision.[133] The fact that the central refrain of *Hyperion*—Heraclitus' 'one differentiated in itself'—is referenced replete with organic metaphors laden with allusions to 'the sun of the beautiful' which 'shines for the understanding' is surely therefore no coincidence.[134]

In a manner, Hölderlin's recollective address is similar to that broached by Èmile Durkheim in the opening passage of *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*: 'to arrive at an understanding of present-day humanity, we should have to turn away from it so as to travel back to the beginning of history'.[135] Schürmann points towards a similar end, describing Hölderlin's function as 'one of translating and transmitting' an 'origin which addresses man' from a bygone era.[136] Hölderlin becomes an exegetic translator of the Greek *phúsis*, conjuring its primordial synchronicity through a *synechia* of poetic language. *Hyperion* recalls how, from its earliest developments, the function and role of poetic speech are inseparable from the muse and memory.[137] Past events, however, do not refer to a metaphysical historical time enshrined in an ontological perspective of *natura*, but a poetic one which corresponds to the free movement of *phúsis*.[138] The events of the poet are, in a manner of speaking, outside of time. Poetic time renders historical time universally valid, or *timeless*, and thus the synechic process of recollection does not merely offer account of a bygone era but is also always present. Hölderlin's language operates in a temporal landscape in which, as Heidegger writes, 'place and time are not conceived in relation to their history' but ascribed 'to processes of movement in general'.[139] The poet operates

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[133] cf. Hesiod, *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia.* (*Theogony*, 371 - 374.).
[134] Hölderlin, *Hyperion.* Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[135] Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Carol Cosman, Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2008. p. 1.
[136] Schürmann, "Situating René Char". p. 525.
[137] Following: Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece.* pp. 39 - 52.
[138] cf. M. I. Finley, "Myth, Memory, and History", in: *History and Theory*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 281 - 302, 1965.
[139] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister".* p. 53.

in a temporal atmosphere for which no indexical date or time can be attributed, as Hölderlin indicates in his poem *Remembrance*: 'what is lasting the poets provide'.[140] Remembrance, then, does not construct a lost past, but rather a form of what Detienne calls 'divinatory omniscience'.[141] The process of poetic recollection is not merely to confer what it is necessary to record or retrieve but also to *hold time itself*. Heidegger labels this process "inner recollection", representing:

> a turning toward what is undisclosed and turned inward in what has been. Genuine inner recollection is intimation… And inner recollection would be altogether the *most profound* intimation when that which is to come, that with which intimation is otherwise concerned, comes out of what has been.[142]

In this fashion, the poet, as Hamacher details, operates in a distinct temporal atmosphere which deviates from a prescribed route in order to arrive at a situation which cannot be determined by categorical time but 'a reversal of the ideal of historical progression'.[143] For both Hamacher and Heidegger, then, Hölderlin's ability to "turn" inside and out of time represents a distinct departure from a metaphysical regime of teleological time through the transmutation of past, present and future into the same gesture.

The crossing of temporal thresholds, literal and metaphorical, as Schürmann identifies in the function of *synechia*, becomes prescriptive in the world of the poet who operates between the present and the absent, the spoken and the unsaid, the native and the foreign, the light and the darkness; between poetry and philosophy, art and science, myth and knowledge; between a world in dissolution and the birth of a rising culture.[144] Heidegger will reference Hölderlin's meditation upon the power of rivers, orientated like the poet in a twofold fashion, in an unwavering ebb and flow both timelessly intimating and vanishing, in a manner which 'simultaneously proceeds into what has been and what is to come' as central to the recollective process which, like the shifting of seasons, has its own temporal processes.[145] As with Heraclitus' river which may not be entered

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[140] Hölderlin, "*Andenken*", in: *SW*. I: 473-475. Hölderlin, "Remembrance", in: *SP*. pp. 250 - 253.
[141] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece*. p. 42.
[142] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*. pp. 29 - 30.
[143] Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". p. 86.
[144] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 92.
[145] Rivers, 'in their flowing, are oriented in a twofold direction. As vanishing, the river is underway into what has been. As full of intimation, it proceeds into what is coming… a singular kind of journey, insofar as it simultaneously proceeds into that has been and what is to come'. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*. pp. 29 - 30. The Orphic tablet

twice, the communion that the poet instigates flows forever, dissolving as soon as it appears, reflecting the essential ambiguity of nature and temporality and preserving a link between time and weather conferred in the Latin *tempus* which indicates a bifocal synechic presence of the seasons and time (it is only when a *tempest* rages that time manifests itself in this primordial, and enigmatic, manner). Benjamin picks up on Hölderlin's striking and enigmatic phrase, 'the turning of time', to describe the nature of this ever-expanding and folding-back-upon-itself directionless and ceaseless synechic movement without progress or regress, 'the moment of inner plasticity in time' which unveils poetically.[146] In like manner, this turning threshold is presented in *Hyperion*'s opening letter:

> Every morning I am on the heights of the Corinthian Isthmus and, like a bee
> among flowers, my soul often flies back and forth between the seas that, to the
> right and left, cool the feet of my glowing mountains.
> One of the two gulfs especially should have delighted me, had I stood here a
> millennium ago.[147]

The place of transition and insight necessary for arrival and departure and past and future can only be held by a "third" place, provided by the words of the poet. This "place" where poetry takes place is thus, as Lacoue-Labarthe writes, 'is the place without place of the imitate gaping - something we must certainly conceive of as the pure spacing which places (do not) sup-pose and which upholds them, with no hold'.[148] Poetic memory is the perfect *synechia* as it necessarily holds-together, with "no hold" or genus, both the absent and the present whose elements are so inexorably interdependent that it is impossible for them to be separated or interrupted by the others elements. The island, the sea, the coolness of the breeze against glowing mountains, the two gulfs which appear to straddle millennia, all become illustrative of the disunion and interdependence perhaps symbolised by the island itself, in ruins.

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dedicated at Hipponium highlights the versive link between flowing water and memory: 'proceed to the lake of Mnemosyne with cold water flowing forth… then you will walk on the holy path', see: Stian Sundell Torjussen, *Metamorphoses of Myth: A Study of the "Orphic" Gold Tablets and the Derveni Papyrus*, Riga: VDM Verlag, 2010.
[146] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 31. The phrase 'turning of time' (*Wende der Zeit*) appears in *Timidity*.
[147] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [I]".
[148] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Poetry as Experience*, trans. Andrea Tarnowski, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. p. 54.

The significance of Greek poetry, as Hölderlin would attest in a brief and cryptic text sketched while working on his translations of Sophocles, 'is most readily grasped' on the basis of such 'paradoxes'.[149] The tragic paradox holds-together contradictions. The interpenetration and blurring of geographical and temporal thresholds, as Henrich writes of *Hyperion*, synchronise epoch-spanning stretches of time with geographically vast and varied spaces in an ever-flowing and expanding web of the poet's recollective processes.[150] Hölderlin is 'the poet of the threshold', as Bambach labels him.[151] The threshold is the point at which the *synechia* becomes necessary: it is the *between* which holds open the possibility of a relation of opposites which, as the condition of their existence, rely on this very relation. There are parallels between Hölderlin's Hyperion and Zeus's paradoxical son, Hermes, 'the god of crossings and crisscrossings' who labours nocturnally to provide safe passage in unbridgeable circumstances, Bambach notes, who presides over 'realms marked by deep ambiguity and equivocation'.[152] Poetic recollection, then, is not derived solely through a personal vision inspired by memory but also a religious power imparted by the preserve of the muses to Hyperion, like the 'watcher by night', Hermes, who, Bambach concludes, also overlooks 'the subtle craft of negotiating the distance between art and artifice, fidelity and dissembling'.[153]

In the pre-classical semantic structure of *alétheia*, the threshold provided by the reconciliation of the poet is instigated by the invocation of muses. The poet's *enthousiasmos*, taken literally as *en-thous-iasmos*, 'being filled with the gods', is necessary for this recollective practice.[154] The poet, at the behest of the muses, is able to interpret *Mnēmosynē*. Detienne has illustrated the theology of poetic truth as a reconciliatory process, drawing attention to the symbiotic relationship between the daughters of Memory (*Mnēmosynē*) and those of Alétheia.[155] The function of these muses is to facilitate, as in Parmenides' poem, a synechic truth process,

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[149] '*Die Bedeutung der Tragödien ist am leichtesten aus dem Paradoxon zu begreifen*'. Hölderlin, "*Der Bedeutung der Tragödien*", in: *SW*. II: 114. Hölderlin, "The Significance of the Tragedies", in: *ELT*. p. 89.
[150] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 156 - 157.
[151] Charles Bambach, *"Poetry At The Threshold: Reflections On A New Hölderlin Translation"*, in: *Athenaeum Review*, Issue 2, pp. 128 - 139, 2019. p. 130. Fenves writes that 'perhaps no phrase captures in a more succinct manner how the relation of his poetry to philosophical thought has often been represented' than *threshold*, in: Fenves, "Measure for Measure". p. 26.
[152] Bambach, *"Poetry At The Threshold"*. pp. 130 - 131.
[153] *Homeric Hymns. Homeric Apocrypha. Lives of Homer*, trans. Martin L. West, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003. *Homeric Hymns*. 4.13. Bambach, *"Poetry At The Threshold"*. pp. 130 - 131.
[154] cf. Gadamer, "Plato and the Poets". pp. 39 - 72 (especially, pp. 41 - 43.)
[155] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece*. pp. 39 - 52.

blending past and present, earth and sky, absolute and singular. Moreover, Vernant has highlighted the affinity between *Mnēmosynē* and the tragic blindness of those possessed of the unique "second sight" of recollection, for 'they are blind in the light of day, but they can see what is invisible'.[156] The vision of the poet mediates a time which is otherwise inaccessible to ordinary mortals; namely, knowledge of the past and the future, to teach of 'all that has been, all that is, and all that is to be'.[157] Blind poets see tragic truth in blindness, 'like the nightingale's singing in darkness… sounds for us the lifesong of the world'.[158]

In this way, one might interpret the three figures who guide Hyperion's "lifesong" (Adamas, Alabanda, and Diotima) in a similar fashion to Parmenides' muses. Many commentators have drawn attention to the role of these characters within the framework of the *Bildungsroman*, more specifically an *Entwicklungsroman* (novel of development), as characters who guide Hyperion's personal development. Lawrence Ryan's assessment that 'the reconciliation between past and present' operates as part of a personal transformation providing narrative resolution to the recollective process remains influential.[159] Hyperion is transformed in his relation to the other characters and his self-reflective and recollective narration of these interactions. Similarly, Mark Roche sees this progression as part of a developmental schema whereby 'Hyperion gains a wider consciousness and acts out his role as a writer and educator'.[160] Such readings recall Harrison's description of moral instruction through ritual.[161] However, the *Entwicklungsroman*, as described by Ryan and Roche, also presents the process of Hyperion's "second birth", his personal *Bildung* and development into "a poet", as entirely personal, rational, and instrumental, and thus removed from the chain of custom that binds the social order pertaining to the ancient rite. It is possible to, then, to read *Hyperion*, as part of the 'processes, customs, opinions, and so forth, which have been carried on… into a new state of society'?[162] Indeed, such

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[156] Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*. p. 117.
[157] Hesiod adopts Homer's description of the diviner, Calchas, to Mnēmosynē: she knows and teaches of 'all that has been, all that is, and all that is to be'. Homer, *Iliad*. 1.70. Hesiod, *Theogony*. 32 and 38. Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks*. p. 117.
[158] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LX]".
[159] Ryan, *Hölderlins "Hyperion"*. p. 105.
[160] Roche, *Dynamic Stillness*. pp. 77 - 78.
[161] Jane Ellen Harrison, *Reminiscences of a Student's Life*, London: Hogarth, 1925. p. 84.
[162] Edward Burnett Taylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*, 2 vols., London: John Murray, 1920. I: 16.

a reading carries the weight of synechic holding which appears most decisively at the moments where historical transitions are most explicitly present.

However, the latent and pronounced affinities between the characters of Adamas, Alabanda, and Diotima and the Greek poetic muses of reconciliation also offers associations beyond the cultivation of a teleological progression. Beyond the cultivation of Hyperion's "personality", the religious function of these characters have implications akin to the guidance of synechic truth which opens a border, as Hamacher writes, 'between the living form of sense and the deadly chaos of what is not sense'.[163] This hidden tragic border at times bursts through *Hyperion* in pangs of melancholic longing, even without indication or justification that conscious memory might grasp, are like unconscious wounds running deep in the schism of philosophical thought, that suddenly break out against the binding custom of convention which decries the notion of knowledge as a recollection of a different, and not entirely visible, sphere. Such moments are instigated in *Hyperion*, through the guidance of its muses, as if only in such inspiration can the curtain that separates the reader from a wider horizon be briefly lifted, where time binds them not to a linear historical *telos*, but the non-time which only reveals itself in the rupturing of time itself.

When the 'holy being', Diotima, is introduced we learn that the 'silent being who was so loath to speak' expresses herself in song which 'floats in golden mean between high and low'.[164] Diotima's song is born out of silence, alternating between the play of stasis and movement at the heart of aletheological pronouncements also recalling the double significance of the word *mousa*: the muses and music.[165] As with the functionaries of Parmenides' Alétheia, whose names indicate and represent both a common noun and a divine power, there are frequent references in classical texts which indicate that *mousa* represents and holds both intellectual and religious dimensions.[166] That in the earliest published letters of *Hyperion* (in Schiller's 1793 *Thalia*) Diotima is named Melite, daughter of the sun-God Apollo, gives credence to her divine dispensation.[167] Diotima

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[163] Gadamer, *Truth and Method.* p. 88. Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". p. 95.
[164] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Diotima is introduced in: Vol 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XIV]", reference to the 'golden mean' appears in: "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXVII]".
[165] Lidell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. p. 1148.
[166] cf. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece*. pp. 150-151, n. 5.
[167] Adler, *Politics and Truth in Hölderlin*. pp. 74 - 80.

awakens 'a sense of eternal belonging', as Theodore Ziolkowski observes.[168] Richard Unger suggests that Hölderlin's female characters should to be read 'as spiritual'.[169] Diotima's mythological status is why she is deprived of speech. 'Of what should we have spoken?', Hyperion questions, for Diotima only manifests in 'celestial song'.[170] As with Parmenides' muses, Diotima is deprived of the contradiction at the heart of *doxic* pronouncements. Diotima exists outside the quotidian, as the embodiment of aletheological truth which "floats" in stillness beyond a mortal world of perpetual movement which, paradoxically, ceaselessly strives after perfection, imperfectly.

Diotima's appearance in time also 'bespeaks her temporality and thus the inevitability of her death'.[171] For several commentators, this death represents an optimistic stepping-stone on the road to a new mythology, devoid of the ancient world of divinities, wherein the absolute representations would no longer require outward physical manifestations. Ryan suggests that 'the achievement of the Absolute would have to require a bodily death' so that Diotima's passing 'becomes the very condition for the realisation of a "more beautiful world" that is more encompassing and just beginning'.[172] Such a reading presupposes that Hölderlin is keen to preserve a polarity between phenomena which come to presence and the Platonic realm of absolute ideas which reigns abstractly. Rather, Diotima's divine presence is necessary for a *synechia* of two incompatible worlds, preserving the unifying measure that holds-together contraries in agonal disputation. Incapable of activity *in* the mortal world, Diotima embodies the disharmony between absolute and singular, theory and practice rendering inevitable her death.

This descent from divine nature into the public world of action is prefaced in Diotima's contemplation of 'the great spirits of ancient days… noble Spartan women'.[173] This reference to Sparta is not without coincidence and itself is foreshadowed in perhaps one of the most strikingly philosophical passages of the text, wherein Hyperion recounts a discussion, aboard a boat with Diotima bound for Athens, on the nature and splendour of the Ancient Greek civilisation.

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[168] Theodore Ziolkowski, *The Classical German Elegy, 1795-1950*, Princetown: Princetown University Press, 1980. p. 111.
[169] Richard Unger, *Friedrich Hölderlin*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984. p. 32.
[170] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XV]".
[171] Roche, *Dynamic Stillness*. p. 76.
[172] Ryan, *Hölderlins "Hyperion"*. p. 129, p. 193.
[173] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 1, "Diotima to Hyperion [XLVII]".

Hyperion begins by emphasising the excellence of the Athenians, how their character evolved, not as a result of Athenian 'art and religion, and philosophy and polity' (which are likened to the flowers of a tree rather than its roots), but rather through their incubation in a world free from 'violent influence' in which 'no conqueror weakens them, no military fortune inebriates them, no alien cult dulls them, no hasty wisdom drives them to untimely ripeness'.[174] Thus, the Athenian soul developed through a synechic resonance which solicited a historical transition free from the violent rupture of contingent circumstances, in 'the hands of nature'.[175] This world is juxtaposed with the Spartan, which rushed ahead of the Athenian in its development, but in so doing acquired distinction by the way of 'labour and self-conscious effort' which breached 'the order of instinct' imbued in nature.[176] The Spartans, then, came to rely on 'arbitrary power' to impose unity.[177] To the contrary, Athenians developed a knowledge in equilibrium with singular and absolute, manifesting in artworks which could hold divine, yet tragic, beauty: 'man rejuvenates and repeats himself… he sets his beauty over against himself'.[178] Some commentators read here that Hyperion suggests 'the wise man loves beauty itself' while 'the people love her children, the gods'.[179] However, as with the distinctions between *doxic* and *aletheological* postings, the two positions are counterpoised in passive and active fluctuations without polarity. The *doxic* manifestation of beauty through religion is not a "lower" form, but rather the necessary condition to reveal the reciprocity of shifting phenomena with the ground which solicits it to come to presence. As the muses of recollection, Diotima, Adamas, and Alabanda represent the holding of these struggling forces made legible because, as Hyperion replies when quizzed by an impatient interlocutor, 'poetry is the beginning and end'.[180]

The recollective process instigated by Diotima is displaced when Hyperion betrays such knowledge, striding forth into battle with the Turks, invested only in the future and a world of action - just as the Spartans' emergence into a world of the violent impositions crushes the porous fluctuations by which the synechic process unveils. Like the Diotima who appears in Plato's

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[174] Ibid. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Warminski, *Readings in Interpretation*. p. 49.
[180] Ibid.

*Symposium* as Socrates' guide, Diotima's role is to facilitate a mediatory process which occupies two contradictory and disunited poles, pointing towards the hidden unity behind, or within, duality, and the singular undertow which also compromises that unity.[181] In this vein, it is telling that *Hyperion*'s mantra of 'the one differentiated in itself', complete with reference to the harmony of the lyre, is also referenced in Plato's *Symposium*.[182] Harmony, a double movement which is always incomplete, is in disagreement with itself yet able to sustain its antagonism. As in the *Symposium*, Diotima guides Hyperion to knowledge of this double movement at the heart of the static singularity. Like artworks, Diotima's person holds two irreconcilable vectors; rational and irrational, material and spiritual, individual and social, ideal and natural, sacred and abysmal, occupying a midpoint *between* two otherwise hostile territories, a mediating force which binds together the singular manifestations of humanity and their holding-together with the permanence of the divinities. As in Plato's *Symposium*, *Hyperion*'s Diotima is explicitly associated with Athenian art as both a potential origin and dissolution, rendered explicitly in her passing.

While, for Plato, as the previous chapter illustrated, the beautiful represents a lesser imitation of abstract ideas, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* suggests that the experience of art is not merely a signpost to an abstract absolute ideal but its living embodiment and fulfilment of an ideal which can never be wholly ideal:

> O you who seek the highest and the best, be it in the depths of knowledge, in the turmoil of action, in the darkness of the past, in the labyrinth of the future, in the graves or above the stars! do you know its name? the name of what is one and all?
>
> Its name is beauty.[183]

The phenomenal is the wellspring of all genuine reflection, and the synechic experience of beauty confers upon singular mortals a tragic experience of unity. Such an experience does not represent a simulacrum of an ideal truth be found in philosophy, as Plato has it, but rather part of a complementary movement which truth holds beyond any law through the mediation of the poetic

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[181] Following: Roche, "Allusions to and Inversions of Plato in Hölderlin's Hyperion". pp. 86 - 103. Also: R. B. Harrison, *Hölderlin and Greek Literature*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1975. pp. 43 - 83.

[182] Plato, *Symposium*. 187a.

[183] Hölderlin, *Hyperion.* Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XIV]".

process. It is in this fashion that one should approach Diotima's demise, prefigured in the Sophoclean motto from *Oedipus Colonus*, rendered at the mid-point of *Hyperion*:

> Not to be born surpasses thought and speech. The second best is to have seen the
>
> light and then to go back quickly whence we came.[184]

Death is not the pessimistic fatality in the case of Diotima, as it confers a tragic reunion with nature which her divinity already represents and *is*, as Hyperion's concludes in the last passage of the novel, the 'arteries part and return in the heart and one eternal glowing life is All'.[185]

As with Diotima, Adamas, and Alabanda appear as mythic one-dimensional abstractions who insert themselves into Hyperion's world. 'I couldn't find my goal. So he found me', Hyperion recalls. [186] Adamas attempts to transpose Hyperion's unreflective conception of personal immortality—in which he 'knows nothing of death'—into a conception of the unity of nature which can only be attained by the way of a transgressive movement outside of its universality.[187] In this way, Adamas offers an affront to the ideal of a youthful innocence free from external coercion - indeed, he appears to present a riposte to Jean Jacques Rousseau's hypothesis that nature imparts an epistemological foundation for the principle of unity.[188] Adamas seeks, rather, to impart in mortals a recollection of tragic unity in nature. One commentator has drawn parallels between Adamas' apparent role of lawgiver and pedagogue and the divinities who inspire and impart in a people their sense of direction and purpose.[189] Tellingly, the etymological foundations for Adamas' name also give credence to this thesis, suggestive of both; *adámas*, from the Greek meaning 'unconquerable', and the Hebrew *adamah*, meaning both 'earth' or 'ground', from which God created man: Adam.[190] The direction of mortals, Adamas suggests, is not wholly mortal: it is to offer "ground" in gesturing beyond the conditioned. The artist's recollective process must not only 'probe beneath the rubble' of antiquity, but labour to unite past and present.[191] Adamas argues that a new unity must be "created" by mortals themselves from out of the paradoxical

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[184] Ibid. Vol. 2.
[185] Ibid. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LX]".
[186] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [IV]".
[187] Ibid. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [III]".
[188] On Hölderlin's interaction with Rousseau, consult: Jürgen Link, *Hölderlin-Rousseau: Inventive Rückkehr*, Weisbaden: Westdutscher Verlag, 1999. pp. 98 - 120. Additionally: Paul de Man, "The Image of Rousseau in the Poetry of Hölderlin", in: *The Rhetoric of Romanticism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984. pp. 19 - 46.
[189] Adler, *Politics and Truth in Hölderlin*. p. 131.
[190] Following: Adler, *Politics and Truth in Hölderlin*. pp. 131 - 132.
[191] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [VI]".

process, just as the Athenians fostered their sense of unity though their works. It is telling that as soon as Hyperion draws towards this recognition Adamas departs, like the muses, as rapidly as he had appeared.

However, the challenge of illustrating the unity of nature to a people who 'turn their back' at 'a spark of reason' quickly dawns on Hyperion.[192] Into this despair appears Alabanda who leads Hyperion away from the fanaticism of the dispossessed, arguing for the necessity of a practical reason over theory alone. This practical disposition is rendered in an explicit kineticism, evocative of flowing water 'rolling down the mountain and hurling aside the ballast of earth and stones and rotten wood and all the sluggish mess that holds it back'.[193] Such vibrant excess in action, however, also threatens to overwhelm itself in an unreflective embrace of pure phenomenality, leading Alabanda to define existence in a theoretical freedom. Does Alabanda, then, represent a distillation of the fantasied Fichtean pure "I", with excessive confidence in the power of action, an unerring confidence in the aptitude of human technique and mastery? If so, Alabanda represents a temporal disposition absent in Adamas and Diotima - he seeks to rectify the present *and* cultivate the future; 'I take my joy in the future'.[194] This novel relation to time also engenders a transition in Hyperion's approach to mortality, precluding engagement with its life's singular origins and ends, represented by the ruins of antiquity. Such future orientatedness, then, also represents a forgetting of the processes of dissolution until the moment these processes occur, and the ideal image of the future is shown as precisely that. The ruins of the past, in their very ruination, provide forms of the present and for the future which collapse in upon each other in the same instance. Through Alabanda's interventions time is necessarily seen as separation - yet it is a separation bridged by the *synechia* of the poetic remembrance.

Through the mediation of these muses, poetic truth resides in a recollective process, which in its fluctuating motions holds past, present, and future, rendered in a language which cannot be coerced. As Hyperion suggests: 'language is a great superfluidity'.[195] It is language

[192] Ibid. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [IV]".
[193] Ibid. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [VII]".
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid. Vol. 2: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Diotima [L]".

which separates and divides humans and muses, like time, even as it presents, like the ouroboros consuming its own tail, problems to the solutions it engenders:

> Permanence is the choice of the stars, in silent fullness of life they constantly wheel, knowing no age. We embody perfection in change, splitting the great chords of joy into wandering melodies.[196]

However, it is in poetic remembrance that language still holds these dissonances in time and place, illustrating how the Greek *mimnéskō* means both "to mention" and "to recall", and Hölderlin, as Henrich concludes, transposed philosophical thinking 'into poetic construction of the course of remembrance'.[197] The process of remembrance sculpts language, as Karl Jaspers writes, into 'a bridge', at once connected to and yet forever separate from absolutes.[198] Time, like nature, cannot be wholly contained in language: language abides at the juncture of nullification of these moments, and yet, with the harmony of an aeolian harp touched by the wind, language itself can also point out its own disredemption in song with the possibility of its own tragic order, perhaps intimated by Celan who writes: 'language doesn't only build bridges into the world, but also into loneliness'.[199]

Hölderlin's remembrance has the reader both in thrall to a homage of a particular place and time despite being constrained by neither. Poetic remembrance represents precisely this: a movement, containing within itself movements of contrary, complimentary, or clandestine forces which develops a sensation of perpetual envelopment without immobility. The reader is borne away by *Hyperion*'s dissonances in which images and sensations rise and fall, because such sensations are understood only as moments, which may be isolated with the help of words, as though partitioning sections from a river, without realising that they themselves encompass only drops in a single irresistible onrush of the *force* of life. Language, while inspired by sensation, intrudes upon and reaches out beyond the physical confines of the phenomenal, conferring it

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[196] Ibid. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LVIII]".
[197] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 248
[198] Karl Jaspers to Martin Heidegger, 6th August 1949, in: Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, *The Heidegger-Jaspers Correspondence, (1920-1963)*, trans. Gary E. Aylesworth, New York: Humanity Books, 2003. p. 169. Jaspers' is countering Heidegger's claim that language is the "house of being".
[199] The aeolian harp is a reference to Benjamin's evocation of Hölderlin in: Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator", in: *Selected Writings*. I: 253-263. Celan to Karl Schwedhelm, 6th November 1952, in: Felstiner, *Paul Celan*. p. 16.

momentarily to obscurity, while awaiting a return and transformation of sensation. Henrich describes this process as a 'ordered *modulation* of acts in which each of the tendencies of life is momentarily released', like the consummate life, repeating 'the *process* of the actual' so as to render is oppositions and conflict in an "order" which also embraces its own necessary disorder.[200] Poetic language provides the mirror in which mortals see themselves reflected amidst the unity of nature; this release also, then, represents an anarchic freedom from the systematicity of all things, which this chapter will pursue in its next section.

*Without freedom everything is dead: Hyperion and the Politics of Freedom*

If Hölderlin's use of language attempts to evoke the ancient voice of poetic remembrance it speaks more so of a lost ideal of truth as much as any potential one. It is in such manner that Hölderlin's Greece must be distinguished from that of his contemporaries. Hölderlin's work does not yearn for an imagined restoration of the Greek world but holds the creative potential of Greece; a promise, perhaps, yet to be fulfilled. In a letter written shortly after *Hyperion*'s publication, Hölderlin expresses this tension:

> I have now laboured at this for a long time and know now that apart from what
>
> must be the supreme things with the Greeks and with us, that is, living craft and
>
> proportion, we cannot properly have anything in common with them.[201]

If thought cannot render infinitude, it must attempt to bridge the gap between idealisation and striving through a common connection to the "living craft" of the Greek *synechia* which holds both. *Hyperion* thus replaces the polarity of life's disparate movements between the finite and the infinite with a synechic movement wherein, aware of the irresolvable fissure which separates, mortals nonetheless, as Henrich writes, 'soar beyond everything and oscillate freely between our own drives'.[202] While two disparate poles remain inexorably unreconciled, *reconciliation occurs as separation* through the synechic act itself. *Hyperion* thus confronts the two essential tragic domains of unfreedom which constrain mortal existence: firstly, the force of circumstance that binds humans to finitude and contradiction, and secondly, born out of this primary unfreedom,

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[200] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 134.
[201] To Böhlendorff, 4th December 1801: Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 912-914. Hölderlin, *ELT*. pp. 149 - 151.
[202] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 134.

the 'morality of custom' embodied in the political or social aspect which concretises the conditions by which varying degrees of synthetic freedom are sought and but never wholly realised.[203] That is, unless the condition of synthetic freedom is capable of incorporating within itself a perpetually incomplete unfreedom.

For Hölderlin, Greek tragic art serves as a 'metaphor of an intellectual intuition' of the tragic conditions of freedom and unfreedom.[204] This metaphor of intellectual intuition, an experiential moment of immediate intellectual and intuitive knowing which requires no further mediation, expresses the capacity for freedom born out of an experience of unfreedom. In an early (1794-1795) version of *Hyperion*, Hölderlin articulates this paradoxical ground of human freedom:

> We feel profoundly the limitation of our being, and there is something in us which
>
> gladly holds onto these chains—for if the divine in us was not limited by any
>
> resistance, we would know nothing outside of ourselves, and so also nothing of
>
> ourselves, and to know nothing of one's self, not to feel oneself, and to be
>
> annihilated, is for us the same thing.[205]

Hölderlin thus highlights the mortal capacity, in syncretic acts, for resistance and contradiction to the condition of finitude and unfreedom, indicating an intuitive intimacy with which it is possible to apprehend, if never wholly to conceptualise, the infinite. Through synechic acts, mortals simultaneously praise and resist the site of their unfreedom through the syncretic practice of freedom. In the capacity for a consciousness of the infinite, humans limit themselves to the singular, yet from out of this finitude a capacity for the infinite is sustained through the very potentiality of articulating freedom. Such consciousness, then, recognises the tyranny of the objective which threatens to overwhelm subjectivity and fights against it, all the while holding an intuition of the infinite. Thus, wherever and whenever freedom struggles to assert itself it must remain true to its essential negativity, because the creative act of freedom must also express a rejection of an infinitude which would otherwise overwhelm it. As Szondi summaries, through

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[203] Nietzsche, *Daybreak*. p. 10.
[204] Hölderlin, "*Das lyrische dem Schein nach idealische Gedicht*". II: 102-109. Hölderlin,"On the Difference of Poetic Modes". pp. 83 - 88. Hölderlin's concept of "intellectual intuition" is best understood in response to Kant and Fichte's theories of the imagination. For further, consult: Sallis, *Force of Imagination*. pp. 66 - 76.
[205] Hölderlin, "*Hyperion*", in: *SW*. I: 485-522.

tragic thinking this site of conflict 'has been transferred into freedom itself, which, now at odds with itself, becomes its own adversary'.[206] The first time freedom discloses itself to mortals, it appears as punishment. 'To suffer is to understand', Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* teaches.[207] Indeed, Hyperion's instruction to Diotima, 'only in suffering do we fully feel the freedom of the soul', summaries the tragic position of mortals who suffer, *must suffer*, in the practice of freedom which imposes the contradictions which confer this very suffering.[208]

In *Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism*, written contemporaneously with Hölderlin's *Hyperion*, Schelling expresses how the Greek tragic knowledge of unfreedom paradoxically provides and sustains the ground from a which concept of freedom itself can emerge:

> The ground of this contradiction… lay in the contest between human freedom
>
> and the power of the objective world in which the mortal must succumb
>
> *necessarily* if that power is absolutely superior, if it is fate… this tragic fact was
>
> the recognition of human freedom; it was the *honour* due to freedom. Greek
>
> tragedy honoured human freedom, letting its hero *fight* against the superior power
>
> of fate… Only a being *deprived* of freedom could succumb under fate. It was a
>
> *sublime* thought, to suffer punishment willingly even for an inevitable crime, and
>
> so to prove one's freedom by the very loss of his freedom.[209]

For Schelling and Hölderlin, the tragedy stages the paradoxical interdependence of the states of freedom and unfreedom in a form of presentation, as Schmidt writes, 'that is not captured by the logic of the concept'.[210] Greek tragedy thus exposes the possibility of a speculative freedom unbound by the particular. Tragedy thus offers a synechic space, holding the singularising undertow which displaces the maximalising claims of philosophical freedom, as Schmidt continues:

> Philosophy at its best has always provided an "analytic of ultimates." In some of
>
> its instantiations it has also argued on behalf of an assumed purity of thought in

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[206] Péter Szondi, *An Essay on the Tragic*, trans. Paul Fleming, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002. p. 10.
[207] Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*. v. 177. Also: The 'might of necessity permits no resistance'. Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*. 105.
[208] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LI]".
[209] Schelling, "Philosophical Letters of Dogmatism and Criticism". pp. 192 - 193 [X: 336 - 338].
[210] Schmidt, *On Germans and Other Greeks*. p. 80.

which there is a harmony among the ultimates that govern us. Tragedy, on the other hand, is an art of the conflict of ultimates, of discord that cannot be effaced or overcome[211]

For Hölderlin and Schelling, tragic truth does not dialectically vacillate between the subjective and objective and then attempt to reintegrate the two so that they correspond reciprocally, but rather renders the necessary and paradoxical conflict in any doctrine of freedom. This is why the synechic reappearance of tragic knowledge, as Schmidt concludes, '*is contemporaneous with the arrival of the end of metaphysics as a possibility*'.[212]

The meaning of the tragic is the assertion of freedom. As Schelling argues, this assertion is paradoxically determined though:

> a real conflict between freedom in the subject and objective necessity. This conflict does not end with the defeat of one or the other, but rather with both of them simultaneously appearing as conquerors and conquered in perfect indifference.[213]

However, while Schelling theorises the tragedy solely from a speculative position, Hölderlin indicates that tragic knowing must also "go-beyond" conceptual understanding because philosophy also surreptitiously reintroduces the domain of the ideal it critiques. Hölderlin thus explores the tragic pursuit of freedom synechically in artworks - not because, like Schelling, he wants to "understand" the riddles of Greek art, but because, as Schmidt argues, through tragic thinking he wishes to encounter everything else and in so doing transform the meaning of the Greek tragedy so that its fundamental question of the relation between the particular and the absolute are born anew.[214] For Hölderlin, tragic freedom cannot be contained in a system or idea: it does not provide a model which other disciplines may "take up" and use, but rather a *synechia* which can withhold and render visible the '*caesura*' or the 'rupture' at the heart of the speculative.[215] This moment of *caesura*, which Hölderlin will also refer to as 'the pure word' (*das*

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[211] Ibid. p. 18.
[212] Ibid. p. 77.
[213] Schelling, in: Szondi, *An Essay on the Tragic*. p. 9.
[214] Schmidt, *On Germans and Other Greeks*. pp. 122 - 123.
[215] Hölderlin uses this phrase in his commentaries on *Oedipus* and *Antigone*. Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108. Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*". II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Notes on the *Antigone*". pp. 325 - 332.

*reine Wort*), represents the flow of discourse and its interruption, the moment at which the inexpressible interrupts the indeterminacy of inarticulate expression so that something of its true content may be captured. Drawing upon the Hölderlinian register of this tragic *caesura*, Gianni Carchia thus described how the:

> aesthetic physiognomy of tragedy can be grasped only in the oscillating space of its blocked agonistic dialectic, in the unresolved tension in which there face off myth and reality, visible and invisible, chthonic underground realities and Olympian surface, matriarchy and patriarchy… it posits itself as a kind of ineffective, suspended ritual, idling, turning in the void.[216]

The tragic withholds a synechic movement which distends and suspends the speculative and 'constantly prevents it from completing itself and never ceases, by doubling it, to divert it from itself, to dig into it in such a way as to create a spiral', as Lacoue-Labarthe writes.[217] Yet Hölderlin's spiralling movement does not, as Lacoue-Labarthe will conclude, bring about the total collapse of the speculative or embody only disunity and disjunction *à la* Adorno's parataxis, but rather suspends it indefinitely between the thoroughfare of aletheological positing, "differentiated in itself" and resting in 'the boundless union purifying itself through boundless separation', in which we are all, in varying fashions by the same phenomena, driven.[218]

The role of the synechic act which operates between the two domains of unfreedom, mental and social, secular and ritual, is preserved in the role *parrhesía* played in what the Greeks called *eleuthería*, a word which is conventionally translated as "freedom" or "liberty". *Parrhesía* itself, which first appears in literature towards the end of the fifth century, literally translates as "saying everything", from *pan* (everything) and *rhema* (to say), however the term is contemporaneously understood in accordance with the concept of "free speech".[219] The *parrhesiastes* is the one who utilises *parrhesía*, the one who "speaks the truth". As Foucault emphasises, this establishes a variance from modern truth-claims contained in the processes of

[216] Carchia, *Orfismo e tragedia. Il mito trasfigurato*. pp. 55 - 56. Translation and quotation in: Toscano, "Tragedy".

[217] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics*, ed. Christopher Fynsk, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989. p. 227.

[218] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.

[219] Following: Michel Foucault, *"Discourse and Truth" and "Parrēsia"*, ed. Henri-Paul Fruchaud and Daniele Lorenzini, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019.

mental evidential experience.[220] For the Greeks, truth does not reside in cognitive exercises or experience, but in the speech act which brings into presence the synechic domain of language and non-language. As a *synechia* of the presence in which truth appears and is, *parrhesía* cannot be dialectically opposed to "falsehood" or "lies", rather *parrhesía* abides with silence, the domain preserved for the sanctity of the will of the divinities to enter the lives of mortals. In the pure silence of the gods, mortals receive the unconcealed openness in which truth can be brought to presence amidst the numberless goings-on of life. The Greeks were thus the first to think of freedom as a value, as a condition preserved in language which could be attained through the correct disposition towards the ever expanding flow of human positing preserved in the verb *legein* which denotes not only the domain of speech but also signifies a 'collecting', 'bringing together', or 'gathering' of that which lies disconnected.[221]

As Hegel recounts in his lectures on history, at the moment the Sophists began to critique the normative customs which upheld the tragic and archaic ethical order, Greek freedom became wedded to a philosophical method which critiqued the self-enclosing governance of a legislative freedom whose political expression, as Peter Sloterdijk describes, referred principally 'to the prerogative of being guided by nothing but habits, customs and institutions that have shaped the members of the collective'.[222] As described in the previous chapter, one need look no further than Socrates as representative of the paradigmatic shift from a collective union with presence into the vacillating infinitude of the individual person at variance with a social order, an independent realm at odds with a collective existence. As Hegel recounts, Socrates personified the desire 'for a higher freedom' through which he sought 'to be free not only in the state… but in his own heart'.[223] It is notable in this vein that Foucault draws attention to *Laches*, the Platonic work which incites *parrhesía* most frequently, and its relation to Socrates' concept of *epimeleia heautou*, the "care of the self".[224] Socrates invokes the concept of speaking freely to highlight the need for a subjective primacy, a correspondence between what one says and how one acts, underpinned by

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[220] Ibid. pp. 39 - 40.
[221] On *legein*, consult: Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 77.
[222] Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. I: 364-367. Peter Sloterdijk, *Stress and Freedom*, trans. Wieland Hoban, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016. p 14.
[223] Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I: 509 - 512.
[224] Foucault, *"Discourse and Truth" and "Parrēsia"*. p. 134.

a strict ontological framework which harmonises a relation between what one thinks, says and does. The Socratic turn priorities the freedom of the "personality" of the speaker as much as speech, foregoing the etymological foundation of *prósōpon*, the acoustical mask used in Greek theatres through which the voice of the actor may pass but not "the person", foregrounding the privilege of language in the annunciation of truth over and above an individual speaker.[225]

Greek society had no precedent to integrate self-criticism from the perspective of the "free" individual. Nonetheless, as Hölderlin and Schelling have presaged, it is also through such a sense of unfreedom that new forms of freedom can be made manifest. 'The first time the law of freedom discloses itself to us, it appears as punishing', Hölderlin outlines in the essay *On the Law of Freedom*.[226] Unity cannot be experienced by mortals as anything other than in the form of a transgression whose limits cannot be made legible. This position undermines the commonplace reception of *Hyperion*, already established in Wilhelm Heinse's contemporaneous reading, that Hölderlin discloses freedom through the isolated experience of pure nature.[227] Rather, *Hyperion* is a treatise on nature *because* it is a treatise on freedom. No doubt Heinse's reading owes much to another revolution in consciousness exemplified by Rousseau and Kant. For Rousseau and Kant, human freedom is capable of expressing itself from the unrestrained site of self-legislating subjectivity.[228] Here, freedom acquires an unrestrained experimentation mediated only by the confines of reason which selects for itself the conditions by which it measures and observes itself.[229] That is to say, from the self-legislating perspective pure subjectivity, freedom may be posited as entirely divorced from external circumstance, providing a ground for itself. Because this ground is itself groundless, it is absolute.

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[225] Note etymological correlation with Parmenides' *péras*. Thus *prósōpon*, as *prós-* for the proposition "at, towards, for", and *ōps*, which in Homeric Greek connoted "hole, eye, opening, pupil, voice, word, speech". Also preserved in the Latin *personō*, as *per-* "through", and *sono* "to make a noise, sound, resound".

[226] Hölderlin, "*Es giebt einen Naturzustand ...*". II: 46-47. Hölderlin, "On the Law of Freedom". pp. 33 - 34.

[227] Hölderlin dedicated "Bread and Wine" and "The Rhine" to Heinse. How far the two thinkers conception of nature is, as Heinse suggests, in alignment, is a question of greater complexity. See: Ulrich Gaier, ""Mein ehrlich Meister": Hölderlin im Gespräch mit Heinse", in: *Das Maß des Bacchanten: Wilhelm Heinses Über-Lebenskunst*, ed. Gert Theile, Munich: Fink, 1998. pp. 25 - 54.

[228] cf. Susan Hall and Richard Velkley, "Rousseau and Kant: Rousseau's Kantian Legacy", in: *Thinking with Rousseau: From Machiavelli to Schmitt*, ed. Helena Rosenblatt and Paul Schweigert, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. pp. 192 - 210.

[229] 'Let us make a trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge'. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. B XVI.

In 'the aftermath of Kant's doctrine of freedom', Henrich writes, Hölderlin 'was the first to dispute Kant's thesis that the supreme point from which philosophy ought to proceed be the unity of the consciousness of the "I" as the subject of thinking'.[230] Hölderlin's essay *Judgement and Being* expresses the scepticism that a subjective systematic ground can be provided for a theory of freedom.[231] In this passage, "Judgement" and "Being", as Henrich identifies, are 'set in an entirely new and unconventional relation of opposition'; that is, of unity and separation emphasised by Hölderlin use of the word "Judgement", *Urthiel*, which can be read as *Ur-theil*, *archē*-separation, *and*, *ur-sprüngliche Teilung*, original division.[232] This tragic *archē*-separation, divided within itself, does not pose the question of freedom solely from the vantage point of human subjectivity but from the tragic perspective of freedom itself.

At this juncture, such reflections ought to be considered amidst the practical applications of theoretical freedom inherent in the schismatic tensions of the French Revolution. In his essay on *Hyperion*, Lukács highlights Marx's assertion that these tensions instigated a return to the tragic as a theoretical model of freedom.[233] Similarly, Hegel remarks that:

> Napoleon, in a conversation which he once had with Goethe on the nature of Tragedy, expressed the opinion that its modern phase differed from the ancient, through our no longer recognising a Destiny to which men are absolutely subject, and that policy occupies the place of the ancient Fate. This therefore he thought must be used as the modern form of destiny in tragedy—the irresistible power of circumstances to which individuality must bend.[234]

Hölderlin's attempt to poetically hold the contradictory and "unconventional relation of oppositions" inherent in the impulse for historicism and universalism did not confer a tragic model of the 'abstract universality of power' by which men and deities can be contained and coerced, as Hegel notes of Napoleon, nor to 'the perfect harmony of man with a society which is adequate to

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[230] Dieter Henrich, *Hegel im Kontext*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1987. p. 12.
[231] Hölderlin, "<*Seyn, Urtheil, Modalität*>". II: 49-50. Hölderlin, "Judgement and Being". pp. 37 - 38.
[232] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 75. Adler and Louth suggest that this philological derivation may stem from Fichte, who used it in his 1794-5 Jena lectures. Hölderlin, *EL*. p. 376, n. 14.
[233] György Lukács, "Hölderlin's Hyperion", in: *Goethe and his Age*, trans. Robert Anchor, London: Merlin Press, 1979. pp. 136 - 156.
[234] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree, New York: The Colonial Press, 1899. p. 278.

him' as Lukács' suggests, but to a theoretically tragic freedom in its fullest unrestrained and thus *incognisable* measure.[235]

Drawing upon these impulses, Minder is keen to invest the tragic impulses of the French Revolution with typically Hölderlinian meteorological significance, describing the French Revolution as 'like an unceasing weather' which 'pushed open the gate to world where the antique republic rose again'.[236] However, while Minder remains wedded to a concrete expression of the tragedy as political *modus operandi*, Hölderlin's tragic experience of *archē*-separation occurs precisely *in* a disillusion which overwhelms all self-determination. Thus, while a newly emergent breed of political philhellenism, whose convictions where decidedly correlative with the dimension of freedom in Greek life and which remained indebted to and inexorably linked to the historical realities of the French Revolution and the Kantian articulation of unrestrained self-legislating freedom, has come to dominate the renaissance in the study of Hölderlin's politics, the synechic extent to which Hölderlin's expression of political freedom remains a decisive constituent to, and yet on another level remains entirely foreign to, his poetology has not been sufficiently investigated. If French Germanists such as Minder and Beraux, were the first to introduce the question of the political in the study of Hölderlin's *oeuvre*, the synechic extent to which Hölderlin's expression of political freedom remains a decisive constituent to, and yet on another level remains entirely foreign to, his poetology has not been sufficiently investigated. Rather than highlighting the extent to which Hölderlin's politics and poetry coincide, one should perhaps pose the question counter-wise: do the elements of poetry and politics meet in Hölderlin's work precisely, and deliberately, because they are, in his rendering, both entirely incompatible with metaphysical determinations of time and history?

It would be remiss to continue, however, without acknowledging that *Hyperion*'s immediate field of action is not the French Revolution but a tertiary Greek revolt against Ottoman-Turk rule in the early months of 1770.[237] Since the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Greece had

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[235] Ibid. Lukács, "Hölderlin's Hyperion". p. 139.
[236] Minder, *"Hölderlin unter den Detschen" und andere Aufsätze zur deutschen Literatur*. p. 28. Adler also highlights that the Swabian *wetter* indicates weather and additionally *gewitter* (thunderstorms, storms) and *unwetter* (tempestuous, inclement weather), in: Adler, *Politics and Truth in Hölderlin*. p. 1.
[237] Appraisal of the conflict can be found in: David Brewer, *Greece, the Hidden Centuries: Turkish Rule from the Fall of Constantinople to Greek Independence*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2010. pp. 184 - 195.

played a shadowy and neglected role in European cultural life, yet the prospect of its re-emergence as a confident self-governing bastion of freedom hinted at a 'revived Athens' up to the challenge of taking back its 'antique brilliance', as Voltaire put it while the revolt was still in progress.[238] While Voltaire was in the business of heralding Greek freedom while its incipient independence movement was still finding its feet, *Hyperion* presented the first sustained and theoretically reflexive treatment of the revolt.[239] Whether *Hyperion* provided the leitmotif for a newly emergent philhellenism of freedom, or if a new generation of writers inspired by Winckelmann's aesthetics collectively intuited an emblem for the contradictory experience of revolutionary politics and enlightenment thought, a string of literary endeavours soon emerged all taking the 1770 revolt as allegory for the constellation of contradictory forces which intersect without resolve between poetry and politics, the ideal and the real.[240] It is this sense, it is poignant to conclude that Hölderlin's instinct portending an emergent movement for Greek liberation (which would crystallise in the 1821-1829 Greek War of Independence) from these nascent events would provide an additional dimension to the 'more soon' of *Hyperion*'s denouement.[241]

In the course of such temporal disassociation it becomes possible to recognise the undirectionality of history. Akin to the inner 'tuning of time' at the heart of poetic mediation, world historical revolutionary forces produce an inner tension, or between, through which various moments and contradictory forces of freedom in time and history can coexist, synechically. Indeed, Benjamin draws on Hölderlin's temporal "turn" to articulate the dimensions of 'temporal plasticity': a directionless movement of which runs, as for Shakespeare's Hamlet, 'out of joint' and counter to any rational teleological linear structure.[242] This would place Hölderlin, as a model, *avant la lettre,* for the historian of Benjamin's *Theses on the Philosophy of History* who 'establishes a conception of the present as the "time of now" which is shot through with chips of

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[238] Voltaire, *Ode Pindarique á propos la guerre présente en Grèce.*
[239] Shortly before commencing work on *Hyperion*, Hölderlin established regular contact, through the mother of his Tübingen associate Neuffer (herself from a Greek refugee family), with Panagiot Wergo, a Greek trader who had applied to the Duke of Wüttemberg to trade in raw cotton and Turkish yarn.
[240] Hölderlin's thesis (*A History of Art among the Ancients*) submitted for the Degree of Master of Philosophy in 1790, shows a clear debt to Winckelmann. It is likely that confrontation with Schiller's *Gods of Greece* in the early 1790s changed Hölderlin's thinking. For literary backdrop to the war, see: David Roessel, *In Byron's Shadow: Modern Greece in the English & American Imagination*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. pp. 13 - 41.
[241] *Hyperion* was out of print at the outset of the War of Independence, prompting a hasty reissue. Hölderlin's half-brother, Karl Gok, proposed donating the resulting proceeds to the Greek cause by the way of donation to the newly founded Association for the Liberation of Greece.
[242] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 31. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*. 1.5.118.

Messianic time'.[243] Benjamin highlights the violent interruption of linear time in a tragic *caesura* of the "Messianic", consuming the past and present within a synechically conflux suspended between both in a moment of temporal dissolution. Indeed, this experience calls into question the essence of the historian as such, who, as Benjamin writes in the essay *The Storyteller*, is 'constrained' by their attempt to 'explain one way or another' historical events 'providing a verifiable explanation'.[244] The poetic 'chronicler', however, who takes such events as examples of tragic fate at work, 'does not aim to accurately link together specific events, but to embed them in the inscrutable course of the world'.[245] In this sense, it is possible to conceive of *Hyperion* as belonging to another tradition in which events pass by in evolutions that form no recognisable or unified shape or system, breaking off into meaningless diversions or abstractions and yet holding-together all the while in an aesthetic presentation. The tempo of these ever-flowing fluctuations are not measured, accounted, or part of a grand teleological schema but rest, endlessly and synechically, in the division between history and nature in a network of what Fóti calls 'epochal discordance'.[246]

*Hyperion*'s temporal structure may be seen to embody above all the contradictory characteristics of Hölderlin's historical situation and the demands placed upon the human understanding of freedom by the divergent registers of history and nature. The layered and interconnected sequence of letters and events, which themselves are never wholly in sequence, engender a displaced reflective order which resists historical categorisation. This disorientation of time and place is further extended by Hölderlin's precise recollections of a modern Greece which he had never seen. The direct borrowing of extended passages from Richard Chandler's 1776 *Travels in Greece*, and the proximity of Hölderlin's geographical details to those of Chandler's accompanying maps, further extends geographical as well as temporal "discordance".[247] Such discordance produces the effect, as Henrich describes, 'of a line drawn

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[243] Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History". XVIII, p. 263.
[244] Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller: Reflections on the Work of Nikolai Leskov", in: *The Storyteller Essays*, trans. Tess Lewis, New York: New York Review of Books, 2019. p. 60. Following reference in: Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*. pp. 5 - 6.
[245] Ibid.
[246] cf. Fóti, *Epochal Discordance*.
[247] It must have struck Hölderlin that Chandler also rediscovered the ancient site of Olympia, whose victorious athletes had been praised in Pindar's odes.

across maps or globes than of a narrated journey', further enhanced by *Hyperion*'s displaced register of letters.[248] *Hyperion*'s epistolary form extends the holding-together of the poetic remembrance into the future; it withholds its absences within its very presence, and oscillates freely between temporal registers and events. Derrida further highlights Hölderlin's atemporal disassociation between the letter, which is indexically signed and dated, and poetic language, which holds no fixed form but is still dateable, both of which are nonetheless synechically held-together as a 'gift', in the same presentation:

> No calendrical time can be given for the 'Now' of his poetry. Nor is any date needed here at all. For this 'Now' that is called and is itself calling is, in a more originary sense, itself a date—that is to say, something given, a gift.[249]

The letter syncretically ties and gifts to the reader the absent and the present, and the past with the future, articulating the tendencies of separation and unification in the pursuit of freedom beyond the domain of abstract philosophical system. For Hamacher, the language of Hölderlin's correspondence during the period of *Hyperion*'s creation consciously orients itself toward an atemporal date; 'brought forth *by* it and *from out of* it' finding therein 'the horizon of its movements' through the creative promise, or gift, of an empty non-time.[250] Hölderlin's thought resides in a "future" which, like the letter, must be and is always an opening and open-to addition or response. The promise of such a future projects a time which is outside of time: the goal, end, or determination of *every time*, in which 'the structure of communication as such exhibits itself' in the epistolary form.[251]

In this sense, the non-linear and non-teleological epistolary form can be seen as representative of Hölderlin's broader political approach to render visible what Hamacher labels a 'non-metaphysical concept of revolution' whose freedom extends beyond the boundaries of the purely "political".[252] As Hölderlin argues in his theoretical writings, a metaphysical construct of the revolutionary can only conceptualise itself by virtue of its relationship with its own negativity;

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[248] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 162.
[249] Jacques Derrida, *Sovereignties in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan*, ed. Thomas Butoit and Outi Pasanen, New York: Fordham University Press, 2006. p. 194. Consider Derrida's statements in relation to Heidegger's remarks concerning the "gift of Being" throughout his Heraclitus lectures.
[250] Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". pp. 117 - 119.
[251] Ibid. p. 119.
[252] Ibid. p. 109.

however, a non-metaphysical revolutionary encounter can only be broached at the point where its own conditions of efficacy cannot be conceptualised. It is in the synechically held impotent suspension where history remains unconscious of the condition of its efficacy and the forces whereby such a consciousness may arise, that the creative moment which, as Hamacher concludes, 'does not begin with self-production and self-appropriation' but rather:

> a *point de suspension* that resists bourgeois idealism and its politics, a point from which a line, though certainly not a straight one, could be drawn to point out the work that could be done to dissolve present systems.[253]

Hölderlin's freedom differs from a conceptually conditioned programme in precisely the sense that it is not conditioned by its own negativity, but rather a spontaneous and unmediated between. The revolutionary moment synechically ties together competing conceptual regimes of freedom and unfreedom because it is moderated by neither: it is 'beyond the patchwork made by hand of man', as Diotima instructs in her final remarks to Hyperion.[254] Diotima's teaching appears to presage the vision memorialised in Hyperion's final letter: 'we don't anxiously strive to be outwardly equal… in our innermost being we are all of us like'.[255] Hölderlin's revolutionary moment traverses landscapes which synechically mediates a reciprocal determination between all of its elements whilst also resisting the capacity of these elements to "rest" in their own essentiality, allowing them rather to interpenetrate, collide, or resist each other without renouncing their oppositionality. It is in this guise that we should read Hyperion's Heraclitean retreat into isolation portended by the moniker outlined in the subtitle of the work, *The Hermit in Greece*, and recounted in *Hyperion*'s first and last letters. Rather than representing Hyperion's disillusioned retreat from the "revolutionary" to commune with nature as the abnegation of political thought, Hyperion's withdrawal exposes the subversive force of his character without fashioning him into a political allegorist. The "retreat" is the necessary self-sufficient detachment beyond every determination which opens the synechic possibility of unification through withdrawal, seizing the *caesura* already at the heart of the speculative and rendering its suspended moment eminently capable of both dissolution and origination.

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[253] Ibid. pp. 108 - 109.
[254] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LVIII]".
[255] Ibid. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LX]".

Returning to the passage from one of Hölderlin's most explicitly political essays, "Becoming in Dissolution", such a surrender is laid bare:

> …dissolution is necessary and holds its peculiar character between being and non-being. In the state between being and non-being, however, the possible becomes real everywhere, and the real becomes ideal.[256]

Dissolution is a process of rupture which can be punctuated by synechic harmonies which bring to presence the possibility of a bridge between divergent formations of reality—the perishing past and the future yet-to-be—which are nonetheless reciprocally situated to the synechic moment, two combined, yet isolated, trajectories which at times move across and occupy the same terrain while, at others, do not even form part of the same "world". It is the empty space in which phenomena can occur before dissolving back, like clouds, into the synechic space which they enter, remain, and then dissolve. This is not to say that the poetic mediation of the *synechia* provides the model for what will become actual, but rather that it is the *synechia* which makes possible the revolutionary moment because it is able to constitute meaning among a horizon of empty possibilities without an immovably fixed connection to the temporal constraints of mortal existence. It is the *synechia* which allows mortals to embrace 'the *possible* which enters into *reality* as that *reality itself dissolves*'.[257] Tellingly, Hamacher connects this passage to an observation made in the 1803 *Remarks on Oedipus* which shows the necessary *caesura* of the revolutionary instance occurring in the space in which 'there exists nothing but the conditions of time and space'; it is this reduction of experience, as endured by *Hyperion* in his hermitage, where the dissolution of form generates a new paradigm of reality which cannot be conceived by ideologically motivated attempts at cultivating the new.[258] The locality of such sites of transition and their connection to transformed forms of consciousness, where revolutionary occurrences may arise, has been traced as a recurring theme in Hölderlin's thought by Henrich who suggests these sites generate a 'connection with all places brought together in a consciousness' of unconditional freedom.[259] This is why the novel's closing statement 'more soon' must remain a

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[256] Hölderlin, "*Das untergehende Vaterland*". II: 72-77. Hölderlin, "Becoming in Dissolution". pp. 96 - 100.
[257] Ibid.
[258] 'You will conquer … and forget what for', Diotima warns Hyperion. Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXXIII]". Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". pp. 125 - 127.
[259] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. pp. 228 - 230.

portend of something that cannot yet be broached or even named, must always remain 'soon', as

Hölderlin evokes in "Becoming in Dissolution"'s allusion to Horace:

> Wisely the God enwraps in fuliginous night,
>
> the future's outcome, and laughs …[260]


*More soon.: Hyperion and* Synechia

Does Hölderlin's recourse to a perpetually out-of-reach "soon" offer the direction for a thinking which resolutely refuses synthesis? As Laplanche indicates, the potentiality of independent finitude which singularises and ruptures the double movement of the dialectic is mirrored in one of *Hyperion*'s final letters:

> Yesterday I was upon on Etna. There came to my mind the great Sicilian who
>
> once, wearied with counting the hours and intimate with the soul of the world,
>
> plunged himself down in his bold lust for life, into the glorious flames; for the
>
> cold poet had needed the fire to warm himself by.[261]

Here, a tragic *caesura* which undermines all synthesis, cancelling resolution through the death of the "great Sicilian" (the pre-Socratic philosopher Empedocles), is represented in the totality of death which undermines and holds the problematic of finitude in its own self-negation. The theme of a totality lost and then recovered in a paradoxical and an immediate fashion which also singularises, allows 'Hölderlin to juxtapose developments in a harmony with which logic would find fault'.[262] This paradoxical stance, of a "cold poet" transformed by "glorious flames", recalls Hölderlin's instruction that poets should 'warm themselves on ice'.[263] The combination of ice and fire, held-together in the moment of the *caesura* which disrupts the logical and sequential flow of the narrative, would also come to dominate the form of Hölderlin's next work, the abandoned tragedy: *The Death of Empedocles*, to the extent that the work itself would forever remain in an incomplete suspension without resolution.[264] Nonetheless, the paradoxical problematic of co-

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[260] Horace, *The Complete Odes and Epodes*, trans. G. Shepherd, London: Penguin Books, 1983. (*Odes*. III, 29, 11.29f.).
[261] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LVIII Continued]". Laplanche, *Hölderlin and the Question of the Father*. p. 94.
[262] Laplanche, *Hölderlin and the Question of the Father*. p. 95.
[263] Hölderlin to Schiller, 4th September 1795, in: Hölderlin, *EL*. pp. 62 - 63.
[264] *The Death of Empedocles* exists in three separate incomplete drafts dating from 1797 to 1800. Introductory overview can be found in: Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles*. pp. 1 - 23.

joining the absolute and with non-reciprocal singular within the same expression, as this chapter has illustrated, is already held-together in both *Hyperion*'s form and content.

The synechic moment to be found at the heart of *Hyperion*'s *caesura* offers a trajectory upon which it is possible to read Hölderlin's approach to a restless condition at the heart of metaphysics, the tragic condition that fates mortals to the bisecting contrary at the heart of being, and his challenge to the various historical strategies for "overcoming" the mortal regime of contradiction which has compelled the restless to find rest in a hermetic universalising ideal. Thus, *Hyperion* indicates an origin from which it is possible to express union, in the 'resolution of dissonances in a particular character', without recourse to a dialectical polarity which subsumes being under the yoke of contradiction, within an aesthetic presentation that marries fire and ice, the light of enlightenment with its correspondent darkness. [265] For this reason, Hölderlin's philosophy of truth becomes unrecognisable from the perspectives of his contemporaries. Indeed, this chapter has encountered Hölderlin's truth claims from the perspective of various philosophical displacements which occur at particular moments in its history, whereby the dominant ruling hegemony becomes visible as such, and therefore becomes both cognisable and questionable.

The conceptual history of *alétheia* has provided the vantage point from which this chapter has evaluated Hölderlin's contribution to the problematic of truth in philosophical thinking at the end of the eighteenth century. To illustrate this, the three principal thematic concerns of *Hyperion*, collated above under the headings of nature, memory, and freedom, all correspond to the performative function of truth as *alétheia*. Through the religious force of *mnēmosynē*, the poet, who can also articulate the law of the gods as *phúsis* in nature, are capable of a "second sight" and able to see what is otherwise invisible to mortals in order to express "all that has been, all that is, and all that is to be". [266] Archaic truth, then, is the preserve of select figures possessed with the performative ability to hold the mythic and religious configuration of *alétheia* and dispense it through a synechic *poíēsis*. True discourse, Foucault writes,

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[265] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. "Foreword".
[266] Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece*. pp. 15 - 17.

held sway over all and was pronounced by men who spoke as of right, according

to ritual, meted out justice and attributed to each his rightful share; it prophesied

the future, not merely announcing what was going to occur, but contributing to

its actual event, carrying along with it and thus weaving itself into the fabric of

fate.[267]

In practical terms, Hölderlin's truth procedure is embodied by the process of synechic speech

itself; so that similarly *discourse is the truth.* The poetic word attempts to bridge the otherwise

unbridgeable variance between opposing extremes which draw each into the other by holding

otherness. In this way, several commentators have also sought to apply this law—namely, that

differentiation must maintain unity, and therefore also must unity maintain differentiation—to

Hölderin's understanding of *Innigkeit* which confers an ecstatic and intuitive moment that

transcends subjectivity.[268] If, then, Hölderlin's *Hyperion* suggests that truth becomes attainable

once again through the synechic potentialities of language which renders feasible for mortals, as

with the ancient disposers of truth, the capacity to *live* in truth, that is, through the synechic use

of the word to *be the truth*, then truth itself wins its way up against the stream of life not by dint

of the rigid application of the superior values of abstract absolutes (whether they be they rendered

in metaphysics, theology, psychology, epistemology, science, or mathematics), but by the

everyday habitation upon earth: a simple act of living through which, in its alternate pushes of

active and passive motions which at times resist the current of language and at others yield to it,

separation and unity collide providing an emblem for the process of the *synechia* itself.

The experience of *poíēsis* enables the presence of *synechia*. In this respect, Heidegger's

meditation upon the tenth strophe of *The Rhine*, which begins: 'Of demigods now I think', is

noteworthy.[269] Hölderlin's "demigod", for Heidegger, bears a connection to register of truth in its

earliest incarnations, and its functionaries perform a role similar to those highlighted by Foucualt

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[267] Foucault, "The Discourse on Language". p. 218.

[268] As Farrell Krell describes, the word *innigkeit* is habitually translated in philosophical literature as "interior" (as in, the interior life of the subject), however, in Hölderlin's case, the term also implies an intense intimacy which also confers an experience of going "outside" or "beyond" oneself. Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles.* pp. 226 - 227. For further on Hölderlin's *innigkeit*, see: Peter Warnek, ""Fire from Heaven" in Elemental Tragedy: From Hölderlin's "Death of Empedocles" to Nietzsche's Dying Socrates", in: *Research in Phenomenology*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 212 - 239, 2014.

[269] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine".* pp. 148 - 191. Also: Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister".* pp. 123 - 161. Also following: Julia A. Davis, "Need Delimited: The Creative Otherness of Heidegger's Demigods" in: *Continental Philosophy Review*, No. 38, pp. 223 - 239, 2006.

and Detienne's: those 'who names the gods with names'.[270] These "sayers", as Heidegger calls them, ascribe names to phenomena and thus allow them to enter the domain of the truthful which is the saying of names itself. As with Parmenides, such a process can only occur in a synechic space "between" phenomena: 'the "between" between the heavenly and human beings'.[271] Heidegger's thesis, however, reverses the ancient function of *alétheia* so that now only mortals, or "demigods", ascribe the performative function of the divinities rather than those gods conferring truth to humans. For Heidegger, it is only at the mortal intersection in which differentiation occurs that immortals can experience themselves *as immortals*, as *The Rhine* seems to suggest: 'The most Blessed in themselves feel nothing'.[272] While the mythical religious semantic content of *alétheia* conferred a thoroughfare along which those bestowed with the privilege of annunciating aletheological truth ferried back-and-forth between the mortal and immortal realms, Heidegger's Hölderlin projects a relation in which truth is conferred in the *synechia* acting as the unaccountable site of mortal and immortal interdependence. In the synechic space between singular and absolute resides the true: that which gathers together and holds the experience of both. The annunciation of truth cannot occur amidst the singular, but in the synechic space which the poem holds open in order to establish commune. It is in this singularising gesture, which accepts its singularisation in order to embrace a tragic unity, that Heidegger claims Hölderlin's thought 'scales one of the most towering and solitary peaks of Western thinking'.[273]

Upon such peaks, the truth itself is for Heidegger no longer the preserve of metaphysicians, whose manner of questioning is not sufficient to ask the "originary" questions, but rather those who think "poetically". Hölderlin draws near to Parmenides' synechic theory of *alétheia*, not only because he reorients the essential relation to truth as poetic, but also because, for Heidegger, he 'commences' a new relation to the 'supreme necessity of this poetic saying'.[274] However, such origins do not simply "begin" as a course of destiny, as Heidegger suggests, but instead proceeds from the space in which *beginning itself is understood as a fable* synechically held with reality. Nor, too, does metaphysics "end". Instead, ending ends. In a noteworthy parallel,

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[270] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*. p. 148.
[271] Ibid. p. 153.
[272] Hölderlin, "*Der Rhein*". I: 342-348. Hölderlin, "The Rhine". pp. 196 - 209.
[273] Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*. p. 244.
[274] Ibid.

the emergent historical necessity of poetry as a self-knowingly flawed origin is also intimated by Badiou, who labels Hölderlin the 'angelical announcer' of the return of an 'age of poets'.[275] This age, for Badiou, is conceivable only in the epochal relation of poetry to philosophy, and only becomes necessary at the juncture at which poets come to occupy 'the place where ordinarily the properly philosophical strategies of thought are declared'.[276] This makes the age of the poem, for Badiou as with Heidegger, contingent on philosophy's own failure to mediate the antagonism between logical systems of thought and historical events.[277] For Badiou, the poets do not enter triumphantly, announcing the coming end of philosophy, but instead occupy a synechic void left by the abdicating voice of philosophy which no longer possesses any hegemonic recourse with which to respond to or mediate the question of its own dissolution.

How are philosophers to account for the abnegation of philosophy from its historic position as legislator and guarantor of truth? For Heidegger and Badiou, the starting point for these disruptions are inherently political and historical, and further conditioned by the cultural domination of language by representational-calculative forms of thought, as Gadamer highlights:

> Sober planning, sober calculation, and sober observation exert a constant and coercive force on the forms that our spiritual expressions now take. The speculative profundities, dark oracles, and prophetic emotionalism that once held us captive are now shunned. In philosophy this manifests itself in a growing trend toward logical clarity, exactness, and verifiability of all assertions.[278]

The poetic impetus is not a regressive yearning but uniquely situated to respond to the moment in which philosophy has abnegated the regions of original uncertainty which manifest themselves most traumatically in the experience or withdrawal of the absolute regimes. The synechic moment which holds this withdrawal is articulated in the closing lines of Hölderlin's *Remarks on Oedipus*, a gesture he will call the "betrayal" of the divine:

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[275] Alain Badiou, "The Age of Poets" in: *The Age of Poets: And Other Writings on Twentieth Century Poetry and Prose*, trans. Bruno Bosteels, London: Verso Books, 2014. p. 3.
[276] Ibid. p. 5.
[277] For Badiou, mathematics necessarily provides philosophers with logical systems of knowledge, while poetry articulates what he calls "the event" (a rupture in the fabric of society), see: Badiou, *Being and Event*.
[278] Gadamer, *Heidegger's Ways*. pp. 15 - 16.

In order to ensure the course of the world has no gaps and *the memory of the celestial does not end*, God and man communicate with each other in *the all-forgetting form of infidelity*, since divine infidelity is to be kept in mind more than anything else. Thus, man forgets himself and God turns, but in a sacred way, like a traitor. At the extreme limits of passivity, in fact, there are no other conditions beyond time and space.[279]

This tragic betrayal is a two-way synechic moment in which the subject and the divine both experiences and inflicts betrayal; in the experience of violent rupture, chaos, or differentiation, under the governing form of authority, the subject identifies that it has been betrayed by it, and yet, in the same gesture, the subject also recognises that it must also betray the prevailing legislator in order to experience reality so as not to be crushed by it.[280] As in *Hyperion* 'the lyre of the heavenly muse' holds sway 'over the discordant elements' in the face of 'scared chaos', the poetic *synechia* bridges the gap in withdrawal and re-emergence, *between* "being and non-being".[281] If truth only confers "sacral" *kenosis* of representation, a transformed relation to language must be undergone for it to survive, as Gadamer argues at the climax of *Truth and Method*:

Hölderlin has shown that finding the language of a poem involves totally dissolving all customary words and modes of expression… [the poem] does not describe or signify an entity, but opens up the world of the divine and the human for us… it does not reflect an existent reality, does not reproduce the appearance of the *species* in the order of essence, but represents the new appearance of a new world.[282]

In this fashion, the poet must enact his form of betrayal at the level of content: through the dissolution of absolute values rendered through the concretisation of directive grammars.

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[279] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Notes on the *Oedipus*", in: *EL.* pp. 317 - 324. This passage bears correlation with Schiller's *Letters on Aesthetic Education*: 'The boundlessness of space and time is presented to Man's imagination… we may call this condition of indeterminability an *empty infinity*'. Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*, trans. Reginald Snell, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954. (Nineteenth Letter.)
[280] Following commentary on "Divine Betrayal" in: Krell, *The Tragic Absolute*. pp. 292 - 309.
[281] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[282] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. p. 470.

What "begins" but does not necessarily end in this recognition is not the birth pang of a new theology, it is the experience whereby the subject withdraws and 'there exists nothing but the conditions of time and space'.[283] In this sense, Badiou's claim, that only a poetic voice is able to speak when all other voices are silent, is telling. The poetic after Hölderlin offers a form of thought that resists the clutching grasp of the concept, 'the poem is an unthinkable thought' which provides 'a form of thinking without knowledge'.[284] This form renders possible an articulation of the "conditions of time and space". To this end, Foucault's analysis that the oft-perceived discovery of the historical dimension in the nineteenth century is also predicted by a simultaneously tragic negation of time, which reaches heightened state in Hölderlin's language, where mortals must 'manifest their return to their native ground of finitude', provides further clarification.[285] At the heart of language lies nothingness, a silence which all language from this moment is also withheld. Such an experience is already visible in Hellingrath's treatment of Hölderlin's Sophocles and Pindar translations. For Hellingrath, language is wrested into a form of 'rigid construction' (*harte Fügung*), a technique, at variance with common practice (labelled by Hellingrath as 'flat construction') of subordination of individual words into a larger unified syntactic context, in which each individual word is instead both connected to and yet isolated from its surrounding material so that overall meaning is withheld and open to a multitude of varying and contradictory interpretations.[286] Benjamin illustrates the manner in which meaning 'plunges from abyss to abyss until it threatens to become lost in the bottomless depths of language' so that, from this withdrawal, truth is vouchsafed at the juncture 'in which meaning has ceased to be the watershed for the flow of language and the flow of revelation'.[287] This is the nature of Hölderlin's "turn", already prescribed in the philological foundation of poetic verse as derived from the Latin *versāre*, that is, "to turn" or "to twist".[288] Hölderlin's poetic language is structurally and foundationally predisposed toward turning, away from itself and yet all the while

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[283] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.
[284] Alain Badiou, "Philosophy and Poetry from the Vantage Point of the Unnameable", in: *The Age of Poets*. p. 48
[285] Foucault, "The Father's "No"", in: *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, trans. Robert Hurley, New York: The New Press, 1998. p. 19.
[286] Norbert von Hellingrath, *Pindarübertrafungen von Hölderlin: Prolegomena zu einer Erstausgabe*, Jena: Diederichs, 1911. Agamben likens this technique to the Greek word *anakolouthon*, literally meaning 'not connected', representing an unexpected and incoherent discontinuity in expression which remains 'without sequence'. Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*. p. 316.
[287] Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator". p. 82.
[288] Following: Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*. pp. 311 - 312.

and at the same time back towards itself without ever reaching its final destination or synthesis. Thus, Hölderlin's poetic voice, presents as an uncomfortable goad to the steed of metaphysics, for, as Hölderlin teaches, the ever-present anarchic potential of language undermines Plato's 'truth of things' in an attempt to synechically hold between mortals forever 'walking in the midst of things unthinkable'.[289]

Synechic truth, as Benjamin concludes, does not lead one back into the mythological but, 'only to mythic connections formed by the artwork into a singular, un-mythological, and un-mythic shape, which we cannot more closely conceptualise'.[290] In the space, in which the ancient ritual once served in an attempt 'to resolve through action what thought alone cannot resolve', the poem provides a *synechia* which holds open and contains the contradictory and paradoxical tragic strife at the heart of truth.[291] As a consequence of this displacement, the agonal experience at the heart of truth is not conditioned by the dialectical back-and-forth but situated again in an unconditioned *phúsis* which arises, as in the poem *As on a Holiday…*, out of 'holy chaos'.[292] Hölderlin recasts an ancient paradigm of *alétheia* which requires no supreme entity, or 'self-incurred illusion of perfect presence', from which mortals take an essential bearing, but allows the present appear without presupposing, as Kant posits, 'that objects must conform to our knowledge'.[293] The poetic *synechia* is necessary for truth to be truly thought, rendering humans as authors and products in the same gesture, and making tragic "truth" come to presence. In one of his most sustained theoretical essays, *On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit*, Hölderlin attempts to affirm with almost obsessive zeal that which must remain an "enigma" as the precondition of its existence, the 'infinity of isolated moments' which this study has defined as the synechic process:

> once it is so advanced, once its transactions lack neither harmonious unity nor
>
> significance and energy, neither harmonious spirit in general nor harmonious
>
> alternation, then it is necessary if the unified (to the extent | that it can be

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[289] Plato, *Phaedo*, 99e. Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*". II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Antigone"". pp. 109 - 116.

[290] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 35.

[291] Roberto Calasso, *Ardor*, tans. Richard Dixon, London: Macmillan, 2016. p. 342

[292] Hölderlin, "*Wie wenn am Feiertage …*". I: 262-264. Hölderlin, "As on a holiday …".  pp. 172 - 177.

[293] Schürmann, *On Being and Acting*. p. 197. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. B XVI.

considered by itself) shall not cancel itself as something undifferentiable and become an empty infinity, or if it shall not lose its identity in an alternation of opposites, however harmonious they may be, thus be no longer anything integral and unified, but shall disintegrate into an infinity of isolated moments (a sequence of atoms, as it were) I say: then it is necessary that the poetic spirit in its unity and harmonious progress also provide for itself an infinite perspective for its transaction, a unity where in the harmonious progress and alternation everything moves forward and backward and, through its sustained characteristic relation to that unity, not only gain objective coherence for the observer [but] also gain [a] felt and tangible coherence and identity in the alternation of oppositions; and it is its last task, to have a thread, to have a recollection so that the spirit remain present to itself never in the individual moment and again in an individual moment, but continue in one moment as in another and in the different moods, just as it is entirely present to itself *in the infinite unity* which is once the point of separation for the unified as such, but then again also point of union for the unified as the opposed, finally is also both at once, so that what is harmoniously opposed within it is neither opposed as something unified nor unified as something opposed but as both in One.[294]

The unity of truth appears, then, not as an ontologically stable category through which the contingent world can be rendered in eternal principles, but as an ever-unfolding expanse which may, in *synechia*, transcend the simple truth of the given into a fundamental unity of thinking, acting, and being, singularly, if only in glimpses, but always with the promise of more soon.

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[294] Hölderlin, "*Wenn der Dichter einmal des Gesites mächtig ...*". II: 77-100. Hölderlin, "On the Operations of the Poetic Spirit". pp. 62 - 82.

# Late Hölderlin

In its previous chapters, this study articulated how Hölderlin renders a synechic process which "holds" truth. In tracing the presentation of these ideas in his *Hyperion*, the previous chapter elaborated the resonances between Hölderlin's *synechic* thought with that of Parmenides and the tragic truth of pre-Socratic Greece. And yet, amidst the decline and abandonment of his subsequent work, *The Death of Empedocles*, Hölderlin's "turn" is also read by many commentators as both a developmental progression from Greece as a model of presentation and forewarning of impending psychological imbalance. The ensuing chapter, therefore, will investigate these relations, exploring first the latent affinities with the theoretical outlook already illustrated in *Hyperion* with that of the later hymnal poetry (commonly collated under the rubric of "Late Hölderlin"). While *Hyperion* is habitually taken by many commentators as a straightforwardly "early" text upon which Hölderlin paves theoretical ground for the maturation of his poetic power, this chapter will argue that *Hyperion* does not, as Fenves highlights, 'run counter to dramatic scenarios in which late Hölderlin is cast as a victor over his earlier self' but instead opens a synechic template which 'lets us see, writ large, the temporal entanglement that constitutes the most striking structural feature of *Hyperion* itself' - that is 'the shape of Hölderlin's writing whereby "late" and "early" are always gently entangled with each other'.[1] This chapter will suggest that, rather than *Hyperion* and *The Death of Empedocles* representing the apotheosis of Hölderlin's Greece, and far from expressions of youthful immaturity which subsequently give themselves over to psychological imbalance, the "late" hymnal works refract his meditations on Greece in a form of presentation which condenses them so as to reframe them in a "modern" manifestation of the tragic truth of *synechia*.

Reading, as most are inclined to do, this chapters title as affirmation of the fact one may begin with a positive response to the question which is perhaps not even presupposed in its economy: *is there a "Late Hölderlin"?* Nonetheless, anticipation of this question ought to remain implicit in any reading, for, on a conceptual level, it serves to subterraneously confront, if not

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[1] Peter Fenves, "Foreword: The Metapolitical", in: *Politics and Truth in Hölderlin*. p. xi.

resolve, many of the traditional legislative referents of Hölderlin chronology which it may provoke as response. The identification and articulation of a problem posed by the various competing historical reference points of Hölderlin administration has already been made by Foucault who, in an essay on Hölderlin's historical treatment, explicitly questioned 'whether a chain of significations can be formed to link, without discontinuity or rupture, an individual life to a life's work, events to words'.[2] Any attempt to bind this chain, then, into a coherent articulation of the ambivalent relations that constitute Hölderlin's so-called "late" life and work confronts an implicit tension between critical and the clinical discourses and the dilemma of subsuming both under a common legislative genus without surrendering to generalities of the most banal and regressive formation. Thus, Foucault issues at the outset a challenge to the sensitive reader of Hölderlin: 'how can language apply a *single and identical* discourse to poetry and madness? Which syntax functions *at the same time* on the level of declared meaning *and* on that of interpreted signification?'.[3] Or, under which rule of law does one articulate or ascribe meaning to the designation *Late Hölderlin*? Is it possible to collapse the distinctions between divergent registers of Hölderlin scholarship, to somehow respect the singular and also conform it to the general? It is a question which any serious study of Hölderlin's "lateness" must attempt to encounter - maybe, even, if only to acknowledge the possibility of the impossibility of such a task and, perhaps, also find therein a point from which it is possible to approach Hölderlin through an articulation of the synechic process: to tie together that which can be made visible with that which is perhaps necessarily hidden from its configuration, to recognise the bifold allegiances which operate within and obscure our organisation of existence.

To say that "Hölderlin is late" is to set a limit which can only be traced through its own violations. A limit immobilises that which lies within its orbit by subsuming it within predetermined system, and therefore enclosure, of knowledge. Thus, to speak of the principle of a Late Hölderlin is to expose oneself, from the outset, to the clamour for an order with its accompanying labels, associations, and titles, be they disciplinary or instinctive. Such ordering principles have jostled for primacy amidst the fluctuating and, at times, choppy waters of

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[2] Foucault, "The Father's "No"'. p. 7.
[3] Ibid.

Hölderlin scholarship for the past two centuries; even, at times, threatening to drown Hölderlin himself. Such methods are, at best, heuristic shortcuts, often appealing to authorities that necessarily extend far beyond Hölderlin's meaning and intentions or what can be explicitly inferred from the circumstances of his life. Nonetheless, these structures of reading also illustrate how the underlying and unquestionable principles which guide such situations only remain so temporarily. As certain regimes and narratives wither away, so often does their principle, giving way to the establishment of a new order or regime of signification. In this respect, the history of Hölderlin study is no less so. This chapter will, therefore, start by exposing the limits of such limits. For *Late Hölderlin* opens, in two words, three reading schemas.

To begin: the first association of lateness with Hölderlin occurs upon the limits of meaning and time upon what Foucault labels a 'pathological calendar'.[4] Within this conflux, Hölderlin's lateness is commonly prescribed by a psycho-biographical referent which isolates the point at which the work ends and the madness "begins"; reading, in the same gesture, both the life and the work along a certain pre-conceived conception of madness. The allure of this convention is already prevalent in the first literary study of Hölderlin: Wilhelm Waiblinger's biographical essay (written in 1827-8), the title of which already signposts a necessary association between *Friedrich Hölderlins Leben, Dichtung und Wahnsinn*.[5] Life, Poetry, Madness, in that order, Waiblinger proceeds according each to the other in turn. Thus, of *Hyperion* readers learn little more than that the spirit of the work is 'of a grave incurable illness… through which the poet forcibly cleaves a path into madness'.[6] In this fashion, Waiblinger's essay commences a tradition which still continues to this day, reading each of the events, characteristics, and creative output of Hölderlin's life as part of an organic psychological developmental schema in which madness is a latent and yet inevitable corrosive element that Hölderlin's work must "struggle against" before finally succumbing to. However, in their efforts to trace madness as it develops through

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[4] Ibid. pp. 5 - 6. Historical survey of Hölderlin's biographies and biographers available in: Emery E. George, "Hölderlin and his Biographers", in: *The Journal of English and German Philology*, Vol. 89, No. 1, pp. 51 - 85, 1990.

[5] Waiblinger, a student and aspiring writer at the Tübingen *Stift* visited Hölderlin frequently between 1822 and 1824. His proximity to Hölderlin, it is suggested, was motivated by his desire to write about him - the novel *Phaeton*, written soon after Waiblinger met Hölderlin, features an insane sculptor (the eponymous Phaeton) bearing a resemblance to Hölderlin.

[6] Wilhelm Waiblinger, *Friedrich Hölderlin's Life Poetry and Madness*, trans. Will Stone, London: Hesperus, 2018. p. 35.

Hölderlin's life and work, these studies flatten the distinctions between Hölderlin's mental processes and his creative output in order to ascribe the latter as instruments of the former. Stylistic alterations in Hölderlin's creative output are habitually read only as manifest symptoms of madness, failing to recognise the critical temporal disassociation between Hölderlin's psychological and poetic processes. Proximity with the complex nature of Hölderlin's writings is foregone. Research which situates its reading of Hölderlin at a juncture between reason and madness also fails to articulate the dimension to which dissociation itself is also a significant and deliberate constituent of Hölderlin's own theoretical perspective.

The synthesis, inherited from psychiatry, of a body and mind in temporal tandem finds theoretical critique in Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's interactions with the work of Pierre Klossowski.[7] For Deleuze and Guattari, psychiatrical or legislative models fail to incorporate the perspective of a "disjunctive synthesis" at play in the midst of the unconscious. Thus, in trying to elaborate Hölderlin's "late" psychological make-up, the clinician is encouraged to bilaterally 'abide by the exclusions (the prohibitions) that correspond to the lines of functional differentiation'.[8] However, in a disjunctive model, the psychologist is encouraged to promote a subversion of their own laws though an operation which is 'disjunctive and which nonetheless affirms the disjoint terms', as Delezue and Guattari conclude:

> He does not replace the disjunctive synthesis with the synthesis of contradictory elements, rather, he replaces the exclusive and limitative usage of the disjunctive synthesis with a use that is affirmative and inclusive. He is, and remains, in disjunction: he does not suppress the disjunction in an identity of contradictory elements by digging into their depths, on the contrary, he affirms the disjunction by surveying an indivisible distance.[9]

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[7] cf. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "*La synthèse disjonctive*", in: *L'Arc*, Vol. 43, pp. 54 - 62, 1970. (The essay is partially recollected and expanded in the 1972 *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.) Citation following the trans. available at: "https://www.academia.edu/36885240/Deleuze_and_Guattari_The_Disjunctive_Synthesis_1970_" (accessed 11th September 2023). Page numbers cited below also correlate to Ian Jackobi's trans.. Deleuze and Guattari's readings find common ground with the surrealist interpretations of Hölderlin inspired by Klossowski's 1930 French translations of Hölderlin's "late" poems: *Poèmes de la folie d'Hölderlin*.
[8] Ibid. p. 11.
[9] Ibid. pp. 12 - 13.

Within a network of rising and falling signification the subject remains always of partial configuration, with shades of Adorno's "parataxis", full of counter acting oscillations of rising and falling intensities which cannot be resolved. The subject is never "this" or "that" but always amidst a synechic network of interrelating and contradictory terms and allegiances. In his study of Hölderlin, Laplanche will also echo the disjunctive "indivisible distance" in which Hölderlin's theoretical perspective operates as an 'intermediary domain between non-being and being'.[10]

To this end, a recent study by Agamben has drawn upon the shortcomings in ascribing a chronological and clinical departure for Hölderlin's "lateness".[11] In attempting to address the insufficiency of purely pathobiographical studies of Hölderlin, Agamben sets up a historical confrontation in which the only legitimate perimeter for a psycho-biographical reading of lateness is the one provided by Hölderlin's confinement in the home of a Tübingen carpenter, Zimmer.[12] Providing, as it does, a practical concrete bisection of Hölderlin's life between two poles—correlating as the 1806-7 referent does precisely between the first half, or 36 years, of Hölderlin's life between 1770 to 1806, and the corresponding second half, another 36 years between 1807 to 1843—Agamben renders a partition in an attempt to overcome the apparent incompatibility of Hölderlin's life with the various irreconcilable discourses that surround him. A line taken from the poem *In lovely blue*, 'poetically man dwells upon this earth', is offered as a departure for an unprecedented notion of what it means to understand his, or any, life 'in a way that cannot be decided or mastered according to habit or custom… but only inhabited'.[13] Needless to say, a life understood as "dwelt" cannot be the subject of traditional clinical biography. Agamben's thesis suggests that the truth of such a life is understood in its ability to hide from the strictly representational. Thus, Hölderlin's idiosyncratic radicalism of unity through division and his

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[10] Laplanche, *Hölderlin and the Question of the Father*. p. 75.
[11] Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*.
[12] Agamben traces this chronology in: Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*. pp. 10 - 13.
[13] Ibid. pp. 327 - 329. The text of the poem *In lovely blue* (*In lieblicher blau*) is drawn from Waiblinger's *Phaeton*, and labelled as 'pages taken from his papers which give a good idea of his terribly distraught state of mind. In the original they are divided into lines of verse, in Pindaric fashion'. Waiblinger's comments encouraged Ludwig Pigenot to recast Waiblinger's prose text into its "original" verse form, a technique echoed in Hellingrath's edition which he labels 'pages that in essence could well be genuine'. Beißner and other editors have printed Waiblinger's text in its prose form while disputing its authenticity. Some editors have dismissed it entirely. André du Bouchet concludes: 'The unsurpassed beauty and, what's more, the coherence of this poem, render such conjectures futile'. Following Sieburth's "Notes to the Poems" in: Hölderlin, *Hymns and Fragments by Friedrich Hölderlin*. pp. 281 - 282.

resistance to the secure knowledge of absolutes and exclusive definition becomes, in the same gesture, the synechic condition for his biographical representation.

At once, in spite of the practicality and prevalence of the biographical partition, a second equation concerning Hölderlin's lateness naturally evolves from the shadow of the first - whose approach cannot be orientated by biographical and clinical categorisations but Hölderlin's distinctive attitude to the processes of speculation and literary construction. In the course of writing the French preface to Jaspers' 1926 "case" study of Hölderlin, Maurice Blanchot attempts to disclose the contours of this anti-"psychological" approach to Hölderlin's lateness.[14] For Blanchot, Hölderlin's lateness is not concerned with working out the mystery of his mental life but rather elucidated at the point of a critical turn in his poetry, namely, 'the moment when he becomes master of the hymn'.[15] Such mastery occurs upon a horizon of poetic lateness prefigured in Hellingrath's critical reevaluations. In these readings, a series of poems produced in the period between 1799-1803 (often referred to as "hymns") come to determine, in a critical fashion, the contours of a Late Hölderlin who "turns" from Greece. These hymns, then, despite having been written by a man on the thresholds of thirty and who would live for another forty years, are taken to be Hölderlin's final and therefore also most developed creative "position". Thus, while Jaspers refuted the appreciation of works written under the cloud of mental illness and Geneviève Bianquis excluded, for similar reasons, 'the poems of his madness' from her French translations of Hölderlin's poems, Szondi also reverses such perspectives, arguing instead that Hölderlin's hymns present a creative outlook:

> characteristic of the late works of those artists who do not seek to attain a limpid
>
> serenity, but rather, with an unworldly obstinacy, struggle to leap over a shadow
>
> which is not only their own but also that of their time.[16]

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[14] For Jaspers the "demonic" or "demoniacal reality", characteristic of Hölderlin's creative work between 1801-1806, happens in immediate proximity to "the absolute" which occurs along the passage from sanity to illness. Jaspers posits a calculated pathological calendar which exists in stages between the "demoniacal" existence: 'the first dates to about 1801, the second to around 1805-1806'. Karl Jaspers, *Strindberg and van Gogh*, trans. Oskar Grunow and David Woloshin, Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1977. p. 146.
[15] Maurice Blanchot, "Madness par excellence" in: *The Blanchot Reader*, ed. Michael Holland, Oxford: Blackwells, 1995. p. 118.
[16] Genevière Bianquis' comments in the "Préface" to: Hölderlin, *Poèmes: Gedichte*, trans. Genevière Bianquis, Paris: Montaigne, 1948. Petér Szondi, "The Other Arrow: On the Genesis of the Late Hymnic Style", in: *On Textual Understanding and Other Essays*, trans. Harvey Mendelsohn, Minneapolis: Univeristy of Minnesota Press, 1986. pp. 24 - 26.

Thus, in an almost teleological fashion, Hölderlin's poetry reaches an apex from which there is nowhere further to travel, except perhaps absolute incomprehensibility. In this reading, the hymns are most commonly taken to occupy the final position in Hölderlin's work before the onset of his "madness", and, at times, even suggestive that this madness is itself something of a poetic necessity upon the path, as Blanchot signposts, of 'pure poetic truth' which occurs:

> in immediate relation with the sacred and envelops it in the silence of the poem
>
> in order to calm it and communicate it to men, a communication requiring that
>
> the poet remain upright yet be stricken none the less, a mediation which does not
>
> merely result in a torn existence, but is this very division of the poet.[17]

Hölderlin's poetry becomes not only the creative interruption of the expression of madness, *but of all expression*. In such a reading, Hölderlin's madness is akin to the intervention of divine fate, a necessary consequence of a prophetic proximity to his poetical destiny. Hölderlin's life, then, is understood as an extension of his capacity for 'Divine Creation', as Reinhardt writes, a byproduct of the processes by which he attempts to mediate between humans and the divine, as fatefully expressed in a line from Hölderlin's Sophocles translations: 'His house is divine madness'.[18]

What, then, of the Hölderlin *after* the late Hölderlin? Is there *a Hölderlin*, so to speak, to speak of? The critical approach to Hölderlin's lateness renders the later Hölderlin late in quite another sense. Beißner comments that the second-half of Hölderlin's life represents a 'terrifying degree of oblivion'.[19] Szondi treats Hölderlin as 'one who has sacrificed his personality to the divine mission'.[20] The notion of absence, first noted by Schelling as '*Geistesabwesenheit*', is recurrently used as the only symbol for Hölderlin's "*non-life* life".[21] The oscillating tension between the two counteracting theories of lateness opens an intersection at this juncture between two discourses that are both in dialogue and yet incompatible. How is one to gather up this absence? It is possible to turn to the bibliographic fate of the lines quoted above from Hölderlin's

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[17] Blanchot, "Madness par excellence". pp. 119 - 120.
[18] Karl Reinhardt, "Hölderlin und Sophokles", in: *Hölderlin: Beiträge zu seinem Verständnis in unserm Jahrhundert*, ed. Alfred Kelletat, Tübingen: Mohr, 1961. p. 292. R. B. Harrison, "Sophocles and Hölderlin", in: *Sophocles: The Classical Heritage*, ed. R. D. Dawe, Oxford: Routledge, 2014. pp. 111 - 136. Hölderlin's line from the incomplete translation of Sophocles' *Ajax* in: Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 387-389.
[19] Beißner, in: Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke (Grosse Stuttgarter Ausgabe)*. 3:328.
[20] Szondi, "The Other Arrow". p. 41.
[21] Schelling to Hegel shortly after Hölderlin's return from France (July 1803) in: Hölderlin, *SW*. III: 619-629.

translations of Sophocles - the last works published during his lifetime and the work which, consequently, pushes the boundaries of two "late" terrains of Hölderlin scholarship up against each other most decisively.[22] First, Schelling's contemporaneous assessment that Hölderlin's translations are the work of 'a complete degenerate' summarises a popular opinion, also echoed by Goethe and Schiller, still commonplace in psychological treatments of Hölderlin.[23] In distinction, a countervailing reading commenced by Hellingrath consider their theoretical implications, as Wolfgang Schadewaldt puts it, 'so far-reaching that to speak of Hölderlin's work as "translation" perhaps does a little justice to Sophocles as it does to Hölderlin's achievement'.[24] And yet, the extent to which both of these readings, which serve as prototypes of their kind for a particular reading of Hölderlin's lateness, manifest from a perceived absence and yet fail to articulate how that which remains conspicuously absent in, and out of, these texts perhaps remains precisely the point, is overlooked.

To summarise: there are two conflicting measures of Hölderlin's lateness, confirming Franz Zinkernagel's succinct appraisal in 1922 that Hölderlin 'divorces spirits'.[25] To this end, a recent essay by Emery E. George has explicitly questioned the historical possibility, or impossibility, of a 'major synthesis' of Hölderlin and Hölderlin's lateness.[26] Similarly, Laplanche's 1961 examination suggests that Hölderlin *lives within the dichotomy* between critics insufficiently armed to deal with the problem of madness and clinicians similarly unprepared to grapple with Hölderlin's poetology. Pointing to Hölderlin's enigmatic line 'a sign we are, without meaning', Laplanche concludes that Hölderlin eludes the traditional vantages associated with the problems of psychology and literature, suggesting that studies of the poet should not 'aim at interpreting the *oeuvre* according to a certain conception of psychosis, but at listening to and

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[22] Hölderlin's *Oedipus* and *Antigone* were published by Wilmans in April 1804 with his two accompanying essays. The numerous typographical distortions, errors, and misprints in the first edition exacerbated the works poor reception. Nearly forty years later Hölderlin lamented 'I tried to translate the *Oedipus*, but the bookseller was a . . .!'. See: Wolfgang Schadewaldt: "Hölderlin's Translations", in: *Sophocles: The Classical Heritage*. pp. 101 - 110.
[23] Contemporaneous reception of Hölderlin's translations in: Wolfgang Schadewaldt, "Hölderlin Übersetzung des Sophokles", in: *Antike und Gegenwart: Über die Tragödie*, Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1966. p. 115. The legacy of the translations in: Haroldo de Campos, "Hölderlin's Red Word", in: *Novas: Selected Writings*, ed. Antonio Sergio Bessa and Odile Cisneros, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2007. pp. 327 - 333.
[24] Schadewaldt, "Hölderlin's Translations". p. 101.
[25] Franz Zinkernagel, in: Friedrich Hölderlin, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe. Kritisch-historische Ausgabe*, ed. Franz Zinkernagel, 5 vols.m Leipzig: Insel, 1926. I: ix.
[26] George, "Hölderlin and his Biographers". p. 52.

making more explicit the poetic utterance of madness'.[27] Laplanche attempts to undermine the dominant stands of identification for Hölderlin's lateness by raising 'the chronological questions that hinders the examination of the relationship of Hölderlin's *grand-oeuvre* to the dynamic of his schizophrenia'.[28] In this way, Laplanche opens the door to a conception of Hölderlin's lateness free from the confines of temporal distinctions, a mode of accessing the late thought and life not as a denouement at the end of a particular conception of time, but as an open domain accessible through engagement with his texts. This engagement questions the utility of rendering Hölderlin's life and truth claims from the same rubric of a teleological "progression" to a determined *telos*; rather Hölderlin's works explicitly challenge the dialectical straight lines that run directly between the two poles.

In the wake of Laplanche's interventions, a striking third thesis of lateness, which does not force Hölderlin scholarships to follow a single fork upon divergent roads, is offered by Hamacher. Building upon Henrich's "rediscovery" of Hölderlin's notable contributions to the history and development of nineteenth century philosophy and aesthetics, Hamacher highlights how Hölderlin's lateness cannot be determined through a simple categorial periodisation but serves rather as a synecdoche for his determined distance from the various competing systems of philosophical idealism.[29] The "absence" perceived by commentators becomes a deliberate or willed separation as critique, as Fenves highlights:

> By separating himself from both transcendental and absolute idealism, without
> reverting to any traditional form of materialism or realism, Hölderlin begins to
> write in such an unprecedented manner that the expression "late Hölderlin" does
> not function, for Hamacher, as a designation for a certain phrase in a
> developmental process, weather stylistic or biographical, but becomes, instead,
> something like a category in its own right.[30]

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[27] Laplanche, *Hölderlin and the question of the father*. p. 14. The line 'A sign we are, without meaning' appears in the poem *Mnemosyne*.
[28] Ibid. Note, Laplache's diagnosis is that of schizophrenia.
[29] cf. Hamacher, "Version of Meaning".
[30] Peter Fenves, "Toward a "Non-Metaphysical" 'Concept' of Revolution", in: *Two Studies of Friedrich Hölderlin*, ed. Peter Fenves and Julia Ng, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019. p. 166.

Lateness is a theme which expands across and envelops - or, synechically "holds together" - the fluctuating currents of Hölderlin's life and work. Lateness cannot be understood solely as a poetic or psychological process, nor exclusively in the enigmatic affinities between these juxtaposed readings, but as related to the unique historical constellation of Hölderlin's time - his deep commitment to the processes of philosophical and poetic thought, both in the individual expression and the objective reality, and a truth process which denies progressive development. In Hamacher's estimation, Hölderlin's thought is deliberately resistant to reduction by partitioning, whether critical or clinical, legislative criteria. Rather, Hölderlin's truth occurs 'not procedurally, that is, not by teleologically following a predetermined goal', but instead 'by straying off track, through the spatially determined inadequacy of the path toward of the goal'.[31] By straying off the path, the realm of the new is opened to Hölderlin and the designation "late" comes to determine his approach to the matter of truth.

There are, therefore, three manners of reading Hölderlin's lateness. To begin: *when* is Hölderlin late? Which is to say, presuming, as many traditional clinical-biographers have, that lateness is strictly a question of historical periodisation of madness, under which lines is it to be drawn? However, in a life such as Hölderlin's, is a traditional temporal biography even possible? Should lateness, particularly so here, not be a question of *how*, alongside and even at times above, when? This line of questioning suggests, then, that readers should read the late Hölderlin as designating his latest legible, and therefore most developed, theoretical critical outlook as manifest in his *late works*? However, a question arises, perhaps latent in the first two approaches but which itself perhaps displaces their techniques as subordinate: does Hölderlin, himself, *think* lateness: is there a concept of lateness according to his work? *How has he thought lateness, as such*? Does this thinking give itself over to the subsequent determinations of lateness - may it even encourage a reckoning with such determinations?

Along whichever paths one chooses to understand Hölderlin, or even in straying from paths altogether, such questions place those who attempt to think along with him at a crossroads of three convening trajectories. Readers find themselves at a site synonymous with what

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[31] Hamacher, "Version of Meaning". p. 39.

Hölderlin, in his translation of *Oedipus*, rendered as *Dreiweg* - the place "where three roads meet".

Yet, as with Sophocles' use of the site, there is more at stake in these readings than straightforward topography. The *Dreiweg* functions, as if a metaphor for the *synechia*, as more than a formal image - it is the site where intersecting and yet irreconcilable destinies can coincide, remaining bound together, yet rendered visible in the counteracting tensions which preserve them as contraries while they remain poised upon this intersection. For Sophocles, such connections were also likely the site of ritualistic practices, especially of a cathartic or apotropaic kind, in which, as one commentator puts it, the symbolic resonance of 'a choice which the individual may not fully grasp, a choice which may involve factors beyond his control and a destiny he cannot anticipate'.[32] The location symbolises for Sophocles the juncture at which father and son's destinies coincide, where one regime of representation must dissipate to give way to another. Yet the *synechia* of this *Dreiweg* allows humans, wherever they wander, to halt momentarily at the location which functions as the threshold in which various paths of denomination must eventually return, not in order to be reconciled, but to be seen tragically, as the space where conflict between laws cannot be reconciled, but seen. To locate oneself upon the *dreiweg* is to recognise that all limits are necessarily so. To acknowledge such an origin, to acknowledge it as the place at which one should attempt to meet Hölderlin, is not to say *this is* Hölderlin, subsuming and maximalising him by the law, but, from the synechic perspective, which can only be viewed, as Parmenides taught, in the narrative of a journey where disparate roads must eventually meet, collide, or coincide.

The desire for such a journey can be satisfied by a work written in the immediate aftermath of the personal disappointment of Hölderlin's Sophocles translations: the poem *Half of Life*.[33] Why this work in particular? Not because readers may discover in it the final "key" to unlocking the secrets of Hölderlin's life and work. Hölderlin's writings dispute the possibility of such conclusions. Nonetheless, these shortcomings, Adorno concludes, do 'not prohibit interpretation, so much as demand it'.[34] Such interpretation points towards 'the knowledge from

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[32] Stephen Halliwell, "Where Three Roads Meet: A Neglected Detail in the *Oedipus Tyrannus*", in: *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 106, pp. 187 - 190, 1986. p. 187.
[33] *Half of Life* (*Hälfte des Lebens*) was published in the *Taschenbuch für das Jahr 1805, der Liebe und Freundschaft gewidmet* (*Pocketbook for the Year 1805, Devoted to Love and Friendship*) by Friedrich Wilmans (who was also responsible for the mishandled publication of Hölderlin's Sophocles).
[34] Adorno, "Parataxis". I: 109.

which no one escapes and which escapes no one, even if the natural metaphysician in each of us closes his eyes to it', the singularising 'knowledge that we arrive by our birth and go to our death' which renders the tragic necessity of *synechia*.[35] In this unbridgeable chasm such a work presents what Schürmann labels the primary *différend*: the singularising undertow at the heart of common representations, which withdraws itself from any hegemony of the universal.[36] From out of this *différend*, *Half of Life*, then, holds-together the double-bind that underscores all mortal representations and shows how, out of the poetic practice, something like a *synechia* of contraries is both necessary and possible.

*Half of Life: The Synechia of Contraries*

There is, first of all, the art of the title: *Hälfte des Lebens*, which orients the poem from the outset upon the theoretical terrain opened by Hölderlin's reckoning with Sophocles. Throughout Hölderlin's theoretical commentaries, the "half" and the "middle" recur repeatedly as primary motifs for the tragic functioning of the *caesura*. In these meditations, the 'tragic *transport*', an empty disjunctive gesture saturated with unreconcilable tensions, is made legible by the functioning of the *caesura*, operating simultaneously as both a rupture in continuity and a continuation beyond this rupture. This rupture, then, severs and suspends discourses upon the thresholds of an unbreachable chasm in which the *transport*, the formal structure of tragic composition, must oscillate perpetually in its inability to find 'succession'.[37] In this process, the *caesura* must necessarily remain 'empty' and 'unrestrained' by any fidelity to content 'in order to meet the onrushing change of representations at its highest point in such a manner that very soon there does not appear the change of representation but the representation itself'.[38] Such a movement divides, partitions, and isolates the tragic composition, leaving it 'divided' in 'two halves'.[39] In such a gesture, which does not halt the succession of representation but disrupts and extends representation beyond representation as such, language, divested of all content in a 'boundless union purifying itself through boundless separation', functions as the *synechia* through

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[35] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 345.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

which infinite finitude, which exists suspended between mortals and immortals and by which 'God and man *communicate in the all-forgetting form of unfaithfulness*', can be 'sheltered'.[40]

But what, then, *of Life*? Hamacher develops a thesis that situates Hölderlin's *caesura* within a broader critique of the 'Kantian notion of representational time originating from the "self-activity" of the subject'.[41] This critique, then, exposes a time or life which is beyond the confines of the purely subjective, as Hamacher concludes:

> as calculable, applicable, and repeatable as the caesura may be as a means, it is so not as an act of subjective spirit, which establishes its law as the law of time-consciousness, but solely as something occurring *in* consciousness, something that is itself calculated and applied by another consciousness or by something other than consciousness.[42]

As this study elaborated in the previous chapter, within Hölderlin's reading of a flattening in the subjective landscape 'there exists nothing but the conditions of time and space', and the condition of the empty suspension of the *caesura* remains unconditioned by the conditioning subject.[43] This gesture is further elaborated in Hölderlin's remarks on *Antigone*:

> To the soul, working in secret, it is a great aid that, at the highest point of consciousness, it avoids consciousness; and before the manifest god overwhelms it, it opposes him with a bold, often even with a blasphemous word, and so preserves the sacred and living possibility of the spirit.[44]

In the synechic encounter, or "opposition", between irreconcilable forces, the subject, which can only posit its own subjectivity in lieu of external forces which themselves do not threaten to overwhelm it, "avoids" contact with its own consciousness in order to embrace the counter-subjective movement of the *synechia* which holds-together the reciprocal relation of the 'form of unfaithfulness', or *nefas*, which must pass between the mortal and immortal theses.[45] To defy an

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[40] Ibid. Pfau translates Hölderlin's *'geschüzt'* as 'protected', while Adler and Louth translate as 'shielded', the above is rendered as 'sheltered', implying, as it does, the force of an external judgement *from above*.

[41] Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 153.

[42] Ibid. p. 154.

[43] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.

[44] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*". II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Notes on the *Antigone*". pp. 325 - 332.

[45] Hölderlin adopts the term *nefas* in his essays on *Empedocles* and the later *Remarks on "Oedipus"*. One dictionary entry describes *nefas* as: 'something contrary to divine law, sinful, unlawful, execrable, abominable, criminal; an impious or wicked deed, a sin, a crime'. Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A New Latin Dictionary*, Oxford: The

immortal law is, paradoxically, also to introduce the gods into one's own destiny: such *nefas*, however, also represents a radical unconditioned openness to the law of the gods - for who amidst mortals can truly say what determines immortal laws.[46] One must go "behind" the gods in order to experience them in their divinity. Thus, when Hölderlin speaks of the gods as 'near / And hard to grasp' is he speaking of a force which overwhelms all expression and yet must nonetheless be given voice to, poetically.

*Half of Life* situates itself theoretically at the site of a new reversal in history, by which the order dominated by principles derived from human subjectivity come to disavow or doubt the ground of their coherence. In the previous chapter, this study traced the trajectory upon which cognition attempts to emancipate itself from the authority of extra-terrestrial transmittal. Within this movement, it is possible to survey how knowledge becomes a problem for itself in an entirely new fashion. Once the defining principal of an epoch is posited entirely by the thinking subject, the subject itself becomes the foundation and *archē* origin for everything knowable through its regimes of representation. However, in this subjective gesture, the same subject is forced to turn back against itself, constituting itself exclusively thorough representations which occur within the same subject. Thus, whatever lies beyond the referential centre of the subject, must remain essentially beyond the subject, or, to put it another way, reflection, in its presupposition of an underlying unity which it cannot realise, forms an obstacle into which the synechic process cannot enter let alone overcome. Here a problem arises which reaches an apex in, and is best explicated through, contract with Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*. Previous philosophers, Fichte posited, had presented the subject, or "I", in the form of a dualistic 'mirror' upon or in which a representative play between the subject and object occurs.[47] Thus, the mirroring "I" which statically holds the object at a distance from the subject is incapable of '"seeing" or intuition' in Fichte's philosophy: it is incapable of union between the reflected and the reflector and must instead be fashioned as 'an eye', or 'a self-mirroring mirror'.[48] Fichte's position, therefore, posits the self-reflecting pre-

Clarendon Press, 1891. p. 1197. However, alongside this reading, Hölderlin never ceases to enquire into the possibility of any law by which the tragic hero's *nefas* could be determined from the perspective of mortals alone.

[46] As implied in Heraclitus' dictum: 'If there are gods, why do you weep for them? For, if you weep for them, you no longer take them to be gods'. Heraclitus. DK B127.

[47] J. G. Fichte, *Foundations of Transcendental Philosophy: (Wissenschaftlehre) Nova methodo (1796/99)*, trans. Daniel Breazeale, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992. p. 151 (§4.).

[48] Ibid.

relational "I", in the formula of an "I=I", as the foundational condition of knowledge through which, in its relation to the "not-I" (in essence, each "I" is what it is insofar as it excludes everything that it is not) forms a sphere the sum of which is absolute.

Perhaps, then, it is the spectre of this self-mirroring reflection of the "absolute-I" which the rupturing *caesura* resists in the common articulation of *Half of Life*'s title. For Hölderlin, unity cannot be articulated from the perspective of the subject which, ever since the Cartesian reversal, has taken itself as an object or *the* object. The highest form of "unity" cannot be posited by the conscious mind alone, hence the requirement of something like a synechic process rendering two antagonistic drives, of which the human subject is not wholly in control, which are nonetheless held-tother in a reciprocally adverse relationship with which it can engage. Hölderlin's process requires not a mirror, but a rupture or break: a 'resolution of dissonances in a particular character'.[49] Perhaps this process is signposted in Michael Hamburger's first English translation of the poem's title as *The Middle of Life*, suggesting something of a *media vita*, in which mortal and immortal regimes push up against one another. Indeed, this existential reading is perhaps further evidenced by poem's title during its initial drafts: *Die letzte Stunde* (*The Last Hour*), and the name later ascribed as a common title for the published collection of works in which *Half of Life* featured; *Nachtgesänge* (*Night Songs*).[50] This mortal theme, a nocturnal knowledge inserted into the day, is extended and echoed in a letter Hölderlin sent to his brother as early as February 1796, stressing that he felt he had 'become an old man in *half my days*'.[51] In her reading of the poem Ulla Hahn similarly underpins a tragic dissonance between divine and mortal drives, citing Hölderlin's correspondence with his sister during the period of the poem's construction, and arguing that the poem, as is illustrated by the letter, becomes a vehicle for expressing Hölderlin's '*Angst vor einer Lebenskrise*' ('fear of a life-crisis').[52] Indeed, Hahn's reference to Hölderlin's sister becomes all the more pertinent in reference to the poem's original draft manuscript, upon the upper part of which is written, beneath three titles evenly spaced across the top of the page

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[49] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Foreword.
[50] The poems of *Nachtgesänge* are: 1. *Chiron*. 2. *Thränen*. 3. *An die Hoffnung*. 4. *Vulkan*. 5. *Blödigkeit*. 6. *Ganymed*. 7. *Hälfte des Lebens*. 8. *Lebensalter*. 9. *Der Winkel von Hahrdt*. See: Hölderlin, *SW*. III: 263-270.
[51] Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 612-613. Emphasis my own. The letter concludes in quotation of Virgil's *Georgics*: *'Deus nobis haec otia fecit'* ('God has given us this tranquility').
[52] Ulla Hahn, *Gedichte fürs Gedächtnis: Zum Inwendig-Lernen und Auswendig-Sagen*, Baden: Wüttemberg: DVA, 2008. pp. 236 - 237. Hölderlin's letter to his sister, 11th December 1800, in: Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 879-881.

reading '*Die Rose. Die Schwäne. Die Hirsch.*' ('The Rose. The Swans. The Deer.'), '*holde Schwester*' and '*edles wild*' ('lovely sister' and 'noble wild'), with the following lines repeating the central lament of *Half of Life*: '*Weh mir!*' ('woe is me').[53]

Over and against Fichte's unattainable and yet eternal idealistic striving for an "I" with an eye, Hölderlin invokes tragic blindness, as in his poem *In lovely blue…*, the blind King Oedipus who, shadowed by the nocturnal knowledge of his tragic demise at the hands of fates beyond his control, speaks: 'Life is death, and death a life'.[54] Thus, blinded, Oedipus sees: 'All the words I utter shall have sight!'.[55] Oedipus knows in darkness and silence, 'there is no pleasure in speaking words that should not be touched on', that his demise, from which there is no recourse (in spite of epistemological apparatuses of knowledge), reduces absolute knowledge to a zero.[56] Indeed, there is surely a correlation with the quotation, also taken from Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*, inserted into the mid-point of *Hyperion*: 'Not to be born surpasses thought and speech'.[57] While life itself is invested in the common, the universal, the tragic demise is, paradoxically, the absolute singularisation. To eliminate the absolute is not to leave nothing but the singular. It is this knowledge which is again indicated in Hölderlin's lines: 'Is there a measure on earth? There is / None. No created world ever hindered / The course of thunder'.[58] One need only glance over Hegel's *Logic* to understand how radical this gesture is with regards to the position of idealistic knowledge. Here, for Hegel, "Life", taken as the absolute gesture of Idealism, is a concept, an Idea that posits itself through its ultimate oppositionality with death and thus gives birth to the entire logic of opposition through which human access to knowledge is defined.[59] For Hegel, life is knowledge, a knowledge which confers that 'absolute idea alone is *being*, imperishable *life*, *self-knowing truth*, and is *all truth*'.[60] Thus, by being made an object of representation within the trajectory of the extension of the Fichtean Idea, life becomes a light which somehow arises within

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[53] Facsimile and transcriptions of the manuscript in: Hölderlin, *SW*. III: 142-144. Alongside *Hälfte des Lebens*, the manuscript also contains drafts of the poems *An die Deutschen* and *Wie wenn am Feiertage*, suggestive of a form of interplay or interference between the various writings.
[54] Hölderlin, "In lovely blue …", in: *Hymns and Fragments*. pp. 249 - 251.
[55] Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*. (74.). cf. Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. pp. 17 - 18.
[56] Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*. (621 - 624.).
[57] Hölderlin, *Hyperion.* Vol. 2.
[58] Hölderlin, "In lovely blue …", in: *Hymns and Fragments*. pp. 249 - 251.
[59] cf. Hegel, *The Science of Logic*, trans. George di Giovanni, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp. 676 - 688.
[60] Ibid. p. 735. Further commentary in: Jacques Derrida, *Life Death*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2020. pp. 1 - 24, 156 - 176.

consciousness, a beacon illuminating being and non-being and in so doing cancelling out non-being, death, as something unthinkable and unrepresentable, the absolute-not in the sense that life is the not of death but rather the reappropriation of the *not* of death as the immortal Idea. It is the attempt to engender a biology of knowledge which Hölderlin rails against, rendering life-death as irredeemable by the movement of a transcendental syllogism; it is unrepresentable, it can only be portrayed by the darkness, which Frank labels the 'semantical inexhaustibility' of aesthetic representation, and held-together in the synechic movement of dissolute motions.[61]

Only in something like the synechic process can the disparate vicissitudes of life and death be held-together in their incompleteness. Could this knowledge also be the impetus behind the enigmatic phrase from Hölderlin's *Notes on Antigone*: '*Greek tragic word is deadly-factual*, because the body which it overwhelms really kills'?[62] The tragic force which can give and sustain infinite aspirations is also that which can overwhelm and destroy it because its word imposes upon mortals the divine elemental and immortal forces which are eternally hostile to mortals, to the singular life. Indeed, Hegel himself appears to hint at something akin to this only a few pages prior to the startling quotation placed above: 'The idea of life has to do with a subject matter so concrete, and if you will so real, that in dealing with it one may seem according to the common notion of logic to have overstepped its boundaries'.[63] However, hegemonic regimes pass silently, and no sooner than Hegel has conceded the apparent impossibility of the absolute is he already re-centering the line of force back upon its secure anchorage. The professional obligation of the philosopher is to provide such an anchorage: to try and live, and die, by this law. Such a duty is already prescribed by Aristotle: 'we ought so far as possible to achieve immortality'.[64] Immortal regimes do not die easily. It is perhaps this incommunicable bridge at which Hölderlin pauses which marred the early reception of the poem, variously labelled by each of the four contemporaneous reviews it received as: 'nonsense', 'dark and very strange', 'highly ridiculous', 'heavy, dark, and often incomprehensible'.[65] Perhaps it is not surprising that those who escaped

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[61] Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*. p. 126.

[62] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*" II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Notes on the *Antigone*". pp. 325 - 332.

[63] Hegel, *The Science of Logic*. p. 676.

[64] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. p. 617, (X: 7; 1177 b 33.).

[65] These collated reviews are expanded upon, with additional commentary, in: Hölderlin, *SW*. III: 263-264. When preparing the first 1826 collected edition Schwab and Ludwig Uhland ignored the *Nachgesänge* series considering the

the nexus of the absolute, or should we say the philosophical nexus, also lost their audience in doing so. A generation of idealists who denied philosophical significance to art, reaching its pinnacle in Hegel's *Aesthetics*, subordinated it to philosophy as a means of expressing the absolute idea or an idea of the absolute. This fissure between the immortal and mortal regimes, between a philosophical and aesthetic disposition, is visible in its most transparent distinction in Hegel's *Aesthetics*, where art can, indeed must, "end", in a fashion, but can never die; it is only seen as a precursor to the 'birth of something higher'.[66] Yet this infinite loop of birth and rebirth without end, '*born of the spirit and born again*', also displaces the distinction between art and philosophical knowledge: art can only partake in its transition into spirit and therefore philosophy. Art can only be true in as much as it is a vehicle for philosophy. How is one to understand Hegel's relation of birth and rebirth without reference to death? How, indeed, is one to understand art's so-called ending?

The aesthetic significance of the proximity to mortality is raised anew in Benjamin's readings of Hölderlin. For Benjamin, the 'unity of the intellectual and perceptual orders' is developed though the poem's foothold in 'life' (for Benjamin: 'the ultimate unity'), therefore; 'life determines itself through the poem' and 'life is, in general, the poetised of the poem'.[67] Thus, this "ultimate unity", "life", the synthetic unity of absolute and singular, is explored through the configuration of death—specifically the courageous acceptance of it—in Hölderlin's poems. Habitually, mortals and death 'stand rigid', the one dialectically opposed to the other, sharing 'no perceptual world'.[68] However, death is made intelligible to mortals through the synechic holding-together of one and other in a mutual permeation though the poetic act: death is not presented as a binary opposition or regeneration of life, but everywhere present 'infinite and at the same time limiting'.[69] Blanchot extends Benjamin's thesis:

> for Hölderlin, for the poet, death is the poem. It is in the poem that he must attain
>
> the extreme moment of opposition, the moment in which he is carried away to

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compilation the product of mental illness. *Hälfte des Lebens* was included in Schwab's 1846 *Gesamtausgabe* under the heading "*Aus der Zeit des Irrsinns*" ("From the Period of Madness").
[66] Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I: 349. Following analysis in: Eva Geulen, *The End of Art: Readings in a Rumour After Hegel*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006. pp. 19 - 40.
[67] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 18 - 20.
[68] Ibid. p. 32.
[69] Ibid.

disappear and, disappearing, to carry to the highest the meaning of what can be accomplished only be this disappearance. Impossible, the reconciliation of the Sacred with speech demanded that the poet's existence come nearest to nonexistence.[70]

It is the acceptance of this limit which characterises the poetic, which 'reaches with both hands into alien world orders, grabs at people and God' in order to hold-them together in a *synechia*.[71] It takes, as Benjamin accepts, something like 'the courage of poets', the synechic ability to disregard all differences, one's singularity, to experience pure being itself to undertake this task. Such an origin can only come to light at the end, in an entirely depersonalised "emptying out", a *kenosis*, which reveals the synthetic foundation of all relations. This is to suggest that life, which does not adhere to anything, has a certain property which is inimical to synthesis. In dialectics, life is dead. Calasso affirms a poetic practice 'circumscribed by the precarious wonder of its brief apparition' illustrates how 'life is irretrievable and irreparable that the glory of appearance can reach such intensity'.[72] It is with this in mind that this chapter now turns toward the word of the poem. It is the poem which holds-together the unreconcilable vicissitudes of a life lived, the poem is, as Lacoue-Labarthe writes, 'ultimately a gesture of existence—a gesture with a view to existence', perhaps with a gesture to Pindar who serves as synechic antidote to the Hegelian determination of the absolute of life: 'Do not aspire to immortal life but exhaust the limits of the possible'.[73]

*The One Differentiated in Itself: The Fate of Poetic Dwelling*

| Mit gelben Birnen hänget | [With yellow pears hangs down] |
| Und voll mit wilden Rosen | [And full of wild roses] |

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[70] Maurice Blanchot, "The "Sacred" Speech of Hölderlin", in: *The Work of Fire*, trans. Charlotte Mandell, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995. p. 131.
[71] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 23.
[72] Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. p. 117.
[73] Lacoue-Labarthe, "Poetry's Courage". p. 86. Pindar, *Pythian Odes*, trans. William H. Race, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997. pp. 256 - 257 (III: 61-62.). Trans. modified.

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|---|---|
| Das Land in den See, | [The land into the lake,] |
| Ihn holden Schwäne, | [You loving swans,] |
| Und trunken von Küssen | [And drunk with kisses] |
| Tunkt ihr das Haupt | [You dip your heads] |
| Ins heilignüchterne Wasser. | [Into water, the holy-and-sober.] |
| | |
| Weh mir, wo nehm' ich, wenn | [But oh, where shall I find] |
| Es Winter ist, die Blumen, und wo | [When winter comes, the flowers, and where] |
| Den Sonnenschein, | [The sunshine] |
| Und Schatten der Erde? | [And shade of the earth?] |
| Die Mauern stehn | [The walls loom] |
| Sprachlos und kalt, im Winde | [Speechless and cold, in the wind] |
| Klirren die Fahnen. | [Weathercocks clatter.][74] |

The simple juxtaposition of two strophes consisting of seven lines each running to similar lengths may warrant an initial reflection that contrary to prior considerations, reflection itself, in near symmetrical correspondent mirroring gaze, is the potent symbol in the geometrical structure of the printed poem. Indeed, when turning to the poem's content, it is clear that an apparent preoccupation with reflection is reflected. In this vein, it is clear how commentators have linked *Half of Life* to Friedrich Schlegel's philosophical fragments, perhaps the most full-throated theoretical expressions of Jena Romanticism, outlining the contours of a Romantic poetry which "hovers"

> at the midpoint between the portrayed and the portrayer, free of all real and ideal
>
> self-interest, on the wings of poetic reflection, and can raise that reflection again
>
> and again to a higher power, can multiply it in an endless succession of mirrors.[75]

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[74] Michael Hamburger's trans., being the most accessible and well-known, is offered above. Hölderlin, "Half of Life", in: *SP*. pp. 170 - 171. (Hölderlin, *SW*, I: 445.) There are reasons why this trans. may prove insufficient in several places, as shall be elucidated in the following analysis.

[75] Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. Peter Firchow. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991. pp. 31-32, (*Athanaeum* Fragment 116.). Schlegel's use of the motif "hovering" is linked to Novalis' *Fichte Studies*: 'all production approaches being, and being is hovering'. Novalis, "Fichte Studies (1795-96)", in: *Theory as*

In this hovering movement, intimately tided to Fichte's early philosophy, the moment of reflection, or "intellectual intuition", mirrors the juncture, or midway, in which the absolute self grounds itself through its own postulation of selfhood, everywhere and always positing itself as the absolute which mirrors itself in pure self-consciousness. As Benjamin first distinguished in *The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism*, the genealogical indebtedness of the epistemological presuppositions at stake in Schlegel's theory have clear antecedents in Fichte's postulation of the reflecting self as the absolute thesis.[76] However, Benjamin continues, Schlegel also attempts extend Fichte's self-enclosing system of reflection beyond the confines of practical knowledge of a subject into something like a theoretical position encompassing all realms of thought, through which reflection, in form which 'should forever be becoming and never be perfected', 'guarantees a peculiar infinity in its process'.[77] In its "hovering" movement, suspended midway between the particular and the universal, the poetic imagination, in a mirroring gesture in which the one glimpses the other, is taken to give birth to reflection itself.

Lingering, however, on Hölderlin's poem, the reader notices that this mirroring-middle is also what is most conspicuously absent. Between the two stanzas, the mid-point from which the structure of mirrored reflection operates, there is instead a rupturing *caesura*, an empty gap. The arrival at the second stanza from the departure of the first is not elucidated. The reader is therefore forced to traverse the journey of the poem's trajectory across a fissure. The word of the poem evoked in the second stanza reflects upon the first strophe only in as much as it seems to undermine its ordered evocation of reflection. Such a movement is further enhanced by the downward trajectory of the poem. Travelling in a direction counter to that of a self-positing and self-sufficient "I" through which the subject stands as the starting point and centre of the process of reflection through which phenomena are embraced in an outward trajectory, *Half of Life* only introduces the subjective position in its second strophe as a vehicle for the disintegration of the harmonious image of nature presented in its first. The alternate perspectives outlined in the poem's series of images are not tied to a single point of view but rather sequential and alienating.

*Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings*, trans. Jochen Schulte-Sasse (et al.), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997. pp. 90 - 112. pp. 105 - 106 (555, 556.).

[76] Benjamin, "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism". pp. 116 - 200.

[77] Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*. pp. 31-32, (*Athanaeum* Fragement 116). Benjamin, "The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism". p. 123.

In this fashion, the lines of the second stanza are, in contrast to the first, anti-rhythmic, stilted, and broken, reaching out in a staccato devoid of the sensuous adjectives of the first. In this caesuric space between these countervailing trajectories of meaning, only the *synechia* operates, and the two processes are held-together inasmuch as they embrace and accept the process of their falling apart, division, and disunity, maintaining such a dissonance in its gesture of parallel yet unreconcilable trajectories which it is possible to shall see amplified in further interrogations of the word of the poem.

The poem's opening image is one of abundance. The yellow pears and wild roses which appear to be so plentiful as to pull the land of the riverbank down towards the surface of the water and are made to seem even more bountiful in their being reflected upon the surface of the lake itself. In this counteracting motion, in which the land appears to descend downwards toward the water all the while being met and mirrored with an identical rising motion of their reflected image upon the water's surface, the reader is presented with a harmonious image of a balanced and ordered modulation of forces. Such harmonious abundance, reminiscent perhaps of Alcinous' palace in which 'fruit never rots or fails, winter or summer', seems to signpost an interlacing and reciprocating network of unity and wholeness.[78] The fullness of the plentiful "o" and "u" sounds further extend the strophe's imagery. The hanging motion of the abundant riverbank, which draws attention to the water's surface, also highlights the swans who sit upon the water and whose form mirrors the arching, bending, and descending movement of the foliage. One commentator has noted the manner in which the use of the epithet '*hold*' to describe the swans further extends this reflexive motion.[79] The etymological function of *hold* to describe the swans ('*holden Schwäne*') implies, alongside the common English rendering of "love", a 'falling movement' (perhaps akin to *"falling* in love"), and its cognates—*Huld*, the notion of grace being conferred "from above", and *Halde*, similar to "down" in English—further extend this descending metaphor. (The expression also carries personal resonances for Hölderlin's: "Hold" being one of Hölderlin's common sobriquets among intimates and, further still, the central motif of the Hölderlin family

[78] Homer, *Odyssey*. VII: 78-132.
[79] Charlie Louth, "Reflections: Goethe's 'Auf dem See' and Hölderlin's 'Hälfte des Lebens'", in: *Oxford German Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 167 - 175, 2013. p. 173. Consider also: Eric L. Santner, "Paratactic Composition in Hölderlin's "Hälfte des Lebens"", in: *The German Quarterly*, Vol. 58, No. 2, pp. 165 - 172, 1985.

coat of arms displaying as it does the branch of an elder tree, from the German *Holder*, a potent symbol of summertime fecundity.) Further still, even more so perhaps than the ripeness of the pears and roses, the swans' drunkenness implies excess and abundance. In this respect, it is possible to find a theoretical exposition in Hölderlin's *Frankfurt Aphorisms*:

> There where sobriety leaves you, there is the limit of your enthusiasm. The great poet is never removed from himself, he may elevate his self as high as he wishes. One can also *fall* to the heights, just as into the depths. The latter is prevented by the elastic spirit, the former by the gravity that resides in sober reflection… It is a rein and a spur to the spirit.[80]

The ascending and descending motion of the early part of the poem are married with the excess and temperance of drunkenness and sobriety in a metaphor for the operation of the poetic spirit. Several commentators have cited Longinus' treatise, *On the Sublime*, which employs the image of the "rein" and "spur" in illustration of the reciprocal balance between theory and instinct, as a clear antecedent in the development of Hölderlin's theoretical disposition.[81] To this end, the drunk swans operate in a manner as a synecdoche for the operation of the poetic spirit itself, a movement perhaps reminiscent of Plato's evocation of Orpheus' metamorphosis and Pindar's poetic identity as a swan.[82] Attention is heightened and then fixed upon an awareness of the significance of the swans, bringing the harmonious fluctuation of movement in the poem's opening lines to their conclusion as the swans dip their head below the water and thus breaking the mirrored surface which offers no resistance despite having held together the previous series of images in a seemingly enduring reciprocal balance.

The spell of reflection is broken. One commentator has highlighted how the use of the phrase 'drunk with kisses' offers an implication that the swans are drawn toward their own reflection in a desire for kisses, as if to plunge their heads towards themselves, meeting in a kiss.[83] As with the shadow of the reflected image in the Narcissus myth, the association renders the sense

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[80] Hölderlin, <Frankfurter Aphorismen>. II: 58-61. Hölderlin, "Reflection*"*. pp. 45 - 48. It is plausible that the *Aphorisms* were composed in response to Schlegel and Novalis' *Athenaeum.*

[81] Charles Lewis, "Boileau and 'Longinus' in Hölderlin's *Sophokles-Ammerkungen*", in: *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory*, Vol. 86, No. 2, pp. 114 - 133, 2011.

[82] Plato, Republic. X: 620A. For reference to Pindar and the motif of bird metamorphosis, see: Mario Erasmo, "Birds of a Feather? Ennius and Horace, "Odes" 2.20", in: *Latomus*, T. 65, Fasc. 2, pp. 369 - 377, 2006.

[83] Louth, "Reflections". p. 174.

of self-sustenance an illusory one, and the harmony of the poem is shattered at the moment the swans dispel this chimera by dipping their heads below the water. The evocation of water as simultaneously reflective and translucent is broken at the point of contact. In philosophical terms, the gesture operates similarly to Schürmann's *différend*: suspended between an illusion which ties together a conceptual image or "mirror" of reality and "pure" being itself. In this sense, a mirror does not simply act as the reflection of that which it is placed in front of, but rather becomes a site of construction forming the representational boundaries of the observers presentation. The problematic nature of the articulation of the verbs in the first strophe which never seem to "complete" themselves, leaving each image perpetually "hanging" or suspended in a spectral rift, extends this problematic illusion which is only bridged with the use of an 'And' ('*Und*') following on from the accusative 'You' ('*Ihn*'), itself suggestive of the manner in which not only the swans' reflection but the very swans themselves are suspended in an incomplete incorporeal hovering which further unsettles the steady balance between liquid and solid. The dislocating 'And' is further heightened by the nuanced use of the word '*heilignüchtern*' to describe the moment of contact, describing, as it does, a moment suspended between two divergent registers; the 'holy' ('*heilig*') encouraging ecstatic union with promise of healing and fulfilment, further enhanced by the manner in which the swans 'dip' ('*Tunkt*') their heads reminiscent of a bowing in reverence or worship before a baptismal emersion, and the actuality of the 'sober' ('*nüchtern*') the cold, unsentimental, and rational displacement of the prior dream.[84] *Heilignüchtern*, then, offers two distinct theses, one divine and one mortal, which have secretly been in conflict ever since philosophers have tried to "synchronise" their necessarily divergent paths of the one and the many. Divergent paths cannot be synchronised, only held-together in a *synechia* of contraries which operates between the divergent and, moreover, between what can and must be said and shown with that which must remain forever beyond the grasp of mortals, between the tasks of naming and arranging the forces of phenomena that show and hide themselves. The mirror, then, does not provide a genus, for such contraries have no genus even if they are maintained and held

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[84] Following: Louth, "Reflections'". p. 174.

in divided unity, but the ultimate site of the singularity rising to meet itself: 'the one differentiated in itself'.[85]

The lake, as with the river, in its potential for both springing and sinking, rising and submerging, revealing and concealing, reflecting and absorbing, evokes and becomes the site for practice of thought, without *archè*, that reveals itself to mortals in a *synechia*. Just as the swans evoke an image of the poet, the water symbolises the poem itself. In essence, the function of this relation appears reminiscent of Hyperion's final letter to Bellarmin:

> I sat deep in the countryside by a fountain in the shadow of ivy-green cliffs and
> overhanging, blooming bushes. It was the most beautiful midday that I have
> known. Sweet breezes wafted, and the land still shone in morning freshness, and
> the light smiled serenely in its native ether.[86]

In a manner, such evocations are also reminiscent of Henrich's descriptions of Hölderlin's poem *Remembrance* (*Andenken*) which:

> attains pure presence not by the hushed movement of the image alone but also by
> the elevated awareness and experience of the day lifted up out of the cycle of
> seasons… to be attuned to one and all, where what has been, what is to come,
> and what at once pervades all reality are brought together.[87]

However, in one of *Hyperion*'s earlier passages, which once more echoes the significance of the mirroring gesture which holds-together the reciprocal relation provided by land and water, Hölderlin hints at the potentially deceptive nature of such reciprocative associations and what can happen when such a spell is broken and a world of movement and disintegration is introduced:

> As a river runs past its banks where no willow leaf is reflected in the water, the
> world ran past me stripped of beauty.[88]

One commentator has illustrated the manner in which such compositions appear to have held particular appreciation throughout Hölderlin's *oeuvre*, with similar expressions also appearing in the poems *Mnemosyne*, *Remembrance*, *The Archipelago*, and *From the Abyss…*.[89] It is telling that

[85] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*.
[86] Ibid. Vol. 2: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [LX]".
[87] Henrich, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*. p. 194.
[88] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 1, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [IX]".
[89] Harrison, "Sophocles and Hölderlin". pp. 113 - 116.

such compositions appear to have clear antecedent, once more, in Hölderlin's translations of Sophocles. One of the selected passages Hölderlin translates from *Ajax* illustrates a complimentary vivid evocation of a harmonious flowing unity between land and water:

> You streams which flow into the same and you caves by the sea and you caves
>
> by the sea and you,
>
> my holy grove which hangs over the shore.[90]

The configuration of land and water, and of the land reflected in the water, becomes the idealised image of absolute union, of an embrace between all of nature's elements which hold each other in a perfectly balanced series of harmonious relations which are underpinned all the while by the unsettling knowledge that such a mirror is illusory and can be shattered at any moment.

It is telling that the dissolution of the mirrored-image revealing itself upon the lake's surface is also the moment the poem unfolds the *caesura* at its turn into the self-reflecting elegiac "I". The balance of forces is disrupted and at the other side of the *caesura*, one finds the subjective questioning "I" positing itself over-above the previous network of relations in judgement. Indulgence of subjectivity threatens to conceal the phenomenality of phenomena, the necessary transition from a world of experience to one of concepts. This process is underscored by the direction of the preposition in a direct question, emphasised by the question mark on the poem's fourth line, which foregrounds the questioning subject whose question can never be resolved. The poem undergoes a shift in perception, analogous perhaps to Benjamin's distinction between "pure seeing" and "interpretation".[91] These interpreting questions reach out beyond the phenomena of the image, placing themselves in a temporally conditioned network of relations. Namely, how is such a correspondence possible in another time, "winter", and another place, a place that lacks the fecundity of the earlier series of images? In this rebellion against the previously synthesising principle judgements are, as Adorno describes, 'catapulted, as it were, out of their old orderings' so as to turn the synthetic form of the concept, to which language eternally is chained, against

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[90] '*Ihr Bäche, die ihr ins Meer fließt und ihr Höhlen am Meer und du / Mein Hain, de hänget über dem Ufer…*'. Hölderlin, "<*Aus Sophokles' Ajax*>", in: *SW*, II: 386-389. Following: Harrison, "Sophocles and Hölderlin". p. 113.
[91] For Benjamin, perception is comparable to "pure seeing", while interpretation penetrates, or disrupts, this otherwise continuous experience. For analysis, consult: Peter Fenves, *The Messianic Reduction: Walter Benjamin and the Shape of Time*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011. pp. 152 - 187. Also: Caygill, *Walter Benjamin*. pp. 3 - 4.

itself, suspending the traditional logic of synthesis.[92] Language imposes a synthesis *outside* of nature which, Adorno continues, 'contradicts what Hölderlin wants to express in language'.[93] Indeed, Hölderlin synechic technique offers an inconclusive synthesis of a different kind, destroying the unity that language itself perpetuates by creating particular correspondences beyond the control of subjective rationalisation.[94] The temporal displacement of the poem's previously eternal harmony, then, rests upon Hölderlin's "turning of time" which operates antagonistically between divided apparatuses of perception and expression, providing no ground for subjectivity in an unfolding of "the historical".

The poem's arrival into historical time is broached by a question that it cannot (or does not) answer, "where shall I find…", betraying its own position with respect to history and thus the ground of its facticity.[95] Thus, in spite of and in response to the subject's historical questioning, the walls remain "Speechless and cold", as if there is no longer any mental state which can mediate between the inner and outer world of the subject. The shift to the historical subject as the ground of the poem's truth content is underscored by the displacement of the natural phenomena in the first stanza (pears, roses, the land, the lake, and the swans drunk with kisses), and their substitution with the manmade artefacts of culture which do not respond, or correspond, to the subject (cold and silent walls, and later, weathercocks). The reader is encouraged to think here of culture as artwork, as the process of nature entering into representation and therefore falling outside of "life". Further still, the plentiful vowels and consonance of the first strophe are also foregone in a fashion which, as Hamburger illustrates, highlights instead 'a war between harsh fricatives and sibilants, ending in the bleak "a" sounds and violent gutturals of the last three lines'.[96] The harsh disjunctures which accompany the subjects question illustrate the manner in which such questions become existential with respect to the position of the subject itself which can no longer speak. In this way, it is possible to think of the walls as "mute" rather than Hamburger's "speechless", since they evoke the impossibility of speaking altogether. The trajectory of the poem represents a historical closure. Furthermore, one may even think of the

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[92] Adorno, "Parataxis". I: 130.
[93] Ibid. p. 135.
[94] Ibid. p. 130.
[95] Following: Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". pp. 160 - 163.
[96] Michael Hamburger, *Contraries: Studies in German Literature*, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1970. p. 269.

'shade' which Hamburger translates from '*Schatten*' more akin to unearthly "shadows", that the coldness of the walls represents as an incorporeal uncommunicative void beyond merely the fall in temperature imparted by the wind. A foreshadowing, perhaps, of Hölderlin's later life in Zimmer's residence, characterised by his negation of the outside world and its events though a wall of separation that withholds any kinship with the external forces which impress upon quotidian routines which go together to make up mortal existence and the expulsion of all historical character from his actions and deeds (attributing, even, erroneous dates, ranging from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, to his poems), perhaps encapsulated by the stubborn and perpetual lament Waiblinger attributes to him: 'nothing happens to me'.[97]

The historical violence expressed in the poem is the experience of dissolution in the face of longing for a world in which art could speak of "all that has been, all that is, and all that is to be". Once more, it is possible to find the evocation of the temporal relation between poetry and subjectivity pre-figured in a passage from *Hyperion*:

> The heart exercised its right to poeticise. Then it told me how Hyperion's
> spirit played with its fair Diotima in Elysium before it came down to earth in
> divine childhood, by the meledious tones of the wellspring and under branches
> that were like the branches of the earth when we see them gleaming, beautified,
> from the golden river.
>
> And, like the past, the gates of the future opened in me.[98]

The question the subject asks is a question of the subject, of who can speak a language beyond that of the subject, who can speak, in the age of the subject, of the age, for time, itself. Perhaps it is telling that the question is also rooted in the locality of the poem, asking "where" ("*wo*") rather than "*how*". The silent response heralds a time and a language seemingly like walls standing and standing still. Therefore, while Hamburger translates the wall's perspective as one of looming, one might better render "*stehn*" as "stand", conferring as it does a withdrawal of the subjective position (for the walls have nothing to "loom" over). To highlight this silence, the visual imagery

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[97] '*Es geschiet mir nichts*'. Wilhelm Waiblinger, *Friedrich Hölderlins Leben, Dichtung und Wahnsinn*, Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1831.
[98] Hölderlin, *Hyperion.* Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXVIII]".

of the first strophe turns acoustic, only weathervanes 'creak'.[99] As if to illustrate this point further, *'Fahnen'*, is suggestive of not only 'weathervanes' but also flags and thus may rightly be seen as representative of the state, perhaps even a metaphor for the cultural illusions and implications of ungrounded absolutism run amok.[100] Yet from these items nothing else is said: only a cold wind remains in place of what Hölderlin once called the 'living breath' of communion.[101] The movement 'takes our breath away, and our words'.[102]

The walls stand mute, prohibiting the flow of language. From out of this prohibition, representation also must then be disrupted. Indeed, Laplanche describes the movement wherein:

> Reflection excludes humanity from the unity of nature at the same time that it makes the unity of nature shatter into scattered parts that it cannot reconstitute as a totality: like a prodigal son driven out of the house by his father, he has nothing more than change leftover from his share, the sum of which will never amount to the whole.[103]

Similarly, Hamacher describes how 'neither representational contents nor representational forms let themselves be translated into these stone-walls, since whatever is translated into them therein becomes mute and stops'.[104] Imbued with poetic dwelling, the world of the opening stanza is replete with the drunken enthusiasm of God's immanence in a world which is open, as if one 'may say that Apollo has struck me', while the second stanza withdraws this correspondence between the divergent registers so that they appear blocked by a wall from which nothing can flow, interpenetrate, or come into presence.[105] The cold sobriety of this later condition, in which the subject can witness the world but feels a separation from it which cannot be bridged, resists every attempt at representation and thus reproduction. The walls represent stasis in the subjective condition, an impasse which language does not leap across into the future. The significance of walls in this process cannot be overlooked. As exemplified in the lines from one of his earliest works, the 1787 poem *On a Meadow*, 'walls of squalor, / Nooks and crannies of deception',

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[99] Note the comparable lines from *In lovely blue…*: 'But up in the wind, silent, / The weathercock crows'.
[100] Winfred Menninghaus, *Hälfte des Lebens*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2005. p. 60.
[101] Hölderlin, *SW*, II: 598-599.
[102] Paul Celan, "The Meridian", in: *Collected Prose*, trans. Rosemary Waldrop, New York: Routledge, 2003. p. 47.
[103] Laplanche, *Hölderlin and the Question of the Father*. p. 69.
[104] Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 162.
[105] Hölderlin, *SW*. II: 920-922. Hölderlin, *ELT*. pp. 152 - 153.

Farrell Krell thus describes how Hölderlin 'contrasts nature, which is life-giving and nurturing, to a noisome and absurd civilisation' through such evocations of partition.[106] Hamacher has also drawn parallels with the 'city walls' in another of the *Nachtgesänge* poems, *Vulkan*, which are torn down by the raging Boreas, the Greek personification of storms and winter.[107] These walls also appear to be intimately connected to the 'wall of law' which can betray 'crooked deception' in Hölderlin's translations and commentaries of Pindar's *The Infinite*.[108] In the accompanying theoretical commentary to this translation, Hölderlin elucidates how the disjuncture between the law and truth can only be resolved in relation to 'a third' element, provided in the synechic mediation of the aesthetic *poïēsis* conferred in the work of art, wherein irresolvable discordance 'hangs together infinitely (exactly)'.[109] This wavering hanging, or holding, together, which binds both the subject and the law of the polis is reminiscent of Antigone's struggle against the laws of the divinities and the polis, between legislation the wisdom of sages, in which 'time reverses' at the moment of the *caesura* and Antigone blasphemously likens herself to Niobe, the Goddess turned into stone as a result of her own *hubris* (by giving form to the formless), and described as 'scraggy… crumped up in the slow long rock' and evermore in 'winter'.[110] What is more, Antigone's eventual fate, buried alive, walled up in a cave and forever deprived of the light at the hands of Creon, further extends this metaphor.[111]

The stone walls remain silent, as if struck by the 'swan shaped' gorgons of Aeschelyus' *Prometheus*, and the human culture they represent, turned to stone, and seemingly no longer representing or speaking of anything.[112] Several commentators have thus suggested that these mute walls cannot be likened to Antigone's struggle, that the subject of *Half of Life* cannot anticipate its own demise because it cannot not stand ahead of itself, but rather remains in stasis, a suspension of time in which no reproductive, and therefore necessarily futural, act can operate. Such a reading is exemplified in poetic terms through Celan's relation to Hölderlin, particularly

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[106] Farrell Krell in: Hölderlin, *The Death of Empedocles*. p. xv.
[107] Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 162. Hölderlin, "*Vulkan*", in: *SW*. I: 442-443. Hölderlin, "Vulcan", in: *SP*. pp. 96 - 99.
[108] Hölderlin, "*Das Unendliche.*". II: 382-383. Hölderlin, "The Infinite". p. 337. cf. Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 162.
[109] '*wodurch sie unendlich (genau) zusammenhängen*'. From Hölderlin's Pindar translations. Ibid.
[110] Sophocles, *Antigone*. 823 - 830. Hölderlin's trans., which departs significantly from the original, in: Hölderlin, "*Antigonae*", in: *SW*. II: 317-368.
[111] Sophocles, *Antigone*. (883 - 890.).
[112] Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*. 795.

so in his poem *Tübingen, Januar*, which, as Lacoue-Labarthe puts it, follows Hölderlin's concern through 'the interdiction on representation; or rather one sole obsession, the unfigurable or the unrepresentable'.[113] *Tübingen, Januar*, then, begins by citing the enigmatic line from *The Rhine*: 'A mystery are those of pure origin', linking not only to the search for an *arche*, but also, if we are to follow Jean Bollack's reading, the river which manifests the power of water as both an origin but which also extends its power until the point of 'almost total dissolution' of time in the same manner as the flow of language.[114] Celan's reference is made before invoking 'Hölderlin's towers swimming' and 'drowning joiners', both extending this metaphor of drowning; one might think here not only of Hölderlin and the poetic word, the synechic joiner, but also Zimmer, the joiner and carpenter, *the very capacity for joining itself - as drowned*, by 'dividing words'.[115] These 'dividing words' reduce language to an empty nothing, and one can only utilise the poetic word as if to speak of its deprivation. In *The Meridian*, Celan goes further, echoing *Half of Life* when citing the work of art's capacity, like Medusa's head, to calcify the natural world depriving everything real of its proper nature.[116] Art therefore represents a failed attempt at reconciliation between two divergent theses in mimetic submission, 'the completest possible *imitation of actuality*'.[117] So, the walls of the second verse might speak precisely *this nothing*, 'Speechless and cold', as Hamacher highlights: 'nothing can answer to it, that no cause, no matter, and no meaning can correspond to it, and that it can say nothing. In it, nothing is communicated but its incommunicability, nothing imparted but its unimpartibility'.[118]

However, recalling Hölderlin's description of the manner in which Antigone 'at the highest point of consciousness' also 'avoids consciousness' in order to preserve herself and her capacity for speech in the face of oblivion, it is possible to offer another reading of this nothingness.[119] This moment of preservation is offered, in an absolute exercise of freedom, by

[113] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "Catastrophe: A Reading of Celan's 'The Meridian'", in: *Oxford Literary* Review, Vol. 15, No. 1/2: Experiencing the Impossible, pp. 3 - 41, 1993. p. 4.
[114] Jean Bollack, "Between Hölderlin and Celan: A Thunderbolt", in: *The Art of Reading: From Homer to Paul Celan*, trans. C. Porter and S. Tarrow with B. King, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016. pp. 333 - 350.
[115] Lacoue-Labarthe discusses the web of associations which accompany this reference in: Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Poetry as Experience*, trans. Andrea Tarnowski, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. pp. 3 - 38 (Particularly, pp. 20 - 24.) (Celan's poem reproduced on: pp. 3 - 4.).
[116] Celan, "The Meridian". p. 6, 8, 11, 26. Further commentary in: Lacoue-Labarthe, "Catastrophe". pp. 9 - 18.
[117] Heinrich von Kleist, "On the Marionette Theatre", in: *German Romantic Criticism*, trans. Christian-Albrecht Gollub, New York: Continuum, 1982. pp. 241 - 244.
[118] Hamacher, "Parousia, Stone-Walls". p. 163.
[119] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*". II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Antigone"". pp. 109 - 116.

opposing the tragic law of mortality, by opposing the divine law, countering it 'with a bold, often even with a blasphemous word'.[120] If the poetic word otherwise expresses an absolute desire for the absolute, 'the common end of… *all* Poems, is to convert a *series* into a *Whole*' Coleridge writes, Hölderlin, recognising that the more the speculative reaches out toward the infinite and the divine the more it casts itself toward separation, attempts to exercise a separation between the two in a synechic gesture of 'boundless union preserving itself through boundless separation'.[121] In fidelity to appearance of the pure nothing, to the withdrawal, the 'categorical turning away' of God, in the empty *caesura* which holds open this space, there is no dialectical reconciliation between two theses but the 'intrusion of the prophetic word' which can hold-together this irreconcilable theses upon the same plain.[122] Even if one of these theses is an anti-thesis, a pure nothing, the possibility of life is held fast in its lifelessness, for in it the very condition of the unspeakable is nevertheless spoken for. Hölderlin welcomes the possibility of the disappearance of the divine, perhaps even encourages its necessity. The tragic disposition which 'begins in supernal fire', is for Hölderlin is only the beginning of a process, namely transgressive setting apart of mortals and gods which has already occurred, whereby a fictive form of beginning is understood as already having begun.[123] The poetic act for Hölderlin which conjoins singular and absolute can paradoxically only be given birth to, or re-born, in a further transgression of its own foundational law which dismantles itself in the same movement by which it erects itself even if its erection is a pure silence. Perhaps this can be seen in the central 'law of fate' presiding over Hölderlin's poem *Celebration of Peace* which suggests that 'when the silence returns there shall be a language too'.[124] Just as a river flows eventually back to its source, so must language return to silence. Earlier in the same poem, Hölderlin similarly suggests that for a god to appear, or in this case perhaps re-appear, there must be 'different clarity' perhaps, even, silence, as is invoked in the later untitled poetic fragment: 'About the highest mysteries, I'm speechless'.[125] Perhaps,

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[120] Ibid.
[121] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. Earl Leslie Griggs, 4 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956. 4: 545. Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.
[122] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zum Oedipus*". II: 309-317. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Oedipus"". pp. 101 - 108.
[123] Hölderlin, "*Die tragische Ode …*". I: 865-881. Hölderlin, "The Ground for "Empedocles"". pp. 49 - 61.
[124] Hölderlin, "*Friedensfeier*". I: 361-367. Hölderlin, "Celebration of Peace". pp. 208 - 217.
[125] '*Vom Höchsten will ich schweigen*'. Hamburger renders the line as: 'About the highest I will not speak', implying a willed silence as much as impotence, however, the preceding line: '*Kein Sterblicher kann es fassen*' ('No mortal can

even, this fragment is evocative of the line from the poem *Mnemosyne*, 'A sign we are, without meaning', itself reminiscent of Luke (17:20): 'The kingdom of God is not coming with *signs to be* observed', and Goethe's Faust's question upon seeing the symbol of the macrocosm: 'Was it a God that wrote these signs?'.[126] Hölderlin's evocation of a God is therefore, and perhaps uniquely so in opposition to dialectical thought, the representation of absolute divestment from the prestige of the particular which manifests in mortal representations of the divine.

To suggest that Hölderlin offers one path "unity" or "disorder", "everything or nothing", is to miss the point. Rather, a constellation of things come to presence through multiple arrivals, sometimes contradictory, sometimes in harmony, brought forth by the divinities but from which mortals must necessarily recede and therefore proceed toward nothingness to render in representation, at every turn turning back toward this divine thesis in order to arrive at all - so that multiple straight trajectories continuously retract each other, forming something like a wavering spiral like motion proceeding, not in a straight line, but circular orbit which also, like the surface of a lake, appears not only upon a flat trajectory, but also offers a bottomless pool with the capacity for both reflection and penetration. *Half of Life* dissolves unity while at a deeper level reintroducing it, it affirms difference as the site of synthesis which nonetheless must forever forego its own closure as a precondition of its very existence. Indeed, this movement is itself perhaps heralded in the poem's concluding lines, 'in the wind / Weathercocks clatter', pointing (or, not) at a certain boundless undirectionality which both affirms the dualist segregation of logical contradictions and yet also heralds Hölderlin's idiosyncratic notion of unity through division in the synechic potentialities of language which withholds the fissures it necessarily creates, imparting a polysemy at the heart of its signifiers, just as the wind, which represents a meteorological coming together of two opposed forces, does not rest in fixedness but remains perpetually in motion. The juxtaposition in Hölderlin's poem between two strophes of an idyllic spring with that of a harsh winter may indeed bring to bear the consequences of an existence

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grasp it'), indicates something of the former powerlessness. Hölderlin, "*Einst hab ich die Muse gefragt …*", in: *SW*. I: 398-400. Hölderlin, "At one time I questioned the Muse …", in: *SP*. pp. 286 - 289. Following trans. in: Friedrich Hölderlin, *Selected Poems of Friedrich Hölderlin*, trans. Maxine Chernoff and Paul Hoover, Richmond: Omnidawn Publishing, 2008.
[126] Hölderlin, "*Mnemosyne*". I: 436-438. Hölderlin, "*Mnemosyne*". pp. 258 - 261. Luke. 17:20. Goethe, *Faust*. pp. 97 - 98 (434.). Similarly, Socrates says 'of the gods we know nothing' in: Plato, *Cratylus*. 400e.

divided, or suspended, between such divergent registers. Mortals are forever constrained to partition in the same manner as nature which remains irreducible in its fluctuating series of seasons, events, and habits which occur, like the lines of life, without verisimilitude, except through the *synechia* of the poem itself which binds together these unbindable events in the very act of their unbindability.

*Half of Life* holds-together an image of mortals standing, like walls, in 'the midst of the unthinkable'.[127] Yet the poetic word continues to speak from this void. The fate of nothing speaking is spoken for. Just as Hölderlin himself said "nothing happens to me", nothing happens in the poem, *the poem is nothing happening*. Just as the power of *alétheia* is indicated through the negation of a privation, nothingness itself is still called into presence. The poem actualises nothingness. This bridge, this empty *caesura*, which itself is not representation but the "standing" and speaking from out of the midst of faltering language, belongs to the structure of the *synechia* itself - a transgressive difference which is impossible to absorb into one common noun, a binding together of contraries without a genus. The centrifugal forces which threaten to pull Hölderlin's poem over the edge of an abyss are simultaneously the same forces which sustain the movement of the synechia in a ceaseless vacillation which recognises no such "final" enclosure. A 'line of filiation', therefore, as Farrell Krell writes, also 'connects the thoughts of one-sidedness, omnipresence, and succession—connects them by disjunction'.[128] It is, to return to Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, a reminiscence of Narcissus exclaiming that while 'no mighty ocean separates us… we are kept apart', perhaps necessarily by our reflections, and yet in the synechic action the poem receives this separation in an antagonistic unity of legislation and transgression in which the dialectical polarity between "man" and "god" is simultaneously recognised and collapsed.[129] The mirrored surface of the lake thus serves as a metaphor for the synechic process, 'an abandoned flowing nature which transcends itself' - by concealing, yet forever keeping at the core of its presence, its unfathomable depth of which mortals, in the use of language, attempt in vein to see to the bottom.[130] Or, as with the interplay of the sunshine and shade, which makes possible the

[127] Hölderlin, "*Ammerkungen zur Antigonä*". II: 369-376. Hölderlin, "Remarks on "Antigone"". pp. 109 - 116.
[128] Farrell Krell, *The Tragic Absolute*. p. 223.
[129] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller and G. P. Goold, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1916. Book III, pp. 156 - 157.
[130] Adorno, "Parataxis". I: 109-149.

reversal of the poem's second strophe. The poem serves to undermine an overwhelming confidence in the absolute subjectivity of Idealism, for such subjectivity also deludes itself of any possibility of fate in the unaccountable, resting instead in its own thoughts of absolute mastery. However, as Hölderlin tries to show in this poem, 'where the danger is, also grows the saving power'.[131]

With respect to this final maxim, as in life, the poem has more imagination than the subject, and neither are entirely reducible to an idea. If the poetic act of *synechia* establishes an irreducibility in any stable truth claims, that mortal theses must eventually turn back upon themselves, the poetic act which holds this disequilibrium must itself remain free of identity. The *synechia* has no fixed address, possible everywhere and always elsewhere, and thus, to return to Agamben's reading of late Hölderlin, is a stance without being a position; rather, it is an act of dwelling. The poetic act is, to turn to what is widely conceived to be last poem Hölderlin wrote, a 'life of dwelling'.[132] Returning to Benjamin's analysis, such an act is defined by a state of 'passivity', through which the subject, 'transposed into *the middle of life*', abdicates on one level the hubristic, that being the concretisation of phenomena in representation, stance of the spirit in order to cohesively juxtapose it in a moment of perpetual arrest.[133] Such a dwelt life, then, consists of a subjective surrender to passivity and nothingness through which the poet operates in "the middle", or half-way between, differences, in a refusal to sacrifice the difference which holds them apart according to a logical schema. The poet, then, is not the mute mouth through which "destiny" speaks but rather the synechic container which contains itself, holding-together two irreconcilable forces, allowing mortal denominations to pass into a superior conflux of coherence, in which the subject exists within the process, all the while without the processes which ascribe them to solely the law of the subject. As Agamben highlights, the line 'poetically man dwells upon this earth' is likely an intentional echo of a passage from the Lutheran Bible: "the word became flesh, and dwelt among us".[134] Hölderlin's process of the poetic *synechia*, then, extends this relation so that in the experience of language, mortal and immortal positions are momentarily

[131] Hölderlin, "*Patmos*", in: *SW*. I: 447-457. Hölderlin, "Patmos", in: *SP*. pp. 231 - 250.
[132] '*Wenn in die ferne, geht der Menschen wohnend Leben*'. Hölderlin, "*Die Aussicht*", in: *SW*. I: 938. Friedrich Hölderlin, "The View", in: *Selected Last Poems*, trans. Claude Neuman, Norderstedt: BoD, 2019. pp. 74 - 75.
[133] Benjamin, "Two Poems by Friedrich Hölderlin". I: 34. Emphasis added.
[134] Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*. p. 296. The verse that reads "The Word became flesh" is from: John. 1:14.

coincided, partaking the basic fact of dwelling, embodied, perhaps, in the imagery of *Half of Life* which brings to bear the potent symbol of the Lutheran church, whose spires feature a swan in place of a weathercock, in two divided positions: absolute and singular. Which is to say that the *synechia*, the poem, show how our theses, our positions regarding phenomena - whatever they may be - are only ever one half of life.

# *Conclusion*

This thesis has set out to examine Hölderlin's distinctive approach to the mater of truth. Using Parmenides' account of the *synechia* which does not rely on an immovable philosophical *archē* as foundation but rather "holds" between two disjunctive positions, the research undertaken has illustrated how Hölderlin's theoretical and literary works, in a move counter to that of his Idealist contemporaries, disputes the dialectical foundation of any absolute truth claims. This research has illustrated how, and why, twentieth century thinkers have turned to Hölderlin's thinking as an answer to a supposed "end"—of metaphysics, of dialectics, of philosophy or even meaning itself—and why the *synechia*, as Hölderlin's theoretical accounts of historical change reflects, comes to the fore at the moments in which hegemonic categories begin to doubt the formerly unacknowledged presuppositions of their own systems of thought. However, as also demonstrated in this thesis, Hölderlin's thinking itself not only provides a form of thought extending beyond such categories, but also disputes the theoretical condition in which such claims to knowledge can be said to have "begun" or "ended" in themselves. Rather, the synechic technique brought forth in Hölderlin's works envelopes and extends thinking beyond the confines of its own conditionedness and into a space *between* which "holds". In this guise, the two primary texts this study has examined, namely *Hyperion* and *Half of Life*, instead of being conceived as upon a developmental paradigm upon which Hölderlin "progresses" from early immaturity to developed critique, both represent points upon a landscape which confer the same theoretical mapping - that is, a mapping which does not "arrive" at a singular fixed position and thus destroying singularity itself, but rather oscillates perpetually between competing and contested sites of determination in a free-play of aesthetic presentation which can hold-together incompatible vectors. In this sense, Hölderlin's thinking offers no "final word", but rather allows for a space in which finitude itself can enter; a space in which there is, as Gadamer writes, 'no first word as there is no last word'.[1]

What, then, is *in* a word? Perhaps this is a question for the future of philosophy. When writing a biographical treatment in preparation for the first collected edition of Hölderlin's works,

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[1] Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Towards a Phenomenology of Ritual and Language", in: *Language and Linguisticality in Gadamer's Hermeneutics*, ed. Lawrence K. Schmidt, Oxford: Lexington Books, 2000. p. 25.

Christoph Theodor Schwab drew attention to Hölderlin's habitual use of the word '*pallaksch*' to mean 'sometimes yes sometimes no'.[2] In response, then, to the question which was broached at the outset of this study—how is one to approach Hölderlin's 'mystery' of the 'pure origin'?—these final words, repeated, '*pallaksch, pallaksch*', stand where the thinkers of the future stand, as Celan recorded in a 1969 letter, in the midst of 'the king's caesura', which like a map without compass is divested of an impeachable *archē* commanding existence.[3] In the midst of this opening, the confrontation with Hölderlin's thinking presented in this study proposes how a *synechia* of language, which tarries back and forth between absolute and singular, renders a form of communication which still *abides in truth* possible. Indeed, his poem *Speak, You Also*, Celan also gives counsel to this end, reminding readers to keep on in this communication as *poíēsis*, 'But keep yes and no unsplit'.[4] Just as Hölderlin's neologism, *pallaksch*, stands at a threshold pointing in both directions—backwards and forwards, towards yes and no, the communicable and the incommunicable, the truth of what can be said and what cannot—human discourse can be sustained in this synechic movement which holds-together that which cannot be reconciled: both the capacity for affirmation and denial between two languages which otherwise cannot communicate.

Of course, it is entirely possible to ascribe Hölderlin's '*pallaksch*' to his "derangement", the babble of an otherwise mute madness to which there is no response.[5] Yet, when André Du Bouchet describes *pallaksch* as the 'word of a language which we ignore', he points towards another possibility.[6] This possibility is the madnesses that humans, as a civilisation, have willingly plunged themselves into in the name of the absolute and for fear of the singular. Perhaps this ignorance is itself part of a language to which we do not currently have recourse, the limited

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[2] Schwab's recollects this phrase from his meetings with Hölderlin between 1841-1843, as recorded in his *tagebuch*, see: Hölderlin, "*C. T. Schwabs Tagebuch*", in: *SW* III: 665-671. In his biography Schwab also provided an account of Hölderlin's death on 7th June 1843. Details of Hölderlin's final hours can also be read in Lotte Zimmer's letter to Karl Gok, 7th June 1843, in: Hölderlin, *SW*. III: 674-675.
[3] 'That's where we stand now … in the king's caesura'. Celan to Ilana Shmueli, quoted in: Felstiner, *Paul Celan*. p. 277. The line 'the king's caesura' also appears in Celan's poem "I drink wine".
[4] Celan, "*Sprich Auch Du*", in: *Selected Poems*. pp. 98 - 99.
[5] William T. Samarin identifies the trait of making words from meaningless syllables as 'glossolalia', a 'language-like' assemblage of sounds which, particularly when spoken by schizophrenics, is commonly taken to be "gibberish". See: William T. Samarin, "Sociolinguistic vs. Neurophysiological Explanations for Glossolalia: Comment on Goodman's Paper", in: *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 293 - 296, 1972.
[6] '"*Pallaksch, Pallaksch!*": *le mot de la langue que l'on ignore*'. André Du Bouchet, *Désaccordée comme par de la neige. Tübingen, le 22 mai 1986*, Paris: Mercure de France, 1989. pp. 68 - 69.

area where language comes up against the silence of another word which does not correspond to any conceptual meaning. Indeed, as Anne Carson teaches, the poet's responsibility has always been to linger upon thresholds between divergent strands to reality, constructing words that affirm and deny both "yes and no" in the same moment:

> out of the operations of the negative, out of the collocation of visible and invisibles, out of the absent presence of gods in human rooms, out of alchemy, out of memory… out of strangeness, hospitality, sleep, prayer and commodity of exchange.[7]

To construct "out of" while also to be "out of" the rule themselves, a *synechia* prescribes to these selfsame rules a new reality, or at least a reality in which they are not absolute, so as to undermine and transcend the limits of the rule itself. Nonetheless, poetic invention, in order to be capable of human habitation must also be legible, it must measure and exchange with words and languages which are given to humans, it must, as Carson continues: 'tease itself out of the unknown through a language mesh where everything ugly, blameworthy, incommensurable or mad is filtered out'.[8] In *synechia*, the poet somehow travels through this mesh and mysteriously preserves the necessarily enigmatic origin at the heart of all that is and can be said. This unknown, then, is itself Hölderlin's mystery of the pure origin which cannot be "uncovered" and made foundational; in this manner, Hölderlin's *pallaksch* is also symbolic of the truth of the purely originated - it speaks in a language mortals believe they understand, and yet cannot. *Pallaksch* speaks of an unknowing which comes not from ignorance, but rather from knowing that this unknown is essential to the practice of poetic dwelling. Human discourses are necessarily subject to the common. Our concepts *live* in our languages. However, the poetic utterance suspends this matrix and shows that, while we humans may never wholly wrest ourselves free of legislative markers, it is still possible to bear witness to the singular undertow in which each of them lives and, ultimately, dies.

The thinkers of the future will perhaps have to decide which languages they desire to grant the authority of truth and to listen to it, or, to hold open the free space for the *synechia* in

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[7] Anne Carson, *Economy of the Unlost (Reading Simonides of Keos with Paul Celan)*, Princetown: Princetown University Press, 1999. p. 131.
[8] Ibid.

which irreconcilable discourses are sustained, poetically. Just as philosophy was born out of poetry, so, too, at the juncture from which a dialectics of truth seems no longer feasible, may it return there. The language of poets, as we read in *Hyperion*, 'is the beginning and end of that science'.[9] *Hyperion*'s discourse illustrates that such foundation cannot exist in relation to the principle, but rather in the capacity of the poetic word to function as a *synechia* which sustains multiple discourses not in order to dialectically synthesise and resolve them, but so that in their presence, absence is shown and held-together. This study, then, has not wished to derive philosophical statements or programmes from Hölderlin's writings, but rather to illustrate the "babbling" which we all unwittingly, and necessarily, live in. *Pallaksch* is the suspension of a discourse between affirmation and negation, yes or no, in the space of the poetic word which shows the limits of all discourses and suspends their irresolvable factions within a terrain where they can be seen, shown, and said, amidst what is hidden, neglected, and silent within them. The synechic technique itself *is* the inceptual two-foldedness of language in which two configurations are held in the same presentation.

If the practice of the poetic is to testify to the relationship between word and thing, language and life, then the *synechia* which resides therein pays tribute to the singular forces seen and unseen, spoken and silent, exterior and interior, active and passive, hidden and revealed, which make up human existences and ties them with a displaced origin. Hölderlin's word is then a figure taken from existence, preserving an indelible linkage with life. The poem, as Luc-Nancy writes, 'can say, in truth, that we live (exist) in truth'.[10] Which is, in a fashion, another way of saying, again, that "poetically man dwells upon this earth". Just as in the narrow sense of a reading of the allusion to the Lutheran passage ('the word became flesh, and dwelt among us') which concluded the previous chapter, the word of God (or spirit), no longer finds its particularity in counter-distinction to the "flesh" but rather envelops the whole person so that both can be sustained in a relationship to God, Hölderlin's synechic technique suspends a tightrope between designations which may travel back and forth between the regimes of the singular and the manifold, the mortal and immortal. Indeed, Luther instructs in his commentaries on Aristotle that

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[9] Hölderlin, *Hyperion*. Vol. 1: Bk. 2, "Hyperion to Bellarmin [XXX]".
[10] Luc-Nancy, "Poetry's Courage". p. 85.

within such a relation 'no syllogistic form is valid'.[11] The habitude of poetic dwelling, then, is not a situation; it does not reside at a fixed point upon a landscape of competing territories rubbing up against each other in our minds but rather (as is preserved in the etymological foundation of dwelling in desert wandering derived from the Greek *eskēnōsen* which literally means to 'tabernacle' or 'tent') to take up, however fleetingly, residence within the empty space that is at once a desert and at the same time abundant with the potential for pure presence of infinitude.[12]

Extending the final metaphor further, it is possible to call upon the manner in which the Greek word for thunderbolt, *skēptós*, can also be taken to mean a sandstorm, indicative perhaps of Heraclitus' thunderbolt - or more pointedly, the powerful intensity of the thunderstorm from which Hölderlin envisaged that he himself had been struck by Apollo.[13] In this manner, the synechic encounter can be read as the sustained poetic attempt to resolve a story as old as human habitation, the search for an *archē* which sustains a people and civilisation. In a manner akin to the ancient narrative of warring factions (perhaps most aptly exemplified by the Biblical account of Cain and Abel; Abel—connoting "transitoriness," "motion," "movement," and "breath"—and Cain—deriving from an etymological root which implies "possession," "accumulation," "settled order") these two opposite poles represent the two divergent trajectories of mortal dwelling, between a settled, fixed, rigid system of authority and legislation anchored by principles, or a free flowing movement in which manifestation appears singularly and irreducibly. The *synechia* bridges between a chasm which, as Philo writes of Cain and Abel, offers the dual manifestation of 'two opinions contrary to and at variance with one another; the one which commits everything to the mind as the leader of all reasoning… and the other, attributing to God all consequent work of creation as his own'.[14]

This study has introduced what Schürmann calls a '*Diremption*', the loss, in conceptual thinking, of a foundational *archē*, a hegemon through which each and every pronouncement presiding over human affairs can tally up its worth, to the reading of Hölderlin's works. The

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[11] Martin Luther, "Disputation Against Scholastic Theology", in: *Luther's Works*, ed. Harold J. Grimm and Helmut T. Lehmann, 55 vols., Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1957. XXXI: 12 (47.).
[12] John 1:14b in the original Greek reads as '*eskēnōsen en hēmin*' literally "tented in us". For *eskēnōsen*, consult: Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. pp. 1608 - 1609.
[13] For *skēptós* (σκηπτός), consult: Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. p. 1609.
[14] Philo, "The Sacrifices of Abel and Cain (*De Sacrificiis Abelis et Cain*)", in: *The Works of Philo*, trans. C. D. Yonge, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2004. p. 94.

research has instead, borrowing from Parmenides, called upon a *synechia* of language which holds-together absolute and singular discourses *in* their incompatibilities. In *synechia*, the irreconcilable traits of language do not oppose or even subsume one and the other; they are not binary traits, but rather keep hold of a connection between inherent schism between thinking and naming, singular and absolute. In its manner of holding-together both regimes within a single presentation, poetry never ceases to give humans a world in which they can dwell, it is the means to rehabilitate the orignary double allegiance behind the mortal condition. For over a century and a half, philosophers have been living with the knowledge of a *kenosis* at the heart of their normative representations. It is the site from out of which Alexander Herzen addressed the time in which:

> The death of the contemporary forms of social order ought to gladden rather than trouble the soul, but what is frightening is that the departing world leaves behind it not an heir, but a pregnant widow. Between the death of the one and the birth of the other much water will flow by, a long night of chaos and desolation will pass.[15]

Within the fragility of such an period, which comes out of a timelessness, the search for an originary *archē* has continued to beckon those in search of legitimising the law of representation, most commonly as 'the birth of "man" or as a way of announcing his death'.[16] Yet from out of the 'radicalised consciousness', which makes an explicit programme of births and deaths, breaks and endings, progressions, even beyond the "era of progress", fragmentation and the systems of domination they birth, one may detect the ever-present metaphysician that seeks a signpost guiding and legitimising any network of determinations.[17] Such signs guide thinking offering a focal point for each and every occurrence, the discovery of an epochal occurrence of contesting teleocracy, however, also makes it possible, as this study has illustrated, to stand *between* time *in* Hölderlin's, or a, synechic thinking: to hold-together the world in passing and the world to come.

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[15] Alexander Herzen, "From the Other Shore", in: *From the Other Shore and The Russian People and Socialism: An Open Letter to Jules Michelet*, trans. Moura Budberg, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1956. p. 124.

[16] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been* Modern, trans. Catherine Porter, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991. p. 13.

[17] Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity—An Incomplete Project", in: *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster, Seattle: Bay Press, 1987. p. 4.

This study, then, has pointed towards Hölderlin's thinking as an answer to such a question: if a hegemonic phantasm no longer serves as the chief model for social life, and a certain communal experience becomes erased or impossible, what, then, happens to the site of human interactions? Where can humans find commonality? The fact of mortal existence poses a riddle, the riddle of 'those of pure origin'. It is, in fact, the same riddle with which Oedipus is confronted by the Sphinx, to which the answer, "man", is in turn the very self-same riddle which he also fails to understand and confront: consciousness.[18] Humans are always afloat upon the conflicted site of fluctuating currents pulling in different directions toward the universal and unique which unfold as life. If every instance of legislation is fractured by the disredemption which underscores its appearance, the question of how humans keep hold of the common in dwelling is a fraught one. Is it possible to think the double allegiance to the maximalised common and the deracinated singular? Is it possible to 'love ultimates in different?'.[19] Perhaps, then, it is sensible to note that what is above posed as a question in Schürmann's *Broken Hegemonies*, is elsewhere published as a manifesto for a philosophy of the future: 'it is possible to love differing ultimates. This, I submit, would be expanding the limits of imagination'.[20]

This study has put forward the synechic use of language, as practiced in the work and thought of Hölderlin, as an apprenticeship toward such a demand. Such a task is not easily achieved, for at each juncture in which one appears divested of ultimate theses and legislative referents, the mind is slowly refilled, like a vessel that has been drained, scoured and then refilled, with another thesis. Tragic truth, as Hölderlin's theories of the tragic have illustrated, confers no such finality to thought. Thus, the function of disredemption requires a new perspective in thinking, as Schürmann concludes:

> not only to comply with norms, but also not to betray deictic phenomena in their
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> places of manifestation. We have yet to learn how to live in worlds where this
>
> singularizing undertow would no longer be denied. Phenomena are betrayed as

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[18] Sophocles' Oedipus represents the dawning of 'the light of consciousness', Hegel posits. Hegel, *Aesthetics*. I:360-361.

[19] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*. p. 631.

[20] Reiner Schürmann, "Conditions of Evil", in: *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, ed. Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, New York: Routledge, 1992. p. 400.

they are subsumed under the one among them that gets saved and cultivated excessively.[21]

The *synechia* of language which disredemption brings forth, this study has shown, attempt to maintain and withhold the double allegiance in common and singular representations - to hold ultimates, *in difference.*

In the technical language of the Ancient Greek theatre, *parékbasis* (often translated 'digression') designates the point at which the actors depart from the stage and the chorus moved toward the proscenium and into the *logeion* (the 'speaking place') from where they would, like Parmenides' maidens pulling back their veils, take off their masks and address the audience directly.[22] The subject of this theatrical digression was of much interest to Schlegel, who wrote about it at length, and more recently appears in Agamben and Hamacher's studies on Hölderlin.[23] According to Schlegel's analysis, the *parékbasis* allowed the poet to remove himself from the customary 'dialectic of thesis and antithesis, which will ultimately be recomposed into a reflexive synthesis' and thus 'expose the two elements in all their irreconcilable separation'.[24] In this fashion, it is possible to envisage Hölderlin's *pallaksch*, just as the *parékbasis* 'falls out of the role of reflection', standing over and above any absolute judgement, reminding it that, if only its masks were removed, the singularising thrust of the irreducible element would resolve us nonetheless to keep hold of a union against the undecidable threshold which refuses to be reduced to a categorical designation of life, but rather in its simple facticity of everyday dwelling speaks and gestures out of and toward itself.[25] Alas, perhaps it is telling, as the dramatic impulse of the tragic teaches, that such a knowledge can only be conferred at the point of departure.

To return, then, to what the *synechia* has to teach about the possibility of a dwelt life: the possibility of suspending two modes of existence, singular and universal, upon a plateau, wherein each and the other is seen and recognised but kept apart, is to recognise the fragility of our

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[21] Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies.* p. 348.

[22] 'The chorus made appeal to the public on behalf of the poet, who could thus give expression to his personal views and wishes… This address stood wholly outside the action of the play'. Oskar Seyffert, *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities: Mythology, Religion, Literature and Art*, ed. Henry Nettleship and J. E. Sandys, London: Swan Sonnenschein and Company, 1891. pp. 457 - 458.

[23] Werner Hamacher, "Friedrich Schlegel's Poetological Transposition of Fichte's Absolute Proposition", in: *Premises: Essays on Philosophy and Literature from Kant to Celan*, trans. Peter Fenves, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996. pp. 222 - 260. Agamben draws on *parékbasis* in: Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness.* pp. 316 - 317.

[24] Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness.* p. 317.

[25] Hamacher, "Friedrich Schlegel's Poetological Transposition of Fichte's Absolute Proposition". p. 248.

maximalising representations, however necessary they may be for coexistence. To dwell poetically is to recognise that whatever else may be said about the practice of thought, and of making thought representable, is that it must always fall short. As Agamben has said:

> What Hölderlin teaches us is that, for whatever purpose we might have been created, we certainly weren't created for success; the fate assigned to us is failure—in every art, in every realm of study, and above all in the sheer art of living.[26]

However, this "failure" (if it can be called such, seeing as the oppositionality of success and failure withers away this paradigm) is necessarily the apportioned lot of mortals and why a life which is poetically dwelt, inhabiting worlds which can never truly be possessed, is a response in keeping with this role. 'Try again. Fail again. Fail better'.[27] Naturally, there must always remain a 'tragic edge', as one commentator calls it, to a project which does not seek 'totalisation but the finitization of all the infinite possibilities connected with it'.[28] The task, then, is to keep hold of the tragic singular within absolute orders, and recognise that the condition for every calculation is necessarily a contested site whose contestation one must, at some point, relinquish in order to establish commune. To call the established laws into order is not only to embrace an abyss, but to recognise that in life one is necessarily a perpetual student, that, as the tragic disposition teaches, each and every time we think we avow this vocation we are quickly humbled and let back to its starting point. If the lone and level sands stretch far into the distance boundless and bare, perhaps it is only in the emergence from a certain philosophical tradition that a synechic relationship to the law can be re-established just as a horizon is often most perceptible from the vantage of the desert.

This conclusion, then, has not been so much an attempt at a consolidation in the manner of Schlegel's remark that such writing should be 'at once the square root and the square of its book' - that is, it does not attempt to tie and weave together into a single image the various strands of research that precede it in order to provide a final or ultimate doctrine of meaning.[29] This is

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[26] Agamben, *Hölderlin's Madness*. p. 328.
[27] Samuel Beckett, *Nohow on: "Company", "Ill Seen, Ill Said" and "Worstward Ho"*, London: Calder Publishing, 1992. p. 101.
[28] Julia Ng, "Versing, Ending". p. 18.
[29] Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*. p. 1 ("Critical Fragment" 8.).

done in the hope that we modern-day *kouroi*, for, as it has been suggested, there are few more fitting incarnations of the student, continue with humility and courage along the carriage-road leading towards the double doors of the horizon, whose bolted bar is unlocked, perhaps, knocking twice upon its door, our knocks may be greeted upon that threshold which lingers before the infinite expanse beyond with a reciprocal response: *pallaksch. pallaksch.*

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