

HEIDEGGER'S HÖLDERLIN INTERPRETATIONS IN ANDENKEN HYMN: THE FEAST

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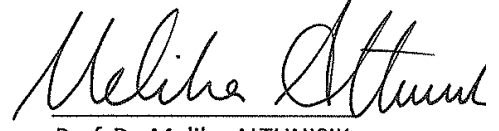
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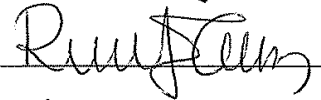
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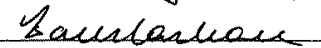
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ABSTRACT

HEIDEGGER'S HÖLDERLIN INTERPRETATIONS IN ANDENKEN HYMN: THE FEAST

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This thesis explores Heidegger's Hölderlin interpretations to exhibit Heidegger's thoughts on history as a destiny of a people. The feast as the occasion of the encounter of gods and men will be set as the inception of the history and the time of the balanced destiny. The course of history will be explained as a result of compliance and accordance with destiny, other than being an output of cause-effect chain.

Keywords: Heidegger, Hölderlin, The Feast, Festive Thinking, Destiny.

ÖZ

HEIDEGGER'İN HÖLDERLİN YORUMLAMALARI: BAYRAM

Arslan, Mahmuthan

Yüksek lisans, Felsefe Bölümü

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Bu çalışma Heidegger'in, Hölderlin şiirine getirdiği yorumlar çerçevesinde, tarihi insanlar ve tanrıların karşılaşmalarının zaman-mekanını oluşturan bayramın ve bu bayramda muvazeneye kavuşan kaderin bir neticesi olarak açıklaması konu edilmiştir. Tarih bir sebep-sonuç zinciri olarak değil, bayramda muvazenesini bulan kadere uyumun hasılası olarak izah edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Heidegger, Hölderlin, Bayram, Bayramsal Düşünce, Kader.

To My Parents

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of Martin Heidegger's works on Hölderlin, with a special emphasis on the thinking of Heidegger about the history as a destiny of a people. Hopefully this first sentence will gain some clarity at the end of this work, only if we succeed to keep in mind through this study that the main concern in Heidegger's works is always the same: The question of Being. Any work of Heidegger, be it a lecture course on Hölderlin's Hymns, or on Schelling's, Hegel's, Kant's philosophy, be it a seminar on pre-socratics, be it criticisms against metaphysics, against logic, against technology; the underlying concern is always the same: The question of Being. Similarly through this work, which is a study of understanding Heidegger's commentaries on Hölderlin's poetry, no literary achievements are aimed; all the concern is to reach to an understanding of the question of Being. This question is not one to be answered, but to be posed again and again, while as we will see through this work that inceptive questioning gives birth to inexhaustible possibilities.

Martin Heidegger is widely accepted as the most influential thinker of the twentieth century. He is mostly known for his discussion of man and Being in his most famous

book "Being and Time"¹. His thinking in "Being and Time" attempts to analyze man in order to reach an understanding of Being². The book is concerned with the meaning of Being in the sense that what should be understood by Being, which is different than beings. To understand Being, the book is mostly working not on Being but on I myself am, or in Heidegger's own word, Dasein. This is because only Dasein has an understanding of Being. *"To say that Dasein exists is to say that is in such a way that it understands being-its own being but also the being of things other than itself to which, as Heidegger will put it, comports itself."*³ Heidegger deepens his work by working on Dasein's existence. The Being of Dasein is Being-in the-World, in the sense of being engaged with things. However the world here does not mean the totality of things, but the web of significance which makes it possible for entities to show themselves or be encountered. So Being-in-the-world is Being-with-others-in-the-world.⁴

The Being of Dasein is "care", in the sense of thrownness, projection and engagement. Thrownness in the sense that Dasein is always already in the world, thrown into world; projection in the sense that Dasein is always ahead of itself, in the sense of projecting itself onto possibilities; Engagement in the sense that Dasein is engaged with entities within the world.⁵ Man or Dasein in Heidegger's words is always aware of himself as being in the world. World belongs to the nature of man

1 Heidegger, Martin; *Sein und Zeit*, Max Niemeyer, Tübingen, 1986.

2 For a brief understanding of "Sein und Zeit" see Joan Stambaugh's "Thoughts on Heidegger" especially division "Heidegger primer".

3 Gorner, Paul; Heidegger's Being and Time An Introduction, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 4

4 Ibid., p.5

5 Ibid., p.6

within which man encounter things and give them their connectedness. Two other ways of being other than Dasein are things and tools.

Dasein's two basic possibilities of being are inauthentic being, meaning that living as others do, do whatever other does. This is the most common way of Dasein's being as the everyday existence. Inauthentic existence means that my possibilities of existence are determined by others. Authentic being occurs only under extreme experiences such as dread or the anticipation of death. Authentic Dasein does not confuse himself with others and lives free for the possibilities that belong to him. Authenticity is a mode in which Dasein comports itself towards death, because the Being of Dasein is being towards death. Death is the most extreme possibility of Dasein in the sense that *"it is the possibility of impossibility of any comportment to anything and in this sense it can not be surpassed"*⁶.

The thinking path in "Being and Time" led Heidegger to the point that care as the being of Dasein has the meaning of being ecstatic temporality. If Being has to be conceived in terms of time as the horizon for all understanding and interpretation of Being, then Being must have an essentially temporal character.⁷ This thought is the end of the first volume of "Being and Time". The second volume, which was originally planned, never appeared.

The Dasein analysis in Sein und Zeit is to reach an understanding of Being. What is meant by Being? This question is forgotten in the history of western philosophy while philosophers were preoccupied with beings. The history of philosophy is the history of the oblivion of Being according to Heidegger. Philosophy has forgotten to

6 Ibid., p.8

7 Ibid., p.12

ask the meaning of Being while it only thought on beings. But for Heidegger Being and beings are not the same. Yet we do not see in “Sein und Zeit” the answer of the meaning of Being. The reason of not publishing the second volume leads us to the problem of metaphysics.

In letter on Humanism, Heidegger says that the language in “Sein und Zeit” is the language of metaphysics and failed in thinking the meaning of Being.⁸ From that point we can move to Heidegger's criticism on metaphysics. The history of philosophy as the history of metaphysics is the history of the oblivion of Being according to Heidegger, as we said above. In Heidegger's own words,

In the history of western thinking, indeed continually from the beginning, what is, is thought in reference to Being; yet the truth of Being remains unthought, and not only is that truth denied to thinking as a possible experience, but western thinking itself, and indeed in the form of metaphysics, expressly, but nevertheless unknowingly, veils the happening of that denial.⁹

Metaphysics has concerned exclusively with beings, and it understood Being as the ground of beings. Understanding Being as the first and most common ground of beings; and grasping Being as the Highest ground and the ultimate ground, metaphysics is onto-theo-logy. Ben Vedder in his “Heidegger's Philosophy of Religion” puts it as follows:

The logos as a logic is seen as the exclusive entrance to being in metaphysics and marks the execution of an unspoken decision. For Heidegger, the logos in its original meaning is 'the gathering of beings and letting them be'. The logos structures that which is into a possible unity or connection(ordo entium). In its turn the connection motivates the search for foundations and dependencies. Something is not accepted as a being until it is presented as founded in something else; in this way the whole refers to a last, all-founding ground. The anticipation of this founding of the whole lies in logos. In this way the tendency toward something like unity, ground, and foundation is laid in the logos....As ontology, metaphysics thinks being in an

8 Heidegger, Martin; "Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank Capuzzi and J. Glenn Gray, in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Krell, New York, Harper & Row, 1977, p. 208.

9 Heidegger, Martin; *Question Concerning Technology and other Essays*, p.56.

undetermined and general way, as that which is merely and purely present(ousia). As theology, it understands this being of pure presence as caused by the highest being. Therefore metaphysics thinks 'of the Being of beings both in the ground-giving unity of what is most general, what is indifferently everywhere, and also in the unity of the all that accounts for the ground, that is, of the All-Highest'.¹⁰

Actually when metaphysics is understood as the history of the oblivion of Being, then Heidegger's attempt to find another way of thinking makes sense, while Heidegger's aim is to understand Being. But Heidegger implies that metaphysics has come to an end through Nietzsche. *"Through the overturning of metaphysics accomplished by Nietzsche, there remains for metaphysics nothing but a turning aside into its own inessentiality and disarray".¹¹* Western metaphysics reaches its peak with Nietzsche and end in Nihilism, according to Heidegger. Ben Vedder understands this end as

Heidegger understands Nietzsche's thoughts as the completion of Western metaphysics. This completion does not mean that Nietzsche no longer belongs to metaphysics; on the contrary, the completion belongs to it as the end belongs to a route that has to be covered.¹²

Although the focus point of this thesis is not Heidegger's criticism on metaphysics, yet we can summarize it as follows: According to Nietzsche the old values are devaluing themselves. This Nietzsche puts as in his famous sentence "God is dead." Nietzsche sees this, an opportunity to put new values instead. Positing new values instead of the older ones or value-positing in general is grounded according to Heidegger in the "will to power". Heidegger shows that will to power is the will to will; that it wills itself. Nietzsche's metaphysics of will to power posits Being as a value, but this value is posited by the will to power and still Being is not thought in

10 Vedder, Ben; Heidegger's Philosophy of Religion From God to the Gods, Duquesne University press, Pittsburg, 2006, p.134.

11 Heidegger, Martin; Question Concerning Technology and other Essays, p.53.

12 Vedder, Ben; Heidegger's philosophy of Religion, p.134.

terms of itself. This is the peak of western metaphysics and it is pure nihilism, while *“the value-thinking of metaphysics is murderous in a most extreme sense, because it absolutely does not let Being itself take its rise, i.e., come into the vitality of its essence.”*¹³

We have seen that western metaphysics has not thought and can not think Being itself; this thinking has led to nihilism as such. This thinking as the will to power and the will to will ended in the domination of a technological world order in which the world become a source for raw material. This is the end of philosophy according to Heidegger that a new thinking is imposing itself as a necessity.

Heidegger's criticisms on Nietzsche's metaphysics are crucial since the need for another way for thinking, which is a main argument of Heidegger, become obvious when metaphysics is understood as a failure in thinking Being. We consequently should better pay heed how Heidegger interprets Nietzsche's philosophy:

*Will to Power, Nihilism, the eternal return of the same, the overman, the justness are the five base words of Nietzsche's metaphysics. “The Will to power” is the word for the Being of beings as such, the essentia of beings. “Nihilism” names the history of the truth of so determined beings. “The eternal return of the same” names the manner how being in totality is, the existentia of beings. “The overman” describes the humanity demanded by all these. “Justness” is the nature of the truth of beings as will to power.*¹⁴

We see that Heidegger frames Nietzsche's thinking by these five basic principles.

Heidegger analyses these principles thoroughly one by one. Heidegger says that will

13 Heidegger, Martin; Question Concerning Technology and other Essays, p.108.

14 “>>Der Wille zur Macht<<, >>Der Nihilismus<<, >> Die ewige Wiederkunft des Gleichen<<, >>der Übermensch<<, >>die Gerechtigkeit<< sind die fünf Grundworte der Metaphysik Nietzsches. >>Der Wille zur Macht<< nennt das Wort für das Sein des Seienden als solchen, die essentia des Seienden. >>Nihilismus<< ist der Name für die Geschichte der Wahrheit des so bestimmten Seienden. >>Ewige Wiederkunft des Gleichen<< heisst die Weise, wie das Seiende im Ganzen ist, die existentia des Seienden.>>Der Übermensch<< bezeichnet jenes Menschentums, das von diesem Ganzen gefordert wird. >>Gerechtigkeit<< ist das Wesen der Wahrheit des Seienden als Wille zur Macht.” Heidegger, Martin; GA 50 1.Nietzsches Metaphysik 2. Einleitung in die Philosophie Denken und Dichten, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1990,p.6.

to power for Nietzsche is the basic character of Being. What is will to power? This principle needs further attention. Power is power, according to Heidegger, only as long as it exceeds its power level. Overpowering itself is the basic character of power. This power is the aim of the will. Since will needs this aim, in the nature of the will prevails a fear from emptiness. In the emptiness lies the extinguish of the will. That is why the will wills even *nothing*, instead of not-willing. Since the will to nothing is still a will while not-willing is the end of will. So even willing the negation of the world only a covered will to power.¹⁵

The will to power needs to reach and secure a power level in order to overpower, to rise above it. In order to empower itself, power needs to command the conditions of rising above and securing. These conditions that are determined by power are the viewpoints of values. The will to power is in itself *value-positing*. The will to power is the will that wills value. This thinking is according to Heidegger a value thought.¹⁶ The will to power as the basic character of beings is then the measure-determining value. The will to power posits value as revaluing the previous values. Heidegger sees the full nature of nihilism in this revaluing. This revaluing is not an occurrence between others, but the basic event of western history. Since the old values are revalued, God is dead and that means the transcendental is dead; the crown of God is displaced by the authority of the "conscience", the "reign" of "reason", the "god" of the historical "progress" or of the "social instinct".¹⁷ But the devaluing of old

15 Ibid., p. 13-15.

16 Ibid. p. 19

17 Ibid., p. 24

values increase the need for a truth for beings. The revaluing is now revaluing values as the conditions for will to power. Consequently, revaluing is a re-thinking of beings as value. The basic character of beings is now the will to power. Nihilism is then the title for the history of metaphysics that ended in the metaphysics of the will to power.¹⁸ This value-thinking of Nietzsche is according to Ben Vedder leads to nihilism as such; as

Nietzsche understands Nihilism negatively as devaluation of old values, and positively as the revaluation of values, then the will to power becomes the origin and measure of all founding, giving and lending of value. In that case Being is a value given by man, Being is in and of itself is nothing; it gets its value from the value-founding will to power. The value foundation of the will to power then merely intensifies Nihilism as Heidegger understands it¹⁹.

Accordingly, the being which has the will to power as the basic character of itself has to be the eternal return of the same and the being which is the eternal return of the same has to have the will to power as its basic character.²⁰

The truth about beings as such has to be undertaken and preserved by a humanity. The man that behaves in accordance with the being that is the eternal return of the same and has the will to power as its basic character is the overman. The new humanity in between beings that are will to power has to will overman. The overman is the highest subject of the completed subjectivity of the will to power. *“The overman lives as the new humanity wills the Being of beings as will to power. It wills this Being while it is willed “by” this Being, that means it is delivered*

18 Ibid., p. 30.

19 Vedder, Ben; Heidegger's Philosophy of Religion, p.148-149.

20 Heidegger, Martin; GA 50 1. Nietzsches Metaphysik 2. Einleitung in die Philosophie Denken und Dichten, p. 32

*unconditionally as humanity.*²¹ The overman puts the nature of the will to power into the will of a humanity that in that will it wills itself as the lord of the earth. The truth of beings as such will be determined through will to power and the eternal return of the same. This truth will be preserved by overman. The history of the truth of beings and the history of this humanity has nihilism as the ground.²²

To understand “justness” in Nietzsche’s metaphysics, one has to forget the christian, humanist, enlightenment, citizen or socialist views of “right”. Right for Nietzsche is the will, a relative power relation to eternalise. Justness is then the ability to set a so understood right, in other words to will that kind of a will. This will can only be the will to power.²³

For Heidegger Nietzsche is the name of a world period: The age of prevailing and arranging the sovereignty of man over the earth. The man as the subject of production. The earth as the core block of the concreteness of world-utilization: the oblivion of Being.²⁴

To summarize the arguments above; we can say that Heidegger's main problem that he made the focus of his thinking throughout his whole life is the problem of the meaning of Being. Being is different than beings. The western philosophy under the name of metaphysics has failed in thinking the meaning of Being and resulted in the Nihilism of Nietzsche. Heidegger sees the deepest destiny of the history of the west

21 “Der >>Übermensch<< >>lebt<<, indem das neue Menschentum das Sein des Seienden als den Willen zur Macht will. Es >>will<< dieses Sein, weil es selbst >>von<< diesem Sein gewillt, d.h. Als Menschentum sich selbst unbedingt überlassen wird.” Ibid., p. 51

22 Ibid., p.59

23 Ibid., p.72

24 Ibid., p.85

speaking in Nietzsche's philosophy.²⁵ To avoid this nihilism a new thinking is necessary. But is that possible?

Heidegger named a division of his book on Nietzsche as "The god- and worldlessness of modern man as Nietzsche's fundamental experience"²⁶. Heidegger goes to the depths of Nietzsche's thought and tries to understand the fundamental attunement determining his philosophy. Nietzsche's "*almost two thousand years and not a single new god!*" is the *one word* that for Heidegger indicates Nietzsche's fundamental experience.²⁷ Because for Nietzsche gods are the products of human creativity. That the man is the achiever of his self-fulfillment, then everything become object. In other words when man stands up(aufstand) as the will that wills its self, then the things become objects.

The rebelling(im aufstand) man and the world as the object(gegenstand) belong together. The deepest nature of objectifying which is still concealed is technology.²⁸ The nature of willing rebels in the form of Zarathustra. He is the highest rebellion of the modern nature of man. In the form of Zarathustra the nature of the unconditioned subjectivity as the self-willing will shines for himself. The man of this nature leaves behind the previous man.²⁹

The possibility of a thinking of Being stems from our relationship with gods. Nietzsche told us that God is dead. The Death of God give the possibility to revalue,

25 Ibid., p. 106

26 Ibid., p.105

27 Ibid., p.107

28 Ibid., p.111

29 Ibid., p.126

but it does not release from nihilism as Heidegger shows us. But what if gods are not dead, what if they have fled instead?

CHAPTER 2

2. POETRY AND THINKING

“Whether the call of the 'godly' of the most distanced god will meet and awaken the participants? Whether poetizing and thinking, freed from the foreign sphere of the literary and the cultural, will be able to transfer their own determinations to each other? This is the concern of my thinking”³⁰ These sentences are from Heidegger's last letter to Imma von Bodmershof, dated as February 10, 1976. Heidegger died in May 26 of this very same year. Heidegger mentions in this letter how the first three verses of Hölderlin's “Die Titanen” hymn occupies his mind constantly;

*it is not but
The time. Still are they
Unattached. The Godly does not meet the inparticipant.*

Martin Heidegger's interest in Hölderlin's poetry can be traced back to 1934. It is more than forty years that Heidegger thought on Hölderlin's poetry or he developed his thinking on Hölderlin's verses. Heidegger also meditated on Georg Trakl's, Stefan George's, Goethe's and Rilke's poems. Why does a thinker put poetry into the center of his meditations? We should keep in mind that Heidegger thought immensely on the nature of Language and the relationship between language and

³⁰ Pieger, Bruno; Martin Heidegger-Imma von Bodmershof Briefwechsel 1959-1976, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart, 2000. The German original is as follows: “Ob der Ruf des >>Göttlichen<< des fernsten Gottes noch Teilnehmende trifft und weckt? Ob Dichten und Denken zuvor aus dem fremden Bezirk des Literarischen und Kulturellen befreit und ihrer eigenen Bestimmung übereignet werden können? Dies ist die Sorge meines Denkens-”

the world. Heidegger wrote in "Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache" that "due to Language and only due to it prevails the world- *is* being."³¹ For Heidegger Language is a world-establishing power. The original language is the language of poetry.³² Obviously Heidegger puts poetry in the middle whenever he meditates on the nature of Language. How should we understand this?

*"Language speaks./Man speaks as long as he complies with Language./ The Compliance is hearing."*³³ Heidegger's thinking says that man has to listen to the Language itself in order to speak properly. Because Language is wise, and it speaks Being. The Genuine listening of Language is poetry. Poet is the one who listens properly and utters the word of Language. Language speaks in the poem. In this speaking Being is spoken. To understand this we may pay attention to Heidegger's article titled "Language" in "Poetry, Language, Thought".³⁴ In this article Heidegger puts one of Georg Trakl's poem at the center of his meditations in order to show the nature of Language. The poem is as follows³⁵:

*A WINTER'S EVE
When snow falls against the window
Long the evening bell keeps tolling
Many find their table ready
And the house is well supplied.*

*Many a wanderer on his journey
Comes by dark paths to the doorway.*

31 "Kraft der Sprache und nur Kraft ihrer waltet die Welt- *ist* Seiendes". GA 38. p. 168.

32 "Die ursprüngliche Sprache ist die Sprache der Dichtung". Ibid., p.168.

33 "Die Sprache spricht./Der Mensch spricht, insofern er der Sprache entspricht. Das Entsprechen ist Hören." in Trawny, Peter; Martin Heidegger, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 2003.

34 Heidegger, Martin; Poetry, Language, Thought,(trans. Albert Hofstadter), Harper and Row, New York, 1975. p.187-210

35 Trakl, Georg; Poems and Prose, (trans. Alexander Stillmark) Northwestern University Press, Illinois, 2005.

*Golden flowers the tree of bounty
Out of the cool sap of earth.*

*Wanderer steps silent indoors;
Pain has petrified the threshold.
Then shines out in purest radiance
On the table bread and wine.*

The poem seems to describe a winter evening where the dinner table is ready for the people coming home. But for Heidegger this is not hearing the Language, since poem is the purely spoken Language. What does this poem say?

The speaking Language in this poem, names things, as naming the snow or the bell, this naming is a call. This call is calling to a nearness in which things bear upon men as things.

The snowfall brings men under the sky that is darkening into night. The tolling of the evening bell brings them, as mortals, before the divine. House and table join mortals to the earth. The things that were named, thus called, gather to themselves sky and earth, mortals and divinities. The four are united primarily in being toward one another, a fourfold. The things let the fourfold of the four stay with them. This gathering, assembling, letting-stay is the thinging of things. The unitary fourfold of sky and earth, mortals and divinities, which is stayed in the thinging of things, we call- the world.³⁶

When poem utters the purely spoken language, Being as the unity of the four; sky and earth, mortals and divinities is spoken.

We have seen up to now that Heidegger's thinking is an attempt to pose the question of Being, which is different from beings. This question is ignored by metaphysics, while it is preoccupied with beings. Metaphysics has come to an end with Nietzsche by positing Being as a value, a matter of will to power. Therefore a different path should be taken to the question of Being. This path is the way to language, while language is wise and speaks Being, when properly listened. The purely spoken language is poetry. Therefore we have to learn to pay attention to

36 Heidegger, Martin; Poetry, Language, Thought, p.199.

what is spoken in poetry, of course here genuine poetry is addressed. Because there is an inner relationship between thinking and poetry. For Heidegger says that it is the property of thinker and the poet to receive the reflection from the word and put it into the saying, so that the thinker and the poet are the true protectors of the word in the language.³⁷

At this point we remember that Nietzsche's philosophy is said to be poetic, because of its style. Heidegger points that there is a relation between Nietzsche's thinking and Hölderlin's poetry: *"With both names we name a thinker and a poet who directly dealt with our era in a hardly penetrable manner, while they presumably – each in his own way- reached beyond us."*³⁸ The relation between Nietzsche's thinking and Hölderlin's poetry is but not a relation of similarity:

*Nietzsche is the thinker who thinks what now is. Hölderlin is the poet who poetizes what now is. But what Nietzsche thinks and what Hölderlin poetizes, stay endlessly different. Does it have to be, what one thinks and what one poetizes, the same? It has to be, what is? Then must in what is, that means in "Being" itself, an endless difference be concealed.*³⁹

37 Heidegger, Martin; GA50, p. 94

38 "Mit den beiden Namen nennen wir überdies einen Denker und einen Dichter, die unser Zeitalter in einer noch kaum durchschaubaren Weise unmittelbar angehen, weil sie vermutlich-jeder in seiner Art- über uns hinausgehen". Ibid., p.96

39 "Nietzsche ist derjenige Denker, der denkt, was jetzt ist. Hölderlin ist derjenige Dichter, der dichtet, was jetzt ist. Gleichwohl bleibt das, was Nietzsche denkt und was Hölderlin dichtet, unendlich verschieden. Dennoch soll es das Selbe sein, was der Eine denkt und was der Andere dichtet? Es soll das sein, was ist? Dann müsste in dem was ist, d.h. im>>Sein<< selbst, sich ein unendlicher Unterschied verbergen." Ibid., p.103.

CHAPTER 3

3. HÖLDERLIN AS THE MOST UNMETAPHYSICAL POET

*Full of merit, yet poetically
dwells man on this world.*

These verses are from Hölderlin's "In lovely blue" poem. For Heidegger these verses are crucial in understanding man in this world. Among poets Hölderlin has a unique place for Heidegger.

Heidegger's ontology of language relies largely upon the work of Friedrich Hölderlin, whose poetry Heidegger understands as giving 'voice' to Being in a peculiar proximity. For Heidegger, Hölderlin's articulations are not those of a subject 'expressing' a meaning (according to the classical theory of language from Aristotle to Husserl), but rather those of a poet whose 'remembrance' recalls a sense of Being metaphysics has forgotten. Heidegger argues that Hölderlin's language is of Being, beyond the self as defined by humanist notions of subjectivity which reduce Being, along with beings, to the subject's objectifying examination.⁴⁰

Heidegger himself named Hölderlin's poetry as a destiny for the German people:

"Hölderlin's poetry is a destiny for us. It waits for the day when mortals will correspond to it.

What does Hölderlin's poetry say? Its word is: the holy. This word speaks of the flight of the gods. It says that the gods who have fled protect us, until we are inclined and able to dwell in their nearness. To be a place of nearness characterizes the homeland. And so it remains necessary to prepare a sojourn in this nearness. Thus

40 Ridling, Zaine; *The Lightness of Being: A Comprehensive Study of Heidegger's Thought*, Access Foundation, Kansas City, 2001. p.v.

we accomplish the first step on a path which leads us to where we may correspond appropriately to the destiny which is Hölderlin's poetry. Only thereby might we attain to the outer border of the place where "the God of gods" appears. For no human calculation and activity, in and of itself, can bring about a turn in the present world condition; one reason for this is the fact that the whole of man's activity has been stamped by this world condition and has come under its power. How then should he ever become master of it?

Hölderlin's poetry is a destiny for us. It waits for the day when mortals will correspond to it. Correspondence leads on the path of an entry into the nearness of the gods who have fled: the region of their flight will protect us.

Yet how are we to understand and retain all this? By listening to Hölderlin's poetry."⁴¹

This text contains almost all key features of Heidegger's understanding of Hölderlin. If we remember that Nietzsche said that "God is dead", we can see the difference between Nietzsche and Hölderlin. For Hölderlin, the gods have left the world and the world's age is declining toward its night. The gods have left means that no god gathers men and things unto himself and by this gathering disposes the world history and man's sojourn in it.⁴² But unlike Nietzsche, Hölderlin is in expectation of the return of Gods when the right time comes.

Hölderlin as a poet is unique among other poets for Heidegger. The following sentences may give a clue for how unique he is: *"The homeland not and not the christianity, not even the 'metaphysical' (in the sense of the transcendental*

41 Heidegger, Martin; *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, (trans. Keith Hoeller), Humanity Books, New York, 2000. p.224.

42 See "What are poets for?" in "Poetry, language, Thought" p.91.

prevailing in all perceptible things) is enough to signify the founding range of Hölderlin, let alone to pre-think in it."⁴³ We see that the poet is a founder for Heidegger, that in his poetry an essential uniqueness of historical moment is experienced.⁴⁴ The poet then poetizes the future time in the sense of founding it. That poet's fundamental attunement is then a knowledge from the sphere of the decision between the godlessness of beings in the meaning of an essential powerlessness to establish an inceptive god, and founding a godness of gods,- a knowledge from the nearness of an essential and historical godlessness of history.⁴⁵ Hölderlin's poetry is so essential that his contemporaries Hegel and Schelling, and especially Hegel, were not wise and curious enough to understand him.⁴⁶

How did this philosophy of Heidegger come to Hölderlin, which originally asked the meaning of Being? We remember that Heidegger began asking the meaning of Being, and to gain an understanding of Being he explored the basic conditions of human Dasein. He realized that the language in "Being and Time" does not lead him to the meaning of Being while that language is metaphysical. Now the language in "Being and Time" and of Hölderlin is the same German language, how then the language in "Being and Time" can fail? The problem then is the logic of this thinking, the logic of it must be metaphysical. We see that Heidegger's criticism

43 "Das *Vaterland* nicht und nicht das *Christendum*, auch nicht das >>Metaphysische<< (in der Bedeutung des alles Sinnliche durchwalten Übersinnlichen) reichen zu, um den Stiftungsbereich Hölderlins auch nur anzudeuten, geschweige denn in ihn vorzudenken." Heidegger Martin; Zu Hölderlin – Griechenlandreisen, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 2000, p.5

44 Ibid., p.5

45 Ibid., p.7

46 Ibid. p.8

against metaphysics is especially against the logic itself that he devoted many lectures to this criticism. Since both thinking and poetry originates from language, they are in an essential relatedness. That is why Heidegger attends poetry for a gateway to escape metaphysics. Poetry, we can assume then, is for Heidegger to eliminate the logic of metaphysics without leaving the sphere of Language. Hölderlin's poetry is significant not for its esthetic qualities, it has more than that. It's because Hölderlin's poetry is a call to gods where the modern man, as Nietzsche puts it, murdered god. Here the gods do not signify the transcendental; gods as immortals who have the heaven as their place and the men as mortals who dwells on earth constitute the unity of the fourfold of the four as Being.

CHAPTER 4

4. HÖLDERLIN'S TIME

*It is not yet
the time. Still are they
unattached. The godly does not meet the inparticipant.*

In his "Die Titanen" hymne, Hölderlin says that it is not yet the time. It is not yet the time for what? The gods are no long with us; they have fled, and it is not yet the time. For Heidegger *"how long it is not the time, how long we cannot experience who we are. As long as we are not participants, as long as we are unattached. Participation and attachment make the necessary conditions so that it is the time for us."*⁴⁷ What we understand from those mysterious words is that participation and attachment is necessary for the arrival of the proper time. But participating to what? According to Heidegger's interpretation, participation is in poet's sense what arranges our Dasein in a way that in it it is all about being and not-being. So when participation or 'care' is mentioned, it means that this is the necessary condition for the time, where the godly ones meet, where the thunderbolt strikes. When it is the mission of poetry to carry this thunderbolt covered up with words into the dasein of the people, then this word speaks to us only when we participate to the poetry, in

47 Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlin's Hymnen >>Germanien<< und >>Der Rhein<<, p.57

other words, to conversation.⁴⁸ Participating to conversation? Why?

For Hölderlin we are already a conversation. Let's hear it from "Versöhnender, der du nimmer geglaubt...":

*Man experienced many,
and named many heavenly,
since a conversation we are
And can hear from each other.*

What does it mean that we are a conversation? Heidegger interpretes man's being a conversation as being a language incidence. We are a language incidence and this incidence is temporal not in the sense that it has a beginning and an end, but that the language incidence is the inception and the ground of the real historical time of man. Since this conversation (Gespraech) occurs, is time and history. This inceptive conversation is poetry, and "*poetically dwells man/ on this world*"⁴⁹

Heidegger summarizes Hölderlin's conceiving language and poetry as such: First of all language is the most dangerous good given to man while it puts man in the realm of being and not-being. Language is dangerous also in the sense that it carries in itself the corruption, as being a repetition of what is already said or being a loose talk. Language also determines and grounds dasein of man in a way that he stands and resists in essential relations. Language can also be a means of facing gods blasphemously to establish a direct relationship to gods. Language has man not man has language. Finally poetry establishes being. Poetry is the proto-language (ursprache) of a people. In this language occurs the exposure of man to beings that open themselves. As the enforcement of this exposure man is historical. Language is

48 ibid. p.58.

49 ibid. p.69-70.

the ground of the possibility of history, not an invention of man in the course of history.⁵⁰

It is not yet the time, for Hölderlin, because the German people is unattached and they do not participate to the conversation yet. For the attachment and participation, a proper mood is necessary; in other words the fundamental attunement of the people has to be the apt one. First of all the flight of the gods has to be experienced, and this experience has to lead the Dasein into a fundamental attunement in which a historical people perseveres the destitution of her godlessness and disruption.

Though first must man purely experience the loss of god, without trying excuses and temporary help, and without making this godlessness an opinion and argument, but recognize in it a destiny, from which a gate to gods will be established, a gate that proves that even gods stay under the presence and unpresence and that they belong to the Being that prevails over them.⁵¹

This fundamental attunement is the one in which the poet finds in the historical Dasein of the people.⁵² The fundamental attunement is not a matter of feelings, nor is it a temporary state of mood; it is an essential attunement in which beings open themselves to Dasein. The fundamental attunement does not settle in the object or in the subject, on the contrary, we are displaced in the fundamental attunement together with beings. Attunements are drastically surrounding powers that covers things and us at once.⁵³

50 Ibid. p.74-75.

51 "Doch erst muss der Mensch den Fehl Gottes rein erfahren, ohne sich in Ausflüchte und Aushilfen zu retten, ohne aber auch die Gottlosigkeit zu einer Meinung und Ansicht zu machen, statt in ihr ein Geschick zu erkennen, aus dem ein Weggang wiederum bezeugt, dass auch die Götter noch unter An- und Abwesenung stehen und dem Seyn gehören, das *über* ihnen west." Heidegger, Martin; Zu Hölderlin-Griechenlandreise, p.39

52 Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlins Hymnen >>Germanien<< und >>Der Rhein<<, p. 80.

To conceive the fundamentality of the fundamental attunement properly, we need to pay attention to the following quotation from Heidegger:

The prevailing fundamental attunement at a certain time and the disclosing of being in totality taking place in this attunement is the origin of the determination of what we call the truth of a people. The truth of the people is the respective openness of Being in totality, according to which the carrying and joining and leading powers receive their ranks and obtain their unanimity. The truth of the people is the openness of Being, from which the people know what he historically(geschichtlich) wills, that he wills himself, that he wants to be himself.⁵⁴

The proper fundamental attunement for the German people in this godless time is for Hölderlin the holy grief. Since the old gods are gone, the holy grief is determined to disclaim the old gods; but in this disclaim the holy grief preserves the godliness of the old gods untouched and keeps itself near to their godliness while the gods themselves are already gone. That the gods have fled does not mean that their godness has disappeared from man's Dasein; on the contrary it presides, but as a no more fulfilled, as a darkening and dark, but still powerful. Renouncing old gods, bearing this renounce is preserving their godliness.⁵⁵ We can say that the holy grief as the fundamental attunement of a people in a godless age is a mood in which the people still feel the need of gods and are in expectation of their existence while the gods are already gone.

Yet time is necessary till the loss of gods helps. First of all the saying of the poet has to be heard by a few people. After that the interpretation of this saying has to be secured in the unspoken. Much more time is necessary until the poetized complies

53 *ibid.* p.89. For a detailed analysis of fundamental attunement see: Heidegger's "An Introduction to Philosophy World, Finitude, Solitude"

54 *ibid.* p. 144.

55 *ibid.* p. 95.

with the presence of the arrival.⁵⁶ This time is not of the historical time measure, this time is one in which the destiny of a people is decided out of the destiny of the compliance of Being. This time as the “years of the peoples” are of another kind that are determined by the message of the gods who decide when is the “time”. Hölderlin says this as such,⁵⁷

*Strictly limited is our lifetime,
numbers of our years we see and count
but the years of peoples,
any mortal eye saw it?*

Here what Hölderlin is thinking is the years of “Völker”, the “Geschichte” of the German people. This history as “Geschichte” for Heidegger is not the relation of cause and effect, but the arrival and the absence of the fate which each time incipiently comes about from the totality of destiny.⁵⁸

At this point the counter positions of Nietzsche and Hölderlin become more clear. Nietzsche prepares the world in which the gods will never appear again. Hölderlin on the contrary is thinking the new meeting with gods. Heidegger's claim is that Nietzsche's position is nihilism as such and it leads to nowhere. This can be understood from the point of view that Being is the fourfold of Gods and man, heavens and earth. Nietzsche lacks gods and heaven in his life understanding, while Hölderlin still insists on the necessity of gods.

Once again we see that Heidegger underlies the importance of Hölderlin's poetry in relation to fundamental attunement. Since the proper mood, the fundamental

56 Heidegger, Martin; Zu Hölderlin-Griechenlandreise, p.39

57 Ibid., p.39-40

58 Ibid., p.40

attunement does not arise itself alone, since the unproper mood has to be changed and the proper one has to be arranged, the firstborns have to be victimized. These are the poets that pronounce the future Being of the people in their sayings and are necessarily ignored. Hölderlin is for Heidegger one of these poets, the most important, that arouse the fundamental attunement of holy grief, in which the flight, absence and arrival of gods disclose in this fundamental attunement. This disclosure puts the people in a frame that in it the question 'if and how the people will build its historical (geschichtlich) dasein on an originary and unitary experience of binding back to gods' arises.⁵⁹

59 . Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlins Hymnen >>Germanien<< und >>Der Rhein<<, p. 146-147.

CHAPTER 5

5. THE PEOPLE AND THE HOMELAND

If language speaks Being, which language is this? Although language is a universal incidence, obviously every people has its own language. Every people has its own language and between these languages there are also intranslatable fundamental differences. How Does Being dwells in these languages, if language is the house of Being?

Those questions may take us far away from our subject here, therefore shortly we may speculate from Heidegger's writings that Heidegger's thinking is neither a universal nor a humanist thinking. Heidegger's concern here is the german people; the west as widest, the destiny of "*Abendland*" is his concern. In that sense Heidegger's thinking should always be thought as a thinking on the history and the destiny of the german people. This is actually a necessity of Heidegger's thinking, because when a thinking is grounded on what language says, then this thinking already bounds itself by the border of this language and this border also borders a specific piece of land.

What is the consequence of this boundaries? Do they constitute a failure for Heidegger's thinking? If Heidegger only concerns with the german people, why should we bother to think on all these matters posed by him?

Every language reveals Being in a unique way. Although Heidegger concerns with the destiny of the west, his thinking shows that every people has to find what is allotted to them; this thinking actually explains the difference of people. What is ownmost to a people is fundamentally different from others. In that sense, a human society becomes a people according to Heidegger, when it seeks for what is ownmost to it: *“A nation first become a people when those who are its most unique ones arrive and begin to intimate. Thus a people first becomes free for its law, which it must struggle for, as the ultimate necessity for its most noble moment.”*⁶⁰ Thus, there is no given peopleness of a people out of its search of what is its ownmost. The people *is*, in its search of what is its ownmost, in the search of what is allotted to it, in its search of its destiny and its gods.

*A people is only a people when it receives its history as apportioned in the finding of its god-that god who pressures the people to go beyond itself and thus to become a being. Only then does a people avoid the danger of circling round itself and of idolizing as its unconditioned what are only conditions for its existence.*⁶¹

We may here from Hölderlin about the peoples;

*Therefore, to stand worthily in the presence of the gods,
Nations rise in splendid order and beautiful
Temples and cities are built, strong and noble, which rise
Above the banks of the waters-*⁶²

The homeland is then, the place where the people is in its search of its destiny, where man dwells poetically. In other words, *“the homeland is the historical place in which the ownmost has to be found”*.⁶³ These meditations of Heidegger points that

60 Heidegger, Martin; Contributions to Philosophy, p.30.

61 Ibid., p.279.

62 Hölderlin, Bread and Wine. Translation from website:<http://www.poemhunter.com/poem/bread-and-wine-4/>

neither the people nor the homeland is given. These are thought in relation to the gods, in relation to the ownmost, in relation to the Holy. In these context is the homeland for Hölderlin the Highest: “ *the Highest is the homeland in so far as it springs forth from the Highest, that is, from the Holy and finds that as the essential spring of its ownmost...*”⁶⁴ We see that the homeland, the holy, the ownmost are used sometimes as the same thing both by Heidegger and by Hölderlin;

*Once I have asked the muse, and she
answered me
At the end will you find it.
About the Highest I wish to remain silent.
The forbidden fruit, as the Laurel, is but
mostly the homeland. But tastes it
Someone at last.*⁶⁵

Heidegger interpreted the uncompleted poem above as follows; “*The ownmost, the homeland is the highest, but that is why its mostly forbidden. This is the reason that it is found at the end, after long searching, after lots of victims and hard services.*”⁶⁶

We see that the homeland and the ownmost is thought as the same, or both are thought in relation to the holy.

We should now take a break and think on the way we have come up to now in order not to lose the direction we are going. This thesis aims to reveal Heidegger's understanding of history as a destiny of a people. We said in the beginning that the

63 “Der geschichtliche Ort, an dem das Eigene gefunden werden soll, ist das Vaterland.” Helting, Holter; Heidegger's Auslegung von Hölderlin's Dichtung des Heiligen, p.309

64 “Das Höchste ist das Vaterland nur, sofern es und sobald es aus dem Höchsten, d.h. aus dem Heiligen stammt und dieser eigenste Ursprung als sein Eigenliches gefunden ist,..” Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlin's Hymne “Andenken”, p.141.

65 Uncompleted Hymne by Hölderlin in Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlin's Hymne “Andenken”, p.134. I have translated it to English.

66 “Das Eigenste, das Vaterland, ist das Höchste, aber deshalb das am meisten Verbotene. Deshalb wird es erst am Ende gefunden, nach landem Suchen, nach vielen Opfern und harten Diensten.” Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlin's Hymne “Andenken”, p.134

main question for Heidegger is the question of Being, which is ignored by metaphysics throughout its history from Plato to Nietzsche. Since Nietzsche exhausted the other possibilities for metaphysics and ended in Nihilism, a different thinking is now necessary. This thinking comes from poetry, due to its unique relation to language. The poet hears from the language about Being, about the fourfold of the divines and the mortals, heavens and the earth. The poet tells us that, this poet is Hölderlin, although the gods have left us, we are still under the protection of the godly. We need a way to reach and meet the gods to avoid this destitute time, since this time which is under the domination of the technological world order which reveals the earth as the source of raw material is nihilism as such. This desolation can not be overcome only by men, as Heidegger puts it in his "Der Spiegel" magazine interview, *only a god can save us*. But the gods does not correspond to those who do not participate. Participation and attachment is necessary in order to meet the gods, as Hölderlin shows in the poem cited above.

What is participation and attachment? How can people participate?

*Some time ago — to us it seems like a long time —
All those who made our lives happy climbed upwards.
The Father turned his face away from people,
And sorrow came rightly upon the earth.
Finally a quiet genius appeared, comforting in a god-like
Way, who announced the end of the day, and disappeared.
The choir of gods left some gifts behind, as a sign
Of their presence and eventual return, which we
May appreciate in our human fashion, as we used to.
That which is superior had grown too great for pleasure
With spirit among men. And to this day no one's strong enough
For the highest joys, although some gratitude survives quietly.
Bread is the fruit of the earth, yet it's blessed also by light.
The pleasure of wine comes from the thundering god.
We remember the gods thereby, those who were once
With us, and who'll return when the time is right.
Thus poets sing of the wine god in earnest, and their
Ringing praises of the old one aren't devised in vain.*

Hölderlin in the lines above actually puts his point quite explicitly. Those who make our lives happy has risen and turned face away from the people some -seemingly long- time ago. Sorrow came upon earth. Yet the choir of gods left some gifts behind as a sign of their presence and eventual return which we may appreciate in our human fashion. How are we going to do that? The great has become too great among people so that there is the lack of strong to enjoy the joy with spirit. Yet some gratitude survives:

First the gifts left behind for man has to be recognized as gifts and the signs of these has to be followed as signs. The recognition of the gifts as gifts is the thank; as to thanking suits frugality which opens road to the free and serene of Being-ability. The thank is as quiet as its thankful.⁶⁷

The gratitude for bread and wine as gift secures the imploring knowledge of the saying of heaven and the prosperity of the earth. The gift as sign leads man to the manly. To enjoy the joy manly mean to have joy out of what it brightens, out of brightness which shines in rare enlightenings. When this happens to man, then it is the holy time in which everything is totally different, original and unique.⁶⁸ The gratitude or the thank is the ground of the manness of man.

the 'manly' do not and never come to man from himself, but only as the grace of Being, which emanates to him from its truth.... The humanity is endlessly different from 'unique manly'. This consists of that the man, appealed by Being from own essence, answers to truth of Being.... The man is unmanly as long as he is thankless. The unmanly man is the one who rebels, ignorant of the unexpected oblivion of Being, against the remembrance of the truth of Being and serves to the rare known will to will.⁶⁹

67 "Zuvor aber ist mit den zurückgelassenen Gaben den Menschen aufgegebenen, die Gaben als Gaben zu erkennen und dem Zeigen dieser als der Zeichen zu folgen. Die Erkenntnis der Gaben als Gaben ist der Dank; denn dem Danken eignet die ins Freie und Heitere des Seinkönnens den Pfad öffnende Genügsamkeit. Dankender jedoch ist der Dank, je stiller er ist." Heidegger, Martin; Zu Hölderlin-Griechenreisen, p.52

68 Ibid. p.54

69 Ibid., p.55

When some gratitude still live, the security of the signs will be founded. This will secure the gifts. In this is concealed the truth of heavens. In this truth occurs the preparation of the festive encounter of gods and men on the incipiently founded place of historical (geschichtlich) homeland.⁷⁰

This path of thought leads us now to the feast.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p.52

CHAPTER 6

6. GETTING PREPARED FOR THE MEETING WITH GODS: FEASTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Contrary to Nietzsche, we said that Hölderlin is in expectation of the advent of gods.

His famous Hymn "Bread and Wine" reads:

*Bread is the fruit of the earth, yet it's blessed also by light.
The pleasure of wine comes from the thundering god.
We remember the gods thereby, those who were once
With us, and who'll return when the time is right.*

The people should be ready for the returning gods. Then is the right time. What will happen when the gods return back? This will be elaborated in this thesis. But first the preparation of the meeting needs clarification.

The meeting with gods can not be an ordinary moment. It has to be special, unique, extra-ordinary. This is because the relation of man with the beings has to change from ordinary to extra-ordinary, man's reception of Being must fundamentally change so that the possibility of the right time may rise. How do men release from ordinary relations? This question is the key to understand the role of feasts and celebrations.

...because celebration is becoming free and separate from the ordinary through becoming ready for the extra-ordinary of the day as a feast time contrary to the night. Ordinary means here the relationship between ever always meeting man and things which can not be in each case appropriated newly in its own being due to

*dreary routine acquaintance.*⁷¹

It is not difficult to understand the function of celebration days and feasts as a means of releasement from ordinary relations. We take a break and stop working for a while and enjoy the celebration or the feast till it is over and then return back to our usual stuff. But celebration days and feasts mean more than that for Hölderlin. Here we are to get to Hölderlin's understanding of history. *"For Hölderlin is "the feast" not an incident in the frame and on the ground of history, on the contrary "the feast" is itself the ground and the being of history."*⁷²

We see that there is a fundamentally different understanding of history and feast here. What does it mean to say that the feast is the ground and the being of history? We shall not miss the point that the issue here is the returning of gods. The feast as the ground of history is the moment in which gods and men meet; it is the time when gods and men encounter; not surprisingly the feast is for Hölderlin the bridal feast, the occurrence of the encountering gods and men. The ground of this occurrence is the festivity of the feast, neither gods nor men can cause this occurrence.⁷³

The encountering of men and the gods in the feast is not an accidental meeting, nor is it an ordinary event in the course of history. The men and the gods come across

71 "Denn Feiern ist das Frei- und Ledigwerdenvom Gewöhnlichen durch das Freiwerden für das Ungewöhnliche des Tages als der Zeit des Festes im Unterschied zur Nacht. Das Gewöhnliche meint hier den Zusammenhang der stets und zunaechst begegnenden Dinge und Menschen, die wir zufolge eines eingefahrenen Umgangs nicht mehr jedesmal neu in ihrem eigenen Wesen aneignen." Heidegger, Martin: Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken", p.65.

72 "Für Hölderlin ist >>das Fest<< nicht eine Begebenheit im Rahmen und auf dem Grunde der Geschichte, sondern >>das Fest<< ist selbst der Grund und das Wesen der Geschichte." Ibid. p.68.

73 See *ibid.* p.69.

each other from afar, and this 'from afar' is not a place lying behind them, on the contrary, they bring this place together, without finding it or opening it. The encounter is then the assigning or transferring (originally *übereignen*) the being to each other in this newly developing and shaping place. The inceptive of the assigning(*übereignung*) is the event(*Ereignis*) that carries and determines the happening of the encounter. This event (*ereignis*) is the real history(*Geschichte*). The event is the festive of the feast. The festive is not the result of the feast; it is the ground of the feast. This grounding festive is the Holy(*Heilige*). This holy is above men and the gods.⁷⁴ Consequently, the holy is the ground of all this process. The holy is "above" gods and men. The holy is the ground of the feast.

We have seen up to now that how men will encounter the fugitive gods in Heidegger's Hölderlin interpretations. This encounter is a feast. It is not an ordinary occurrence, and it is an assigning of being of gods and men into a place. Here the question arises: What happen when men and gods meet? What follows after this meeting?

Suzanne Ziegler in her "Heidegger, Hölderlin und die *Ἀλήθεια*" describes the feast as the bridal feast in which the truth arises(*ereignet sich*) when the men and gods encounter⁷⁵. This is for Hölderlin is as follows;

Dann feiern das Brautfest Menschen und Götter/then celebrate the bridalfeast men and gods

Es feiern die Lebenden all,/ all the livings celebrate,

74 Ibid. p.77.

75 Ziegler, Susanne: Heidegger, Hölderlin und die *Ἀλήθεια*: Martin Heidegger's Geschichtsdenken in seinen Vorlesungen 1934/35 bis 1944. Duncker und Humbolt, Berlin, 1991.

Und ausgeglichen ist eine Weile das Schicksal/ and balanced is the destiny for a while.

Clearly we can understand from Hölderlin's lines that the bridal feast is the moment of balancing destiny. Through the encountering of men and gods, the destiny finds its balance. How? Ziegler says that Heidegger differentiates between feast and the festive. The festive for Heidegger carries and determines the event (ereignis) of the feast. This festive for Heidegger is the holy. The holy, the festive greets men and gods. Only through this greeting can the gods and men greet and meet each other. The feast as the bridal feast is the event (ereignis) of this inceptive greeting. This inceptive greeting for Heidegger is the hidden being of history (Geschichte). This inceptive greeting for Heidegger is *the* event (ereignis), *the* inception. This inceptive greeting of the holy make possible that gods and men keep up with each other. When in the feast the assigning and granting of beings between gods and men takes place, both gods and men comply with (sich schicken) what is fitting (das Schickliche). From what is fitting understands Heidegger "what accords (sich gehören) in the sense of ensuring the membership to being (Wesen). What is fitting (Schickliche) for gods and men is that they comply with each other, they keep up with each other, in which they assemble to the holy. The compliance assembles the relations of the holy to men and gods, the relations of men and gods to the holy, the relations of men and gods to each other and these relations themselves to the holy."⁷⁶

On the meaning of what is fitting (Schickliche), Ziegler gets four meanings deriving from Heidegger's works: 1-that which complies (was sich gehört), 2- the compliar (Gehörige) as the ruler (Verfügende) and the assembler (Fügende), 3- in relation

⁷⁶ Ibid. p.204-209

with gods, men and the holy it is the holy, 4- the self (das Eigene), that will be assigned to a humanity (Menschentum) which historically belongs to a destiny.⁷⁷

Consequently for Heidegger the history (Geschichte) prevails in destiny (Schicksal).

Destiny abides balanced for a while in the feast. Destiny displays itself only in what is fitting (Schickliche). This must be searched for⁷⁸.

Heidegger's festive thinking, his interpretation of Hölderlin's poetry is hard to digest, and this is in my opinion because of its originality. The feast as the encountering men and gods is surely not a saturday night party, it is the inception of the history of a people. The gods and men carry their own being (Wesen) to each other, but none lead the feast; their encounter is determined through the holy, that which destines (schickt) the men and the gods in their rank of being (Wesensstand). As this destine (Schickende) is the holy for gods and men "what is fitting"(Schickliche). The destiny (Schickung) assembles(fügt) the relations of the holy to gods and men, the relations of gods and men to the holy, the relation of gods and men to each other and these all relations themselves to the holy.

the unity and simplicity of these original relations is the joint(die Fuge) that assembles(fügt) everything and determines what the proper(Der Fug) is. We name the joint as Being. The assembling of the joint is setting-free to being, but at the same time leaving to the possibility of unbeing.⁷⁹

While the encounter of gods and men in the feast is the inception of history, the course of history has to be then understood from this ground. Since the ground of

77 Ibid. p.210

78 Heidegger, Martin: Hölderlin's Hymne "Andenken", p.186

79 " Die Einheit und Einfachheit dieser ursprünglicheren Bezüge ist die Fuge, die alles fügt und jegliches bestimmt, was der Fug ist. Die Fuge nennen wir das Seyn, worin alles Seiende west. Die Fügung der Fuge ist Freilassung ins Wesen, aber zugleich Loslassung in die Möglichkeit des Unwesens." Ibid. p.100

the history is this feast according to Heidegger, the historical events has to be a result of these relations. But how? Do gods and men or their encounter “cause” to historical events? Are historical developments result of the feast?

Since the interpretations of Hölderlin's poetry are an attempt to find a way to unmetaphysical thinking, the cause-effect relations have no place in this thinking.

Modern understanding sees beings as effective or affected or a result of an effect. But Hölderlin's understanding is different. For Hölderlin something can **be** without being an effect or affecting something. Every Being (Sein) and Being-together(Mitsein)is a compliance(sich fügen) to the proper(der Fug) of the allotted being(Wesen). The proper does nothing and make nothing to beings, but it assembles so that it lets beings to be. Assembling is therefore not a causal intervention, it is rather a withdrawal and a concealment that first lets beings be, then leaves to the twofoldness of finding the own being or losing it⁸⁰.

We can summarize the whole process as such: the feast is the ground of history. Everything under destiny is historical (geschichtlich). The event of feast brings every compliance (Sich-schicken) and every fitting (Schickliche) and so that the destiny (Schicksal) to an accord (Einklang). The feast is the time-space of the balance in which everything is as it is. Wenn everything is as it is in its being, then is the truth.⁸¹ when the destiny is in balance for a while, then beings be in accordance with Being. Only when the destiny is balanced, beings be in compliance with Being (Seyn). But the destiny is balanced for a while; not always is the destiny balanced, and when it is

80 Ibid. p.102

81 Ibid. p.92.

not balanced, beings get out of the proper (Fug), everything improper brings fuzzy, fuzzy brings error, error is openness to malice. With the improper, malicious is set free⁸². Here the malicious or malign is not morally bad, or a lack in being, but an incomplice to the destiny.

Heidegger claims that Hölderlin has overcome the Asiatic idea of fate or destiny.

According to him;

the poet does not think "destiny" in the sense of "fatum" or "fatality", with which a Being imagined as a willing-less, unknowing float in a dull, simply fort-rolling fate within the totality of the self-enclosed beings. This, we can say, Asiatic image of destiny is creatively overcome in Hölderlin's thinking. A one-time and in its type unrepeatable overcoming of Asiatic fatum was performed by the Greeks, in fact together with the poetically-thinkingly-stately becoming of that people.⁸³

Alfred Knödler points to the fact that the Asiatic understanding of destiny mentioned by Heidegger is what is called "Fatum Mahumetanum", "Turkish destiny" and "Turkish fatalism".⁸⁴ Although Heidegger himself does not seem to mention about Turkish destiny, it seems plausible to think that he had this in mind. Hölderlin himself might have thought that either; his famous work Hyperion is about a man who had fought against Turks for Greek freedom war. He must have thought about the Turkish conception of fate and destiny, when he was thinking about history as destiny. But the question remains, how much is "Fatum Mahumetanum" "mohammedan", or how far the Turkish destiny is "Turkish"?

Heidegger thinks destiny different from the compelling fate; he thinks about freedom when he thinks destiny. This understanding of destiny is far from the blind

82 Ibid.p.102.

83 Heidegger,Martin; Hölderlin's Hymnen >>Germanien<< und >>Der Rhein<<, p.173.

84 Knödler,Alfred;Das Denken des Festes:Das Fest des Denkens. Duncker&Humbolt, Berlin,2001. p.265

fate, in which things be because they have to be, or things happen because of a cause. Even god is understood in this thinking as the primal cause. But as we said that Heidegger's understanding of destiny is different from the cause-effect chain of order. Destiny first of all is understood as a dispensation (Schickung) that dispensates us to our determination as long as we truly comply with it in order to know and knowingly will the fitting(Schickliche) .⁸⁵ So here man is free to find what is fitting to him, while he can also escape from it. In that sense destiny is a letting-be and a letting-go.

The terms Heidegger uses when he thinks about destiny are all about harmony. Schicken, Schickliche, Schickung, sich schicken, sich fügen, fügung, Die Fuge, Der Fug are all about complience and accordance. What destiny does is "schicken" and "fügen"; to fit, to comply. These are not act of causes; in Heidegger's words; "Complying (Fügung) and fitting(Schickung) are not causing; we cannot grasp their being if we think so."⁸⁶ these acts do not force, they let be.

Heidegger names Being as the joint (die Fuge) in which all beings prevails. He sees that since the causal thinking is dominant, it is difficult to tell people this nature of destiny;

How man can in such a trap think that all Being and being-with(Mitsein) is a complience to the joint(Fug) of the allotted beings(Wesen). That this joint does nothing and makes nothing to beings, on the contrary it complies so that let the being be.⁸⁷

In this letting-be the compliance is a withdrawal so that it permits place for fitting

85 Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlin's Hymne "Germanien" und "Der Rhein", p.176

86 Heidegger, Martin: Hölderlin's Hymne "Andenken", p.100.

87 "Wie soll der Mensch bei solcher Verstrickung sich darauf besinnen, dass alles Sein und Mitsein ein Sichfügen in den Fug des zuwiesenen Wesens ist. Dass der Fug nichts tut und am Seienden sich nicht zu schaffen macht, sondern es fügt, indem er das Seiende sein lässt." Ibid., p.101.

and unfitting. In the feast is the destiny balanced for a while. This is because gods and men experience their being in the freedom of destiny and they help each other in this experience. But destiny is not always balanced, it is mostly unbalanced; the compliance of gods and men into what is fitting is only in the feast, so for a while abides the holy in the feast.

CHAPTER 7

7. TO FIND WHAT IS FITTING (SCHICKLICHE) FOR A PEOPLE

The feast is the encounter of men and gods in which they comply with what is fitting. Suzanne Ziegler above showed us that one of the meanings of what is fitting is the “own” (das Eigene), that will be assigned to a humanity (Menschentum) which historically belongs to a destiny. This own is but not an always available means, but it has to be sought for.

As Suzanne Ziegler points out, Heidegger's thinking of history is not a matter of universal history or world history. Heidegger's thinking of history is thinking the history of west regarding its inception, regarding ancient Greece.⁸⁸ The own(Eigene) of a people is the origin of his history but this own has to be appropriated; the history does not emerge by itself from the own. For Heidegger the finding, appropriating and learning the use of the own constitutes the freedom of a people to itself. In this lies the historicity of the history of a people.⁸⁹

How is this own be appropriated? This can be acquired only when the foreign is acknowledged. A voyage to the foreign has to be taken in order to learn what is own. Learning the usage of the own is the most difficult task. In the appropriation of

⁸⁸ Ziegler, Susanne: Heidegger, Hölderlin und die *Ἀλήθεια*: Martin Heidegger's Geschichtsdenken in seinen Vorlesungen 1934/35 bis 1944. p.199

⁸⁹ Heidegger, Martin: Hölderlin's Hymne “Andenken”. p.130

the own, in mastering in the ownmost inception, will “the Highest” be found at “the end”.

For Hölderlin the own of the Germans is the clarity of presentation (die Klarheit der Darstellung) where the own of the Greeks was the fire from heaven⁹⁰. Heidegger understands the clarity of presentation as the ability to grasp Being, and the fire from heaven as the exposedness through Being (Betroffenwerden durch das Seyn). Hölderlin as a German poet sees the ancient Greece as the foreign, and he has to learn and master the foreign to find what is German's own. Since the ability to grasp Being is gifted to the German, in his journey to the foreign the poet will be exposed to Being, and after his return to home, the exposed Being will be put into words.⁹¹

Heidegger explains the clarity of presentation as such in “Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry”

What is natural to the Germans, on the contrary, is clarity of presentation. The ability to grasp, the designing of projects, the erection of frameworks and enclosures, the construction of boundaries and divisions, dividing and classifying, these are what captivate them. This native trait of the Germans, however, does not become authentically their own as long as this ability to grasp is not tested by the need to grasp the ungraspable and, in the face of the incomprehensible itself, to bring them into the proper “disposition”. What the Germans must encounter as foreign to them, and what they must become experienced within the foreign land, is the fire of heaven. Through the shock of being struck by this fire, they will be compelled to appropriate and to need and use their own proper character.⁹²

When the free usage of the own as the most difficult task is displayed, learned, then is the soul (Geist) at home, the highest is found. Then emerges the truth, incepts the history.

90 Ziegler, Susanne: Heidegger, Hölderlin und die $\text{\AA}\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$. p.198.

91 Ibid. p.203

92 Heidegger, Martin; Elucidations of Hölderlin's poetry, trans.Keith Hoeller, Humanity Books, New York, 200. p.112-113.

*In order to freely utilise the ownmost, before that in order to learn how to freely employ the ownmost, a conflict with the foreign is necessary. That is why the soul must voyage to the foreign; not to get lost there and forget the homeland, but to get strong and ready for the own in the foreign...*⁹³

Without knowing the foreign, the ownmost can not be utilised. The learning of the employment of the ownmost is the most difficult task. This has to be sought for. This searching is the longest, and as long as it is sought for, it is never lost. The ownmost in another sense is the holy of the homeland, so it is the highest. Accordingly, what is to be sought for is the history, that means, the festive nature of the own homeland.⁹⁴ That is also Hölderlin's understanding;

*Once I asked the muse, and she
answered me.
At the end will you find it.
About the highest silence is my will.
Forbidden fruit, as the Laurel, is but
mostly the homeland. It is but tasted
by someone finally.*⁹⁵

Hölderlin also thinks the own as the homeland, as the forbidden fruit, but is tasted by some at the end.

*The ownmost, the homeland is the highest, but that is why mostly the forbidden. That is why it will be found at the end, after long searches, many victims and hard services. Someone can taste it finally, only when he is ready, when no involuntary can put an eye to the highest, when no intrusiveness bewilders and scares the forbidden.*⁹⁶

We see that the ownmost is the homeland, which is the clarity of presentation for

93 "Um freilich das Eigenste frei gebrauchen zu können, um allererst den freien Gebrauch des Eigenen lernen zu können, dazu bedarf es der Auseinandersetzung mit dem Fremden. Deshalb muss der Geist in die Fremde, nicht um dort verloren zu gehen und das Vaterländische zu versäumen, wohl aber um sich im Fremden für das Eigene bereit und stark zu machen,.."
Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken", p.123.

94 Ibid., p.133.

95 Ibid., p.134.

96 Ibid., p.134.

germans. The ownmost, the homeland, the highest is a duty in that case.

*The ownmost has to be open to what is assigned to it, so that the utilization of the ownmost can be free....Freedom is openness to the original and to the inceptive. Learning the free employment of the ownmost, the most difficult task, means; learning to be open to the original, what, against all selfishness, other and from another origin is, as a total stranger.*⁹⁷

We said above that the ownmost for the Germans is the clarity of presentation. This is not a mere ability, it has to be determined from what is to be presented; by the feast; *“What is to be presented is the history, the becoming in the decay, the coming of the feast. The feast is the history of the Holy. That is but the Highest.”*⁹⁸ Once again we see the interrelatedness and interconnectedness of the holy, the homeland, the ownmost, the foreign, the history, the destiny, the feast and the poet.

97 “Damit der Gebrauch des Eigenen ein freier werden soll, muss das Eigene offen sein für das, was ihm zugewiesen...Freiheit ist Offenheit zum Ursprünglichen und Anfaenglichen. Den freien Gebrauch des Eigenen lernen, dies, was das Schwerste ist, das bedeutet: Lernen sich zu öffnen für das Ursprüngliche, was gegenüber aller Eigesucht das Andere und anderer Herkunft ist, fast so, wie ein Fremdes.” Ibid., p.145.

98 “Das Darzustellende ist die Geschichte, das Werden im Vergehen, das kommen des Festes. Das Fest ist die Geschichte des Heiligen. Dies aber ist das Höchste.” Ibid. p.146.

CHAPTER 8

8. WHAT IS GOD

*But friend! We come too late. Although live the gods
But over the heads up in another world.
Endlessly they affect over there and seem to care little
whether we live, much as the heavenly ones conserve us*

In the Introduction of this thesis, we said that Heidegger's interest in Hölderlin's poetry is a search to find a way to overcome Nihilism. Nietzsche claimed that with the death of god there remains nothing binding; and everything is "beyond good and evil" possible.⁹⁹ Hölderlin himself also speaks the escape of gods. But contrary to Nietzsche, for Hölderlin the gods may return, since they are living above our heads, although not caring about men anymore.

In the age of Nihilism nothing can overcome the will to consume. This age can not be overcome with the sole man effort, for a change in the course of history, a god is needed. This Heidegger says in his *Der Spiegel* interview; "philosophy can not change the current world-situation. This is true not only for philosophy but for every other man thinking and caring. Only a god can save us."¹⁰⁰

Heidegger uses the word "god" both in singular and plural. The plural usage is not a matter of numbers, but comes from the undecidedness whether the presence of

99 Trawny, Peter, Martin Heidegger, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2003. p.138

100 Ibid. p.141

gods or a god will be experienced or not. It has to be left open how a god or gods will be.¹⁰¹ The singularity or plurality of the god is not a matter of numbers, but according to Ben Vedder

*an allusion to the undecidability of the being of gods, whether of one single god or of many gods...For Heidegger the question is whether there will be gods, not whether there will be one or more. He asks if it is possible to grant being to gods without destroying divinity as such.*¹⁰²

Vedder continues that for Heidegger the gods need being in order to belong themselves, yet the godhead and being are not equal then, and neither gods are above being, nor being is above gods. Yet with regard to gods, nothing can be decided, so the thinker, according to Vedder, should remain in this undecidedness¹⁰³. Vedder speculates that being is needed by gods as that which withdraws, being is never causable and conditionable, which is contrary to the metaphysical meaning of god as the highest being. Consequently, man does not count gods and understands that he does not know the rules of god¹⁰⁴. Heidegger speaks about “the last god” in “Beitraege zur Philosophie” who has unique oneness and stay out of the counting determinations of “mono-theism” or “pan-theism” or “A-theism”. The godly should not be counted; but different appearances of the flashings of godly can be named with different names; although these names has to be thought in relation with the last god. The last god for Heidegger is the inception

101 Ibid.p.139.

102 Vedder, Ben; Heidegger's Philosophy of Religion, p.164-165.

103 Ibid., p.166.

104 Ibid., p.167-168.

of the unmeasurable possibilities of German history; not an end.¹⁰⁵ The last god forms together with men the history. He historically opens up a new insight into the hidden and lets the beings emerge under a new light.¹⁰⁶

We have seen that the inception of history is grounded in the encounter of gods and men in the feast. This means that the god does not prescribe the history for men; but together they ground the history. The god *needs* men and his finite relations with being in order to presence historically. This need is not a deficiency; because although he needs Being in order to presence, he is the “Highest” in this appearance while he lets the ground (urgrund) of Being to shine purer.¹⁰⁷ Being, in turn, needs man as Dasein, as clearance (Lichtung), in which Being can presence and come about in beings. Through the need of gods are they dependent on dasein because this only can keep the clearance of Being open. Man differs from other beings not only through his unique relation with Being but also with gods.¹⁰⁸

The relation of god and man founded upon the Event (Ereignis) is reciprocal. The god is assigned (übereignet) to man where man is dedicated to god. Man is in a certain way devoted to god, meaning that man is in a way oriented to god. The historical destiny of god is in man's hands since the godly is assigned to man. Man's hands cannot find this destiny, but it is delivered to him.¹⁰⁹

We have seen that god or gods are not omnipotent, rather are they in need of

105 Heidegger, Martin; Beitrage zur Philosophie. Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt, 1989. p 411.

106 Helting, Holger; Heideggers Auslegung von Hölderlins Dichtung des Heiligen. Duncker&Humbolt, Berlin,1999.p.407

107 Ibid. p.277 and p.409.

108 Ibid. p.277

109 Ibid. p.278-279.

dasein in order to presence; what kind of gods are they then?

Hölderlin named in the late version of "Heimkunft" as "angels", what he calls as "gods" in the prior version. This according to Heidegger is not a de-powering the prior gods, but a more appropriate naming of them. The being of gods are named purer with the name "angel". Because the being of gods do not consist of self-sufficiency; on the contrary, god is in need of Being in order to presence. Consequently, gods are then the messengers of the holy; they offer the greetings of the holy.¹¹⁰

110 Ibid. p.442.

CHAPTER 9

9. THE HOLY

We said that neither the gods nor men conduct the feast; they encounter in the feast, this encounter is determined by the holy, which sends(schickt) men and gods to their rank of being(Wesensstand) in that the holy is “what is fitting”(Schickliche) for gods and men.¹¹¹ The essential difference between gods and the holy is for Helting that while gods in a way presence in the clearance, the holy “renders possible” every present being in itself.¹¹²

Joan Stambaugh points that there is an ambiguity in Heidegger's words on the Holy. Stambaugh determines four stages of the Holy in Heidegger's writings: first stage is that the holy is the *harbinger* of gods, second is that the holy is the dwelling place of gods, third is that the holy is the interim of the presence and the absence of gods, and last is that the holy is the ultimate.¹¹³ the first stage for Stambaugh is the stage of pure waiting. The holy is the foreboding aura, a preliminary abode of the god. The second stage is where the holy is the dwelling place of gods. Here the holy provides the free room in which gods and men can belong together, in which Being can hide

111 Heidegger, Martin: Hölderlin's Hymne “Andenken”. p.100.

112 Helting, Holger; Heideggers Auslegung von Hölderlins Dichtung des Heiligen. p.111

113 Stambaugh, Joan; Thoughts on Heidegger. Center for Advanced research in Phenomenology&University press of America, Washington, 1991. p.95.

itself in things so that the fourfold(Geviert) shines in it and so that a place in which gods can presence and men can dwell is founded.¹¹⁴ the third stage is the transition between the presence and the absence of gods; this stage for Stambaugh is “highly complex”. The last one is that the holy is inviolably complete and whole, granting wholeness to every being but itself unapproachable. The holy is knowable only to the poet, the poet knows the holy by divining it as a dream or vision.¹¹⁵

Ben Vedder in his “A Philosophical Understanding of the Holy” claims that Heidegger thinks the holy in connection with the notion of the 'Whole' as it is analyzed in anxiety, boredom, and wonder:

When we look further in Heidegger's work, we find that he connects the notion of the holy with the notion of the “whole”. From the beginning, the notion of the holy as an experience of the whole is a counter position with regard to our contemporary age. The holy is introduced with regard to a historical position.¹¹⁶

We can say that the holy is the ground of the feast that it enables gods and men to encounter in the feast in order to comply with what is fitting for them, that is, what is fitting for gods and men is the holy itself. But there are much to say on that issue. If we hear the poet, we can grasp more, while Hölderlin uses the word “holy” in many of his hymns. One is particularly important that Heidegger devoted a section in “Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry”. This poem is “As when on a Holiday”.

*AS WHEN ON A HOLIDAY ...
As when on a holiday, to see the field
A countryman goes out, at morning, when
Out of the hot night the cooling lightning flashes had fallen
The whole time and the thunder still sounds in the distance,*

114 Helting, Holger; Heideggers Auslegung von Hölderlins Dichtung des Heiligen. p.613.

115 Stambaugh, Joan; Thoughts on Heidegger. p.102.

116 Vedder, Ben (2005).A Philosophical Understanding of Heidegger's Notion of the Holy. *Epoche,10(1)*. 141-154.

*The river enters its banks once more,
And the fresh ground becomes green
And with the gladdening rain from heaven
The grapevine drips, and gleaming
In quiet sunlight stand the trees of the grove:
So in favorable weather they stand
Whom no master alone, whom she, wonderfully
All-present, educates in a light embrace,
The powerful, divinely beautiful nature.
So when she seems to be sleeping at times of the year
Up in the heavens or among plants or the peoples,
The poets' faces also are mourning,
They seem to be alone, yet are always divining.
For divining too she herself is resting.
But now day breaks! I awaited and saw it come,
And what I saw, may the holy be my word,
For she, she herself, who is older than the ages
And above the gods of Occident and Orient,
Nature is now awakening with the clang of arms,
And from high Aether down to the abyss,
According to firm law, as once, begotten out of holy Chaos,
Inspiration, the all-creative,
Again feels herself anew.*

*And as a fire gleams in the eye of the man
Who has conceived a lofty design, so
Once more by the signs, the deeds of the world now
A fire has been kindled in the souls of the poets.
And what came to pass before, though scarcely felt,
Only now is manifest,
And they who smiling tended our fields for us,
In the form of servants, they are known,
The all-living, the powers of the gods.
Do you ask about them? In the song their spirit blows,
When from the sun of day and warm earth
It awakens, and storms that are in the air, and others
That more prepared in the depths of time
And more full of meaning, and more perceptible to us,
Drift on between heaven and earth and among the peoples.
The thoughts of the communal spirit they are,
Quietly ending in the soul of the poet.
So that quickly struck, for a long time
Known to the infinite, it quakes
With recollection, and kindled by the holy ray,
Its fruit conceived in love, the work of gods and men,
The song, so that it may bear witness to both, succeeds.
So, as poets say, when she desired to see
The god, visible, his lightning flash fell on Semele's house
And ashes mortally struck gave birth to
The fruit of the thunderstorm, to holy Bacchus.*

*And hence the sons of the earth now drink
 Heavenly fire without danger.
 Yet us it behooves, you poets, to stand
 Bare-headed beneath God's thunderstorms,
 To grasp the father's ray, itself, with our own hands,
 And to offer to the people
 The heavenly gift wrapt in song,
 For only if we are pure in heart,
 Like children, are our hands innocent.
 The father's ray, the pure, does not sear it And deeply shaken, sharing a god's
 suffering, The eternal heart yet remains firm.*

The first stanza says that the poets stands in the favorable weather such as a farmer sees his land benefited from the rain. The poets are educated by the powerful divinely beautiful nature. *"Nature comes to presence in human work and in the destiny of peoples, in the stars and in the gods, but also in stones, growing things, and animals, as well as in streams and in thunderstorms. 'Wonderful' is the omnipresence of nature."*¹¹⁷ This nature is according to the poet older than the ages and above the gods of the orient and occident. The Holy is the nature.

*For even if the poet's soul may preserve in itself the presence of what is coming, the poet by himself is never capable of naming the holy immediately. The blaze of light, quietly preserved in the soul of the poet, needs to be kindled. Only a ray of light that emanates again from the holy itself is strong enough for that. Therefore, someone higher, who is nearer to the holy and yet still remains beneath it, a god, must throw the kindling light flash into the poet's soul.....Since neither men nor gods by themselves can ever achieve an immediate relation to the holy, men need the gods and the heavenly ones need mortals:..*¹¹⁸

We have seen that the holy is nature. She is above the gods of the orient and the occident. She is the ground of the being of even gods. She makes in herself every prevailance possible. The nature seem to be "sleeping at times of the year" but this is not a sleeping, but a mourning in the ages of the world, "but now day breaks!" that is the coming of the holy.

117 Heidegger, Martin; Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry, p. 75.

118 *ibid.* p.90

this coming alone specifies the 'age', in which it is 'time' for history to confront its essential decisions....History is rare. History is only when the essence of the truth comes to be decided on primordially. In its coming, the holy, 'older than ages' and 'above the gods', grounds another beginning of another history. The holy primordially decides in advance concerning men and gods, whether they are, and who they are, and how they are, and when they are.¹¹⁹

119 Ibid.p.98

CHAPTER 10

10. CONCLUSION

In the introduction of this thesis we tried to elaborate Heidegger's criticism on metaphysics. For Heidegger metaphysics has reached to its peak in Nietzsche's nihilism and this nihilism shows itself in the domination of the technological order of the world. From this point we plausibly can suggest that Heidegger's attempt to interpret Hölderlin's poetry is by no means due to a literary interest. He explicitly rejects this in his works on Hölderlin's especially hymnal poetry. Heidegger attempts and succeeds to a measure to uncover the inner relation between thinking and poetizing. Although Heidegger wrote on Rilke's, George's and some other poet's works, Hölderlin has a very unique position that his poetry for Heidegger is unmetaphysical.

The thinking attempted here through Hymns of Hölderlin is a festive thinking. The festivity of it stems from its insistence to understand Being in its fourfoldness; that is, to understand Being in its relations to Gods and mortals, heavens and earth. This festive thinking is a historical (Geschichtlich) thinking in that it is a destinal thinking. This historicity (Geschichtlichkeit) comes from its way of understanding history as having its ground in the feast. For the history does not begin; but it has an inception which needs god to commence. The commencement of the history of a *people*

(*Volk*) is in the feast.

The feast as the bridal feast is the encounter of gods and men. For Heidegger gods are always the gods of a people. We see that the history in Heidegger's thinking is never a universal issue.

The feast as the bridal feast can not occur as an appointment; since the godly one does not meet with nonparticipants (Göttliches trifft untheilnehmende nicht). Participation is necessary. This can take place when the people feel the grief of the loss of gods and expect the return of them. This can happen in the fundamental attunement of *the holy grief*. When the mood is the right one, man can free itself from the routine and worn out relationship with beings and prepare himself to the extra-ordinary relation with beings. In this preparedness come the gods with the greetings of the holy.

The encounter of gods and men in the feast by no means can be arranged by either gods or men; the holy provides the free place to them so that gods and men comply to what is fitting to them. This bridal feast in which men and gods flower out each others original (ureigenes) being (Wesen) is the Destiny (Schicksal).

This destiny does not function as a blind fate in which things happen under the compulsion of this fate, rather this destiny lets beings be in compliance with their own being or disarrays. There is freedom in this destiny in obedience or disobedience to own way of being. But here the point is that in the feast the destiny is balanced for a while, meaning that things are in compliance with their own being. So the feast is the time of balanced destiny and for Heidegger this is rare, while mostly destiny is unbalanced.

There is a crucial point here that in destinal history the case is not of cause and effect; things emerge not as a result of a cause but because they comply with Being. I will dare to say that the emergence of things and events are due to the compliance to what is fitting for them. Things be because it is proper to be. This is not deeply elaborated by Heidegger himself because he says that under the domination of the cause-effect understanding, man can not understand this.¹²⁰ But we have to notice that here everything is related to compliance, accordance and properness.

In the feast men and gods comply to what is fitting to them. What is fitting for man is what is his own(Eigene). What is one's own is what is most difficult to appropriate. This necessitates the learning of what is foreign. Only after learning what is foreign to a people can what is own and appropriate to a people be appropriated. We have to notice that here the history of the west, "Abendland" is at the core of all this thinking. So the own and the foreign has to be thought in this context. Hölderlin thinks the history of the west, that is the destiny of the west referring to the origin. The origin of this destiny lies in the Greek commencement. The own for the Greeks was the fire from heaven. This is the foreign for the German people. Consequently this people has to learn the foreign in order to learn how to appropriate their own; the clarity of display, clarity of presentation.(Die Klarheit der Darstellung). This is a journey to the roots, to the spring. Hölderlin poetizes this in his River Hymns.

There is an assumption here that Hölderlin has overcome the Asiatic view of destiny as fatum or fate as the cause of what is happening which give no place to human freedom. Alfred Knödler puts this as "Türkenschicksal". It is possible that Hölderlin or Heidegger or both had in mind what they name as "fatum mahumetanum" or

120 Heidegger, Martin: Hölderlin's Hymne "Andenken", p.101.

“Türkenschicksal”. My suggestion is that there is a need to make explicit whether Türken Schicksal is rightly understood by Germans or not.

Heidegger's philosophy is not and can not be understood thoroughly enough, for still are there works of him that are newly published or waiting for publishing; and that he is still very close to us so that an objectivity is difficult. He died in 1976, and his political attachment is still dominating the discussions on his philosophy. But doubtless his thinking on Being and on the origins, his festive thinking offers new horizons to people, the horizons which the modern world and the technological order strive with all efforts for covering it. Heidegger's thinking is an attack; *“..,that Heidegger's Feast-thinking is for us not only just a philosophical-factual challenge, but a provocation in the exact meaning of the word.”*¹²¹ This festive thinking is a threat to the understanding, which has shaped the modern humanity; because *“it is about unhinging the planetary humanity which has become unhistorical and so that regain its consciousness.”*¹²²

Heidegger's reflection on Hölderlin is a mystery, as in the german word “Geheimnis”. “Das Heim”, home and related matters are thought here; the destiny of the homeland, its future, its security, its foundation and sources are thought. The duty of the german people is determined and a call is made to this people; to remember its historical role. The role of this people as the people of thinkers and poets, then, to answer Hölderlin's call we may say. This role is, then, to take responsibility on the

121 “.., dass Heideggers Fest-Denken für uns nicht nur eine denkerisch-sachliche Herausforderung, sondern auch eine Provokation im förderlichsten Sinne des Wortes darstellt.” Knödler, Alfred; Das Denken des Festes; Das Fest des Denkens, p.67.

122 “Es handelt sich darum, ob das Wesen des ungeschichtlich gewordenen planetarischen Menschen ins Wanken und damit in die Besinnung gebracht wird.” Heidegger, Martin; Hölderlin's Hymne >>Andenken<<, p.6

destiny of the west. This west is what Heidegger calls “Abendland”.

So we notice that the homeland for Germans is in a sense the “Abendland” in the broader sense. The homeland is then not the political borders of Germany, it is broader. In the widest sense is then the homeland the west itself, as long as it can be defined. More aptly, Germany is where German people live, but where they are responsible for, according to Heidegger, is the west itself. Heidegger is thinking the destiny of the west in thinking the destiny of the German people.

A quite helpful paper for understanding Heidegger’s meditation on homeland is Julian Young’s “Heidegger’s *Heimat*”.¹²³ Young sees Heidegger’s meditation as a response to the loss of place in the age of technology:

Place not in the sense, merely, of a bounded region of space but in the sense of dwelling place; Heimat or ‘Homeland’. Homeland, says Heidegger, that which is ‘near’ to us. Yet nearness implies farness, fails to appear if ‘remoteness...remains absent’. In the age of jet travel, television, the internet and the cell-phone, however, everything is being reduced to a ‘uniform distancelessness’ in which nothing is ‘remote’, and so nothing ‘near’, and so nothing a dwelling-place.¹²⁴

Young also points the fact that attunement is also important in dwelling. Yet much more is necessary: “to become a dwelling-place a place needs to become a ‘fourfold’.
To the fact of attunement one needs to add the appearance of ‘earth’, ‘sky’, ‘gods’ and ‘mortals’.¹²⁵ Earth and sky for Young is then the holy nature as experienced by the poet.

God, that is to say, is the essentially ‘other’ of humanity and if we cannot experience the divine in nature we can experience it nowhere. If we are immune to the wonder of nature we are alone in the universe, condemned to the anxiety of an icy solitude that precludes the possibility of truly dwelling in the world.¹²⁶

123 Young, Julian(2011). Heidegger’s *Heimat*. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 19(2), 285-293.

124 Ibid.

125 Ibid.

Young sees the nature as the place for experiencing the divine. What is the significance of mortality, then, for the dwelling-place? Young points to the fact that already in "Being and Time" Heidegger analyzed death thoroughly. The sense of finitude gives man the understanding that life is a gift. Within this fourfold is a place a dwelling-place. Julian Young concludes with opposing Jeff Malpas' idea that Heimat is not a 'fixed and stable spot' but 'a state of mind'¹²⁷, and argues that Heimat is a specific region: "*to live in the sight of gods is to live in the sight of specific gods- namely the gods of one's own community, the gods who make it the community it is.*"¹²⁸

To this point throughout this thesis, we have seen Heidegger's path of thinking from searching the meaning of Being by analyzing "Dasein's conditions, to reflecting on the responsibility of the German people in the destiny of the West by attending to Hölderlin's poetry. We have in a way outlined Heidegger's later philosophy. Yet we have not done that in a Heideggerian manner. We have up to this point focused on what Heidegger said on Hölderlin's poetry; yet we have not thought on what is left unspoken.

What is left unspoken in the verses of a poet and in the sentences of a thinker is much more important than (or as important as) what is uttered. Yet who has the gift to discover them? A poet or a thinker may undertake such an endeavour. Such an endeavour would be, to be sure, a great work extending the limits of this thesis. But

126 Ibid.

127 Malpas, Jeff; Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2006.

128 Young, Julian(2011). Heidegger's Heimat. *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 19(2), 285-293.

inevitably some questions disturb the minds.

Johann Christian Fredrich Hölderlin lived between the years 1770-1843. He was an admirer of Napoleon and supporter of French revolution in his youth. This era is the term of the rise of Europe in the history and the beginning of the end of the Turkish threat. These years are the years of flourishing European nations. Yet Hölderlin says the gods have left and no more care about people. It is the darkening ages reigning over Europe.

Martin Heidegger lived between 1889-1976. He witnessed two world wars in his lifetime, both ended with the defeat of Germany. Yet this is the time in which Europe has left no rivals over the planet defeating all the classic societies. The technological superiority of the west crashed all non-western countries and give rise to American domination. Yet the time is for Heidegger the time of desolation.

Why this pessimism? Why the great minds of the west such as the poets, the thinkers, the artists have uttered the dark and the darkening night of the west in an era in which the statesmen, the soldiers, the bankers of the west were declaring their victory? The victory of a humanity which condemned the poet as a mad man into the house of a carpenter, and exiled the thinker as a nazi out of academy. We see that the most fundamental criticisms to this humanity comes from its own members.

Heidegger in his interpretations on Hölderlin's poetry says that Hölderlin has overcome the asiatic view of fate or destiny. Alfred Knödler says that by Asiatic destiny "Türkenschicksal" or "fatum mahumetanum" is meant. Whether the thoughts of Hölderlin and Heidegger has really overcome the "Asiatic" or "Turkish"

view of destiny is a good subject to work on, but not the aim of this thesis; yet the point is that these two great figures of Germany felt the necessity to think on how to overcome the “Asiatic” view of destiny, in order to find a way to get through the dark night of Europe.

“To find and use what is your own is the most difficult.” “To find what is your own, the foreign must be learned first.” What is foreign seems to be somehow related to the Turks. Neither Hölderlin nor Heidegger mention this in their works, yet there are some traces. The question “what has shaped Europe” has to in some point be answered through the “eastern question”. So where the destiny of the west is thought, it will not be surprising that “Türkenschicksal” is also a subject. This matter needs further investigation, but it is beyond our aim here.

Heidegger’s interpreting Hölderlin’s poetry as a destiny, a destiny for the west as widest, is a proposal of a thinking which is un-metaphysical. Yet this thinking hides in itself a potential for establishing a new world. Whether a new world order is demanded or not is a question directed to the conscience of contemporary man.

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APPENDIX TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU



ENSTİTÜ

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü
- Enformatik Enstitüsü
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı :

Adı :

Bölümü :

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

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TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılsın ve kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla tezimin bir kısmı veya tamamının fotokopisi alınsın.
2. Tezimin tamamı yalnızca Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi kullanıcılarının erişimine açılsın. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)
3. Tezimin bir (1) yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olsun. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)

Yazarın imzası

Tarih