

Speaking the Language of Destiny: *Heidegger's Conversation(s) with Hölderlin*

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Abstract:

This essay offers the reader a unique interpretation of Heidegger's notion of authentic destiny as it develops in the Hölderlin lectures and essays written in the 1930s through the 1950s. Ultimately, for Heidegger, the destiny of Germany, and perhaps beyond, that of humanity, is contingent on the receptivity of a people to the founding and grounding words of the "poet of poets" Hölderlin, who calls Dasein to participate in the awakening to a future that is as of yet indeterminate and historical in the highest degree, wherein, attuned by Hölderlin's poetry, participants resolutely anticipate the potential "historical" arrival of Being as destiny.

The notion of destiny pervades the Hölderlin lectures and essays. Heidegger reads Hölderlin as expressing the essence of human dwelling in relation to the founding event of historical Being as the "event" of language, "the primal event (*Ereignis*), which disposes the highest possibility of Man's being" (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 56).¹ Poetizing the essence of poetry (and the essence of language), Hölderlin's poetry is historical to the highest degree because it anticipates a new historical time for a people who are called to the poetry to stand in the "sphere of the poetry's influence" (p. 56). Language is the event that opens and attunes Dasein to its historical Being, which includes the historical manifestation and appropriation in a manner that responds creatively to the manifestation of Being. Hölderlin's poetry holds the potential to determine the possibility and manner in which Dasein appropriates its historical "essence," and enacts its destiny, which first manifests as authentic possibility in the *Ereignis*, as Dasein's historical relation to Being is first "spoken" and inaugurated through the language of poetry. This essay offers an interpretation of Heidegger's concept of destiny as it develops in the lectures on Hölderlin's poetry from the 1930s through the essays of the 1950s.

In 1935 Heidegger considers the question of Being and history (*Introduction to Metaphysics*) and claims that "the fate of language" hangs in the balance. The overcoming of the oblivion of Being, the move beyond metaphysics, entails the understanding of poetry's originary language, *Dichtung* in the essential sense, which is both the origin of Dasein's historical Being and the origin of language itself.² "The essence of language must be understood out of the essence of poetry," and poetry is "the primal language of a

¹ *Ereignis*, in basic terms, is associated with the "appropriation" of that which is "appropriately" Dasein's own. It might be thought of as the (temporal) event of "en-presenting" and appropriating of, within the horizon or space of disclosure, the proper historical world and vocation of a culture or people.

² *Dichtung* is a term Heidegger (1993) incorporates in his writings on the work of art and Hölderlin's poetry. All art, as an event of *truth-happening*, is in "essence poetry" (p. 197). *Dichtung*, as the "essence" of art/poetry, is not limited to the linguistic expression of "poetry," or poesy. Rather, for Heidegger, *Dichtung* represents all creative, projective events of truth's revelation, and it is "due to art's poetic essence (as *Dichtung*) that, in the midst of beings, art breaks open an open place, in whose openness everything is other than usual" (p. 197).

historical people" (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 60). During the "turn," the writings of the 1930s, Heidegger revises his approach to the fundamental question of Being, moving beyond the traditional language of metaphysics, the language of 1927 and *Being and Time*, and embraces a more poetic approach to *thinking*. This move is inspired by the encounter with both Sophocles and Hölderlin, an encounter that produces some of Heidegger's most rich, fruitful, and difficult philosophical writings (Zimmerman, 1990). The following important questions arise: What is Heidegger's conception of language as it relates to Hölderlin's poetizing of Being as historical phenomenon? How does the event of language occur and in what manner does Hölderlin poetize Dasein's destiny?

Hölderlin poetizes the primal event (*Ereignis*) of language, which is the gathering and appropriation of Dasein's historicity occurring at the moment of the original "naming" of the gods and all things. When Dasein, attuned and resolute, partakes in the inaugural moment of Being's coming-to-presence, which is the poetic "commemoration" of the moment when "time arose and was brought to stand" in the word, it enters into the originary historical dialogue (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 57). "This distinctive moment, undoubtedly immemorial, is named and commemorated in Hölderlin's poetry as the time of his poetizing, itself poetized as the moment" (McNeill, 2006, p. 150). This primal historical event commemorated in Hölderlin's poetry is the time that humanity became "One" dialogue. This is the *Ereignis*, the moment of Temporality when Dasein's world happens through poetic naming in essential language (Dastur, 1999). Language, as an originary event of naming, brings the world, the gods, and beings to stand as that which endures, initiating the singular dialogue that humanity has been since the moment of "torrential time," since time temporalized, and "has been broken up (torn) into present, past, and future" (Heidegger, 2000, p. 59). The event of originary language, which expresses the historical Being of humanity is at once an originary event of Temporality. So, in Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin, the *Ereignis* is understood in terms of an original event of poetizing, an event of language in relation to the time and truth of Being, which makes possible Dasein's entrance into its proper and uniquely destined historical time (McNeill 2006; Kisiel, 2001).

What this indicates is that for Heidegger, Hölderlin's poetry is at once the *thinking* and *poetizing* of what might be conceived as Dasein's authentic historical relationship to Being in terms of its *destiny*, which unfolds as an ecumenical dialogue concerning a people's proper *vocation*. This so-called "ecumenical dialogue" is inaugurated *as* the temporal founding of a historical "world" in the open clearing (truth-happening) that Hölderlin's poetry makes possible, and the "dialogue is to be conceived not as communication, but as a fundamental event of our being" (Heidegger, 2004, p. 75). To the point, the "essence" of Hölderlin's poetry lies in its power to show us – through a gesturing, a pointing that designates and commemorates its own unique event - what our "essential" relation to Being is like *as a historical phenomenon*. However, this relationship is possible only when Dasein participates in Hölderlin's poetry and recovers the concealed ground upon which the past relation to the gods or the "holy" depends, and it is Hölderlin's destiny as linked to our "potential" destiny to locate, reopen (*tear*), and found this ground anew in "language" by poetizing the event when we have *first* "been exposed to beings opening themselves up," and this, for the *first* time, reveals to us our historical/communal Dasein in terms of *historicality*. Hölderlin uncovers the ontological "truth" that in the presence of Being's unfolding we are called beyond our individuated subjective existence that

comprises “mass society” and the potential arises for an authentic historical *community* to find its beginning in the “conversation” Hölderlin's poetry inspires. Within this “conversation,” in the moment of being's authentic *presence*, individuals are “bound in advance to something that binds and determines every individual in exceeding them” (p. 74). It is in this way that we come to *poetically dwell* in the world, on and in the presence of the Earth.

As is evident from these foregoing remarks, Hölderlin's poetry (as “essential” *Dichtung*) is not linked with the tradition of critique in literature, poetry, or aesthetics, for poetry is not about opening imaginary worlds for readers, the re-presentation of emotional states-of-being, or flights of reverie brought to language in ways that titillate and enthrall our aesthetic sensibilities. This because in the modern age Heidegger claims that “art” loses its power to found and ground historical worlds, such as the classical Greeks, and “art” is relegated to the science of “aesthetics,” which indicates that art becomes a mere “subjective” phenomenon and is no longer a “communal” event of historical magnitude. Rather, Hölderlin's poetry is the supreme response to a living crisis, and for Heidegger, this crisis was the modern German mood of nihilistic despair, the degeneration of its life, language, and world. Hölderlin does not merely remember the Greek gods who have fled, but rather his thoughts recall and recapture the reason for the flight, namely, the forgetfulness of the ancient relationship to the holy and the corollary loss of the history-determining heritage, as *ethos* in the two-fold sense of “habituated behaviors” and “primal dwelling,” which is linked to the loss of the meaningful, authentic sense of community. Importantly, Hölderlin seeks the recovery of sanctified ground in preparation for the time of the gods' return, the ground upon which the *polis* is founded and the new temples are raised. While Hölderlin's poetry is certainly not a form of divine prophecy, it undoubtedly intimates a sense of reverential expectation, and beyond, resolute anticipation, as it foretells and announces the proximate arrival of Dasein's destiny in the event of the *Ereignis*.

In 1942 Heidegger philosophizes the *Ereignis* as the site of Dasein's potential historicity, or the originary emerging of the *polis* in the presencing of the strange-estranged nature of humanity as *deinon*, and the essence of *deinon* is expressed in the unity of the fearful, powerful, and the inhabital.³ To experience these elements in their originary “counter turning” and belonging together, is to experience life as pervasively uncanny (*das Unheimliche*). The human (*to deinotaton*) is paradoxically enacting its authentic destiny when it is at *home in not-being-at-home*. Dasein's potential for destiny hinges on the authentic relationship to its essence, as destined by Being to remain unhomely, from which emerges the historical truism that all of its projects directed toward establishing a habitable historical dwelling, cannot, and “ought not,” as Heidegger claims, overcome the estranged nature of the *deinon*. Heidegger, in 1942, still claims that Dasein's historical selfhood consists in acknowledging the groundlessness of its existence

³ *Deinon* is a Greek term usually translated as “wonderful” or “marvelous.” However, Heidegger in his interpretations of the choral ode from Sophocles' *Antigone* (1935/1942) emphasizes *deinon* as “fearful,” “terrible,” “frightful,” and “dangerous.” Heidegger uses *deinon* in a twofold sense: (1) as representing the “overwhelming sway” of Being and Dasein's immersion in and relation to this phenomenon as a violent, awe-inspiring encounter, and (2) as representing Dasein's way of being as a “violence doer,” i.e., as Dasein works to wrest beings (entities) and its world from concealment it does violence as it interrupts and arrests, by way of *techne*, the flow and dynamic unfolding of nature as *physis*.

(finitude), and this depends on the manner in which Dasein's historical nature comes to presence, and the manner in which Dasein orients itself to this uncanny manifestation. However, in this later and more mature work, it is now the *Ereignis* that determines the law of historicity, for in the *Ereignis*, the *polis*, as "originary community," along with Dasein's nature are revealed for historical appropriation.

The notion of original *ethos*, or Dasein's *originary* community, its heritage in relation to the *Augenblick* (the authentic *present*) is related to the more original Greek meaning of *ethos* (Zimmerman, 1990; McNeill, 2006).⁴ Its meaning is more "primordial" than what appears in "Aristotle's lectures on 'ethics'," and the meaning of the term *ethos* which is "more original than that of the 'ethical' or 'ethics' – is one's abode, one's place of dwelling," which holds the truth of historical human dwelling, "the very truth of our human being" (McNeill, 2006, p. 133). In Hölderlin's *Hymn "The Ister,"* the truth of historical dwelling is located in the site of the *polis*, the site of Dasein's *ethos* as heritage, the originary condition for Dasein's historicizing, and this site might be linked to the Earth and the *Ereignis*. "The *polis* is that realm and locale around which everything question-worthy and uncanny turns in an exceptional sense," and this original site can never be determined by works alone, as it is not founded via *techne* (art) or political state founding actions, e.g., with respect to the *Antigone*, blood oaths sworn to the *polis* and ancestral cults of the dead do not bestow meaning upon the city, rather these ancient customs and practices acquire meaning and are first legitimized in the original site of the *polis* (Heidegger, 1996, p. 114.). Heidegger indicates that *historicity* is determined by the way in which Dasein faces and appropriates its essence in the *Ereignis*. Thus, it is necessary to ask the following: In what manner is Dasein brought (opened) to face its historical essence and the fundamental *ethos* of its past having-been?

Focusing on the Greek term *pelein*, which appears in both Presocratic philosophy and the archaic poetry of Homer and Hesiod (as the usual word for Being, *einai*), Heidegger attempts to understand the manner in which beings come to presence within this originary site of disclosure, i.e., the context within which they manifest as this or that amidst the interplay of concealment and unconcealment. The nature of Dasein emerges in the open site of Being most conspicuously in terms of absence ("Nothing"), and thus holds the potential, or danger, to either remain hidden or manifest in a frightfully ominous and disturbing manner. The un-homely (*deinon*) appears "in such a way that in all its stirring, it nonetheless abides in the inaccessibility of its essence" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 113). In the 1942 "Ister" lecture, the potential "catastrophe" of Dasein's historicizing does not relate to the inevitable "shattering" of Dasein in the tragic confrontation with Being (as in, for example, *Introduction to Metaphysics* - 1935), but rather refers to the ever-present potential of human life to remain oblivious to its nature or in the inauthentic turn from the *deinon*, to flee in the face of its responsibility to its authentic historical nature. Importantly,

⁴ *Augenblick* is translated by McNeill (2006) as "glance of the eye" and is understood in terms of a temporal happening or moment of *authentic* revelatory comportment. It is possible to grasp the meaning of *Augenblick* in Heidegger's writings in two ways: (1) as the "moment of genuine *praxis* informed by *phronesis*," which is a "moment of knowing and seeing oneself – one's own Being – as addressed and called to decision by one's worldly situation as a whole" (p. 98), and (2) as the "en-presenting" of Being and Dasein's authentic possibilities in the "present" *ekstasis* of the three-fold model of "ecstatic" temporality when past and future converge, which is "the originary time of the event of Being itself in which the Being of beings attains possible steadfastness" (pp. 109-110).

in both instances, there exists the risk of losing the historical (originary) site of the *polis*, and hence humanity's *destiny*.

In Heidegger's analysis, it is the human relationship to this essence that determines *historicality*, which manifests and is made available for appropriation amidst the interplay of unconcealedness and concealedness as radical finitude (McNeill 2006; Fynsk 1990). It is for Heidegger in 1942, in this relationship to Being and human essence, that the tragedy of *Antigone* comes to define the characters of Creon and Antigone: The former, embedded only in the politics of the state, expresses the inauthentic relationship to this tension. The latter, abiding by the highest law that is beyond humans and gods, demonstrates the authentic historical way of Being in which humanity's relationship to the unsettling nature of the *deinon* unfolds authentically through the proper orientation to the "Nothing," in the "here and now" of the *Augenblick*. The ever-present threat to Dasein's appropriation of its historical nature in the site of the *Ereignis*, the possibility that Dasein might turn from its essence, is the ultimate tragic threat to historicality (the possibility of an inauthentic dwelling), which outweighs the import of the factual threat of death. It is possible to trace the source of the danger present to the disclosure of the *deinon* to the language-event, to language itself. For language grants Dasein its time and potential historicality, but harbors intrinsically a legitimate danger, and as Heidegger believes, essential language is a double-threat to Dasein, in that it "first exposes humans to the realm of Being and thereby nonbeing," opening the perilous threat of the loss of Being, not specifically in terms of Dasein's earthly, or biological, death, but with regard to the loss of its selfhood, the loss of the historical site and the potential for its authentic destiny (Heidegger, 1996, p. 132).

By stressing the potential danger of Dasein's turning from its essence, in a manner reminiscent of *Being and Time* (1927), and yet in terms that clearly outstrip this work, Heidegger draws the distinction between inauthentic and authentic modes of being historical. Importantly, the inauthentic relation to Being, and to the essence of Dasein as unhomely, spawns the misunderstanding of *techne* (technical knowledge), which leads to the overestimation of Dasein's power to master the environment (Zimmerman, 1990; Bambach, 2003). Misconstruing the *deinon* in the site of presencing, in the emergence of finitude, Dasein is without the proper orientation to the authentic meaning of its nature (in relation to the "Nothing"). Thus, it fails to orient itself to the saving source of authentic historical Being. Catastrophe, as Heidegger argues, connotes the sense of blindness and forgetting, as a turning away from Dasein's historical nature (*deinon*), which fails to keep "Being in view or in thoughtful remembrance (*Andenken*)" (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 141).⁵ When this occurs, the potential exists for Dasein to become lost in the inauthentic search for the homely, expressed as the obsession with the technical mastery of beings.

In 1942, when revisiting the continua of *pantoporos-aporos* and *hupsipolis-apolis*

⁵ *Andenken* is a term Heidegger (2000) incorporates in his essay "Remembrance" that indicates a unique form of thinking, or thought, linked with the sense of *authentic remembrance*, which is a thinking-of what has been. However, in distinction to thinking about what is merely past, *Andenken* is an intimation or understanding of "what is still coming into presence from afar...a 'thinking-of' but in such a way that it thinks what is yet to come" (109). *Andenken*, which is both philosophical and *poietic*, holds the potential to reveal Dasein's proper place within those events that are still on the approach from the indeterminate future. *Andenken* is linked to Hölderlin's unique form of *poietic* thought.

(first presented in *Introduction to Metaphysics* – 1935),⁶ Heidegger does so with the purpose of understanding Dasein's authentic self-hood, which presupposes a relation to Being that is established through Dasein's grounding, *uncanny* relation to the primordial concealedness of Earth, which can never be grasped through everyday modes of cognition or acts of creation (Geiman, 2001). Rather, it is through the phenomenon of the attunement of Hölderlin's poetry that the knowledge of the Earth (Being) is approached. It is clear that Heidegger in this later work is evermore concerned with humanity's disingenuous relationship to *techne*. This is not to suggest that Heidegger is moving away from the interpretation of *techne* as presented in "The Origin of the Work of Art," but rather, in addition to *techne* (as a mode of truth-disclosure), he is attempting to emphasize the importance of a different species of knowledge involved in the process of becoming historical, namely, the "poetic" knowledge of Being. Heidegger is not attempting to minimize the need for Dasein's practical, ecumenical "world-creating" activities, for the contests, competitions, politics, warfare, and architectural accomplishments, which all spring from the original site of the *polis*, represent legitimate culture-founding works. The *phronetic* aspects of life, the moments of necessary decision-making and building in *praxis* are undoubtedly crucial practical aspects of Dasein's life and destiny. However, there is a shift in emphasis occurring as Heidegger is moving from the work of art to embrace the original happening of language. In short, if *techne* inspires and guides the work of art, it does so only because it is inspired and guided by a more primordial form of understanding (McNeill 2000, 2006). In the later Hölderlin lectures, Heidegger is working toward exposing the desperate need for adopting the proper perspective and measure for determining the ultimate value of practical comportment.

In the 1954 essay, "...Poetically Man Dwells..." Heidegger reads Hölderlin's "In beautiful blue," a poem that speaks the historical dwelling of the poet and Dasein. The enactment of Dasein's authentic destiny, through understanding its ultimate potential in relation to "The Godhead," or the powers of the holy Earth, happens by way of the ever-renewed, ever continued process referred to as "measure-taking." Heidegger (2000a) reasons that this poem, "In beautiful blue..." poetizes the manner in which Dasein becomes historical through the enactment of its destiny.

May, when life is nothing but toil, a human
Look upward and say: thus
I too would be? Yes. So long as kindness, in purity,
Still endures in the heart, humans
May measure themselves not unhappily

⁶ *Pantoporos-aporos* might be translated from the Greek as "all-ways-through-with-no-way-through." For Heidegger (2000b), this bespeaks the existential condition of Dasein as a resourceful "technological" being that always and everywhere attempts to "make routes for itself," and in its "terrible" (*to deinotaton*) relation to nature (*physis*), it is "flung from every route" in its attempt to establish a permanent dwelling site (p. 162/117). *Hupsipolis-apolis* might be translated as "above-the-city-as-without-a-city." Although Dasein, as creator, rises above the site of the *polis* as the site of history, it is not in Dasein's technological achievements that its authentic historical Being resides. Rather, Dasein learns that despite its potential to bring world to stand through its ingenious accomplishments it is always without a permanent home. This notion of being "without a city" is representative of authentic "historical" existence, which is, according to Heidegger, "lonesome, uncanny, with no way out amidst beings as a whole" (162/117).

By divinity. Is God familiar?
Is he manifest like the heavens? This
I rather believe. The measure of humans it is.
Full of merit, yet poetically dwell
Human beings upon this earth. Yet the
Shadow of night with its stars is not purer,
If I could say such a thing, than
The human being: he is called an image of the divinity.
Is there measure on earth? There is
None (Hölderlin as quoted in Heidegger, 2000, pp. 219-220).

Since no authentic measure exists in the world or "on the earth," Dasein arrives at the poetic essence of its historical dwelling only by way of measuring itself against the divine, that which is without measure. Hence, the "measure-taking" required is not a common measure, a qualitative (Cartesian) calculating of some distance in space, consisting of points and coordinates, but rather, it is an essential-ontological form of measuring in which humanity first comes into their authentic temporal-historical "dwelling" by gauging themselves against the awesome powers of the Earth (or the unknown divinity). The potential for Dasein's destiny is first revealed through Hölderlin's poetry (as a measure-taking) in the founding of Dasein's historical world in language. Hölderlin, standing in the presence of the gods, intercepts their signs, and poetizes the intimate belonging-together of humans and gods in the presence of the holy as manifest in the dimension of the sky. Just as Hölderlin's poetic task is to mete out his existence against the divinity, so too is Dasein's vocation to seek the measurement for its historical earthly dwelling by looking to the Earth and listening for its "reticent" call. Historical dwelling depends on Dasein's "upwardlooking measure-taking of the dimension" (Heidegger, 1971, p. 222). Dasein's dwelling is given and takes on its proper historical fittingness through Hölderlin's poetry, which takes and provides measure from the divine.

As stated, the language event (*Ereignis*), the primal event of Temporality in the disclosure of Being, opens the potential for Dasein's authentic appropriation of its historical essence. Destiny unfolds in the continued and ever-renewed process of Dasein's taking-measure, holding itself in the "dimension," and meting its earthly life against the primordial source of its Being, the emergence of the holy Earth (Heidegger, 1971). If it is the fate of Dasein to enact its destiny by way of sustaining an essential relationship to the self-secluding source of its Being, then coming to an authentic knowledge of its historical nature, and appropriating that nature, represents a legitimate possibility. In short, Dasein's authentic historicity (as destiny) presupposes the knowledge of Being. What does Heidegger have to say about the knowledge of Being that holds the key to Dasein's destiny as the new time of history? How is this knowledge related to Hölderlin's poetry? With the understanding that *Antigone* represents the supreme expression of Dasein as *deinon*, as the one who is unhomey and radically uncanny, set within the context of an authentic historical existence, such questions loom large. Heidegger defines the Hearth as Being itself, related to the Goddesses *Hera* and *Hestia*, it is the site and locality of "homeliness." Knowledge of the hearth expresses the human relation to Being and its historical nature. The hearth of a house, from where the fire "burns" and "radiates," unites heaven and Earth. It is the site in which "the fire has its secure locale, and this locale, gathers around it all that

properly occurs and is bestowed" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 105). Just as the hearth is conceived as a force that draws everything into the radiant light and warmth of its flames, "wherein beings have their site and are at home as beings," so too is the *polis* conceived as a gathering force, which, as the originary site of history, manifests "the site of abode of human beings as historical in the midst of beings" (p. 105). As center and locale of being-at-home, it is also the site of *deinon* (the site of the tragic double-bind), which alone determines the human's potential for historical Being, as "that potentiality for Being in which the being of human is fulfilled," which is ultimately Dasein locating its dwelling in the essential estrangement of the human from its home (p. 110). The potential for the appropriation of the essence of the *deinon* emerges directly from Dasein's belonging to Being, but it manifests itself in cryptic, obscure, and difficult terms, and as stated earlier, the understanding of the immediate presencing of Dasein's nature in the disclosure site defies standard modes of human cognition.

The knowledge of Being, which is ultimately a knowledge of the "home" and the understanding that Dasein's destiny resides in the estrangement from the hearth (home), is poetic in nature. It is described as a "genuine intuition," which is different from any other forms of knowledge, and thus is not understood in terms of *calculative* thought, *episteme* (scientific) or *techne*. For example, whereas Heidegger links *techne* primarily with unconcealment, in that it is a form of knowledge that wrests beings from concealment, he suggests that poetic knowledge of the hearth should be understood in terms of primordial concealment and finitude. Therefore, knowledge of the hearth is grounded in the essence of truth as concealment (*lethe*), which lies at the heart of unconcealment. Knowledge of the hearth intimates the concealed essence of truth (*aletheia*) and it is from the essence of the self-concealing Earth that Dasein receives the potential for its historical destiny. This unique form of poetic knowledge, according to Heidegger, knows Being because "it stems from a belonging to the hearth" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 110). Whereas *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935) reads the chorus of Theban elders in the *Antigone* as affirming the authentic nature of the *deinon* through their inauthentic claims, in that the chorus turns against the uncanniness of the human essence by affirming that one "who *is* in *this way* [namely, as the uncanniest] should be excluded from hearth and council," Heidegger's 1942 reading of the *Antigone* concludes that the chorus possesses the knowledge of Being, "for the *deinon* to be able to expel the most uncanny of all beings from the homely hearth, they must know the hearth itself," the poetic knowledge springing from the human's belonging to Being (Heidegger, 1996, p. 111). Regarding the one who attempts to be at home through creation, the chorus says:

such shall not be entrusted to my hearth,
nor share their delusion with my knowing,
who put such a thing to work (p. 111).

In order for Dasein to appropriate its nature as unhomely, the source of its historical Being, the hearth must be understood. Since Dasein is "uncanny," its essential nature is unhomely, and its nature can only be determined in relation to the hearth, the source of Being, the source of homeliness itself, a site from which authentic Dasein must be excluded. This knowledge that grasps the historical nature of the human is a *phronesis*, it is a "pointing and meditation that comes from *phronesis*, that is, from the 'heart,' from the

innermost middle of human essence itself" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 107). This *phronein* for Heidegger is poetic and is gleaned through proximity to the hearth's light and the eternal warmth of its flames, in which humans have already gathered collectively. Heidegger suggests that this poetic knowledge is accessible only through the attunement of poetry, and for Heidegger, this knowledge happens through the *Dichtung* of Hölderlin, who poetizes the supreme truth of all gathering and historical dwelling. Above, this knowledge of the hearth was referred to as a "genuine intimation," a form of knowledge that gleans the essence of the homely as an indirect intuitive "sign" or hint into the innermost character of the hearth and Dasein's unique way of belonging to the innermost center of Being. It is also possible to link this intuitive knowledge with Hölderlin's form of "poetic" knowing-thinking, which is primarily the remembering of the belonging to Being, which reveals the authentic orientation to the hearth and Dasein's historical nature, i.e., the thinking that is *Andenken*.

Hölderlin is unhomely in the sense of being cast out from dwellings both divine and human. Therefore, much like us, he must find a home and dwelling in the knowledge that neither realm will ever provide a permanent port of refuge from his uncanny fate. Just as Hölderlin appropriates the vocation bestowed by the divinity, and with it, the burdensome role of living and poetizing as one who is supremely uncanny, so too must Antigone acquiesce to her destiny, which is decreed by a superior power, the law that is beyond both humans and gods. "Antigone is the poem of becoming homely in being unhomely," and in suffering the *deinon*, the human's unhomely essence, she testifies to the authentic historicity of Dasein (Heidegger, 1996, p. 107). Authentic destiny presupposes the fittingness of humanity as determined by the law of Being historical. "Antigone's story begins with her taking knowingly upon herself the necessity of downgoing, her relation to the *deinon*" (McNeill, 2000, p. 183). Her authentic lot is to suffer and bear the unhomely nature that she is (*pathein to deinon*), and this strange, unhomely essence "nevertheless belongs, in an unequivocal manner, to the wordly dwelling of human beings" (p. 184). The phrase "*pathein to deinon*" indicates that Antigone's fated lot as Being-in-the-world *is* to suffer and undergo the terrible. What Antigone takes upon herself when appropriating her historical essence, the human essence, "is that which first bestows ground and necessity upon the distinction of the deed and the priority of blood," and the "ground" of her historical existence manifests and is appropriated in the originary site of history's locale (p. 184).

In the confrontation with Creon, her resolute determination is something far beyond prodigal and defiant acts in the face of Creon's authority. Rather, this taking on of the authentic human essence is "her being-towards death," which is not simply the taking on of her earthly death, but is ultimately "the dying that is belonging to Being" (p. 183). *Deinon* is the proper Being of the human in its "hearty" knowledge that it belongs, always and already in advance, to Being, to the primordial seat of finitude, the holy Earth. "What determines Antigone's actions is not only no mere human ordinance, but lies beyond the upper and lower gods, *Zeus* and *Dike*" (p. 184). In the moment of Being's authentic presencing, she is removed from human possibilities, and "placed in direct conflict over the site of all beings and into a sublation of subsistence of her own life" (p. 184), and this for Heidegger embodies the poetic dwelling of humanity. Antigone's indebtedness to Being, as a singular truth, which in the finite nature of her unique actions simultaneously expresses her belonging to a greater truth to

which humanity stands in relation to by way of the knowledge of Being's truth, destines her Being in advance, inspiring and guiding her destiny. "In knowingly taking upon herself the *deinon*, Antigone first comes to be who she will have been, and the accomplishment of her dwelling, as the fulfillment of her potentiality for Being, becomes the 'being unhomely in coming to be at home'" (p. 184).

Heidegger links Hölderlin's poetizing of human destiny with the ancient festivals of Greece, because his poetry inspires what Heidegger calls the grounding attunement of *das Festliche* ("The Festival"), which is the most primordial form of human attunement that Heidegger identifies, more primordial than *Angst* (McNeill 2006). Whereas *Angst* reveals *world as world*, the overarching system of relations (world), world acquires true historical meaning only when Earth rises up through the work to authenticate the world. The Festival mood reveals *world in its authentic relation to Being*, wherein participants are transported in a state of ecstatic rapture, outside of their everyday ways of being, as a profound sense of wonder permeates their lives. The *Ereignis* is the paradigmatic moment when the holy Earth rises to engulf and transform the everyday world of Dasein. Hölderlin's poetry not only inspires this festive mood, it is also born of it, for The Festival is the supreme encounter of the gods and men, the wedding festival, "from which there issues the birth of those who stand between men and gods and endure this 'between,'" namely, the demigods, the poets like Hölderlin (McNeill, 2006, p. 150).

Heidegger's interpretation of The Festival, as the reawakening of the pervasive sense of the holy, bears directly on Germany's (in the 1940's) overcoming its modern spiritual crisis (Young 2001, 2002; Zimmerman 1990). I conclude this paper by examining the scope of *Dichtung* in relation to German Dasein's authentic heritage/destiny as conceived by Heidegger. Of importance here is the fact that during the "turn," Heidegger worked on the Hölderlin interpretations while concurrently preparing many of the lectures and essays previously discussed. For example, a careful reading of Hölderlin's *Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine,"* reveals that the lecture points in two directions simultaneously, illuminating two possible interpretations of the so-called "Greek paradigm" of art (while also alluding to Hölderlin's questionable role as Germany's poet of the times, i.e., here of the 1930s). On the one hand, there is an early encounter with the Greeks (*Introduction to Metaphysics*), and in this lecture course, Heidegger undoubtedly refers to the classical Greeks. On the other hand, there is a slightly more ambiguous encounter with the Greeks, as philosophized in Hölderlin's *Hymn "The Ister,"* where Heidegger seems to suggest an encounter with the Archaic (Homeric) Greeks. What do the Hölderlin lectures indicate about the scope of *Dichtung*, which influences Heidegger's expanding conception of Dasein's historical destiny, in terms of the future, in terms of an indeterminate event? What does the encounter with Hölderlin say about the authentic heritage of the Greeks, which Heidegger insists must be experienced and retrieved in order for Germany to enact its authentic destiny?

To think of Germany's *Greek heritage* exclusively in terms of the "classical paradigm" of art is perhaps a bit misleading. It is indeed possible, and legitimate, to read Heidegger in terms of expressing a distinction between two historical Greek responses to Being in the Hölderlin lectures: the classical response and the Archaic response, respectively. A reading such as this makes a distinction between Heidegger's early writings on Hölderlin (1934-1936), harkening to the classical paradigm (and the loss of specific Greek gods), and the later writings on Hölderlin, (1936-1954), which appear to

reference an earlier moment in Greek history (Young 2001). However, as opposed to highlighting the distinction between the classical and archaic responses to Being, I am more interested in examining the notion of "Greek" heritage from the perspective of both cultural epochs. By examining the phenomenon that grounds and stimulates the overarching ancient Greek response to Being, the phenomenon that prefigures the emergence of both the classical and archaic periods, it is possible to understand Greek heritage as relating at once to the Greeks of both classical and archaic times, who share, in an important sense, a single (primordial) heritage born of their unique spiritual relationship to the divine forces of the Earth. It is not so much their heritage that differs, as it is the unique response to the call of Being of each cultural age, to the presencing of the "fire from Heaven," which resulted in two distinct historical moments (Young, 2001). For in the Hölderlin lectures (most specifically, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*), Heidegger is thinking about a people's receptivity to their history in the presence of the holy, and the subsequent form-giving response to this moment. It is possible to state that both cultures, both moments in Greek antiquity, are essential to understanding the historical Greek heritage. Inspired by Hölderlin, Heidegger appears to be embracing the older and darker, mysterious forces that simultaneously inspired both the archaic poets (Homer and Hesiod), and also the festivals, competitions, politics, architecture, and poetry of the classical age, stimulating their great accomplishments and destiny.

It is not the return to the classical Greek paradigm of art or the return of the Olympian pantheon that Heidegger seeks for Germany. To reiterate, he is not interested in a classical Greek renaissance, a representation of ancient Greece in modern dress, in the form of a decadent, neo-classicism, an aesthetic model which would have amounted to an inauthentic facade of genuine culture. Such a flawed ideal, formed the basis of his ongoing criticism of National Socialism (Caputo, 1990; Zimmerman 1990). Rather, Heidegger works toward a deeper understanding of their primordial encounter with Being as a sacred event, which represents Germany's true link to the Greeks with the potential for "the other (German) beginning." This is because he seeks a retrieval and beginning that is always unique, new, and singular, in that it is related specifically to the authentic possibilities of a historical people in relation to Being. Presumably, it is possible to locate the greatness of the classical Greeks in their ability to successfully appropriate the heritage poetized by Homer, who first brought the Olympians gods to form and word in response to the archaic Greeks' heritage (the fire from heaven), and this notion of authentic "Greek" heritage appears to be what Heidegger insists is entirely lacking in the spiritually-deprived milieu of modern Europe. If Germany's destiny is to be an authentic world-founding occurrence, the Germans must be opened, via Hölderlin's poetry, to the sense of the holy to motivate and authenticate their gift for giving form to their world through the "clarity of presentation."

The classical Greek paradigm, as envisioned by Heidegger, is representative of a historical response to Being that appears to strike a perfect "Nietzschean" balance between the openness to Being as the "fire" from Heaven (the Dionysian) and the "clarity of presentation" (the Apollonian) required by a culture in order to bring its understanding and experience of Being to stand momentarily in great works, exalted moments of form-giving creative activity, which express that culture's true ecumenical spirit, which always manifests itself and is granted through the resolute dedication to Being. However, what has been said is not intended to discount or deny outright the possibility of the return of

the gods of ancient Greece in new forms (Young, 2001). For the way in which the gods manifest (return) is contingent on the status of the holy and Dasein's relationship to the divine, e.g., Zeus, the Heavenly father, and Apollo, the brilliant sun-god, are for Heidegger temporary forms, cultural embodiments, and unique instantiations of the pervasive, originary manifestation of the holy. The possibility of the gods' return - and this possibility remained alive for Heidegger throughout his philosophical engagement with Hölderlin - hinges on Dasein's authentic reawakening to the source of all divinity, namely Being, or the "fire from Heaven," which (while formless itself) takes on specific forms and attributes unique to the historicity of the culture or civilization, within which the gods are embodied manifestations of the people's authentic relationship to the holy (Bambach 2003).

Despite Homer's poetizing the fate and historicity of the West, Heidegger claims that the archaic Greeks lacked what the classical Greeks possessed in abundance, namely, the gift for "clarity of presentation," e.g., the inspired, creative activity that brought Being to shine in their works of architecture, poetry, and politics. In *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*, Heidegger (1996) emphasizes the foreignness of the Greeks to the Germans (and *vice versa*), stressing that the Germans must become homely in a different manner than either the classical or archaic Greeks. "Hölderlin recognizes that the historicity of those two humankinds is intrinsically different." (p. 124). Just as the Greeks became homely in a unique way, so too must the Germans become homely in a way that is unique to their culture. However, in order to historize, appropriating what is rightfully the tradition and authentic heritage of both Greeks and Germans, "the Germans must be struck by the fire from the Heavens," and this *fire from heaven* is the heritage they share, the relationship to the holy that has been lost and covered-over (p. 136). For only if the Germans are struck by the ancient holy fire will they move toward "the correct appropriation of their own gift for presentation" (p. 136). Heidegger links the incessant modern drive for technological mastery of the world with the German's alienation from their proper relationship to the Earth, and thus they require a poet such as Hölderlin to reawaken the spiritual sense of the holy, to reconnect the culture with the holy fire that once burned so brightly in the ancient skies above Homer and Hesiod. Hölderlin's poetry attempts to reawaken the sense of the holy, the awe and wonder in the presence of the divine Earth, and it is only through his poetry that the law of history manifests itself, and this law manifests itself only to the poet.

Thus, it is Hölderlin's poetry that holds within it the fate of Germany and the West. However, as Heidegger writes in the 1934, a pressing concern, which is reiterated by Heidegger in 1942, Hölderlin's poetry has not yet been understood. The proper heirs and preservers of his poetry have not yet arrived, and so apparently Germany of the 1930s and 1940s will not benefit from the power of his word. Heidegger writes in the 1934-35 lecture course, foreshadowing his extreme dissatisfaction with the National Socialism, "Hölderlin's poems become more inexhaustible, greater, stranger from year to year - and cannot be classified anywhere in an ultimate sense, they still lack their genuine historical and spiritual realm" (Heidegger, 2004, p. 25). Hölderlin, in the later lectures, undoubtedly assumes the role of poet of the future, of the new futural paradigm of art that will be inaugurated by a genuine historical response to his poetry. Gadamer (1990, 1999), interpreting Hölderlin as a future poet, argues that Hölderlin belongs to neither an idealistic, bygone age nor the immediate present of Heidegger's Germany, rather Hölderlin as a poet belonged "to a future which could usher in an overcoming of metaphysics and the

present forgetfulness of Being" (Gadamer, 1990, p. 147). Thus, it is possible that Heidegger is expanding the scope of *Dichtung* and the potential for the destiny beyond Germany in the 1940s, suggesting perhaps a position with global potential in which Hölderlin will someday inspire future poets of Dasein and Being to found and ground a people's destiny on a global scale, through the respectful, awe-inspiring relationship to Being that has been forgotten (or more correctly, never experienced) by Germany and the West in modern times.

It is now possible to understand Heidegger's words, in *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister,"* concerning history, destiny, and the authentic "poetic" dwelling of Dasein on the Earth, as belonging to the Earth, the source of Dasein's Being. Philosophizing the originary appearance of the *polis*, as the site of historicity, he states: "From this site and stead there springs forth whatever is granted stead and whatever is not, what is order and disorder, what is fitting and what is unfitting. For whatever is fitting [*das Schickliche*] determines destiny [*das Geschick*], and such destiny determines history [*die Geschichte*]" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 82). In the moment of the *Ereignis*, in the presence of finitude (the "Nothing"), Dasein's historical nature manifests as if nothing, by way of absence. However, if Dasein is attuned to its nature in this moment through a receptive poetic-knowing, which in a similar manner to Hölderlin (and the Theban elders), "takes in Being in a concentrated perception, a gathering which resembles a listening," it holds the potential for the appropriation of its life, world, and of a new historical time (Heidegger, 1971, p. 223). Thus, Heidegger is undoubtedly stressing the necessity of Dasein's resolute openness to the reticent call of Being, the Earth, and essential language in the moment of the *Ereignis*, which is the time and moment of Dasein's appropriation of its historical nature in the "founding of [historical] Being in the word" (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 59).

In the Earth's becoming homeland, it opens itself to the power of the gods...Where the Earth manifests herself in the disinterestedness of authentic Dasein, she is holy – holy Earth. The holy one, the abyss in which the firmness and the individualness of all grounds retreats and where everything yet finds its way to a constantly dawning new beginning (Heidegger, 2004, p. 105).

This "dawning new beginning" is the language-event in which Dasein receives its new time as that which is founded through its participation in and preservation of the poetry of Hölderlin. As shown, this is first made possible through Hölderlin's measured relation to the holy Earth, which is communicated via the poetry to the Dasein of the people. It is through Hölderlin's poetizing that Dasein is equipped to enact its destiny through a process of measuring itself against that which Hölderlin's poetry first makes manifest, his language first reveals by "naming" anew and again, the Earth. Human finitude is thus meted against the divine in order to first arrive at its proper historical measure and fittingness for its destiny.

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