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FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN: THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF
RELIGIOUS POETRY
Studies in the Elegies

Martin F.A. Simon

This is a genetic study of Hölderlin's religious poetry. It examines the evolving strophic form of the Elegies, and relates this directly to the transition from personal to hymnic lyric: the poet does not overcome, but creates out of, the elegiac situation. Against the impersonality of a predominant approach which treats the later work as objective statement, I have found the poetry to be the progressive creation of a private world made of the experiences of childhood and love.

The strophic form is not primarily a means of communication, but the existential sphere of a relationship. The poem's message is restricted to autonomous paradigmatic enactment of a revolution in man's relationship to Nature which is, however, also a rejection of the individual's place in the world and therefore necessarily solipsistic.

The method follows from these principles. Artistic unity of form and content is here of heightened intensity, in rhythm, so that ideas cannot be isolated from their context; conversely, where they can be the poetry fails. The thorough analysis of the five strophic elegies is based on this aesthetic criterion; it aims to replace paraphrase by literary criticism.

The Elegies follow strict laws of composition, but these proceed from the opposite of speech-orientated reflection: a consistently negative conception of poetic form as the relativising limitation of consciousness, contradicted by the mysterious and daemonic intensity of the unconscious. The use of form is not classical, but belongs, with unparalleled extremity, to the Frühromantik. The historical context is therewith the transcendental philosophy of Kant and Fichte.

The true value is not religious but aesthetic; it lies in the softness and delicacy of a child's perception of Nature. As the poetry, in polemical example to the world, undermines intellect and will by the will to surrender, the reader is confronted by irreconcilable values.

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Abbreviations, editions, English terms

References in numbers only are to the Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe, edited by Friedrich Beißner and Adolf Beck, seven volumes (Stuttgart, 1946-77), giving volume, page, and line number.

The Poems are referred to by title (or first line), followed by line number, as in Volumes 1 and 2 of this edition.

Hyperion (and the 'Fragment von Hyperion') is referred to by the original volume, page, and line number, as in Volume 3.

The Empedokles writings as a whole are referred to as 'Empedokles'. The version is designated by a Roman numeral, followed by the line number, as in Volume 4.

The Letters are referred to by number and line as in Volume 6 of this edition, prefaced by the initial B.

References to the Frankfurter Ausgabe, edited by D.E. Sattler and Wolfram Groddeck, four volumes so far (Frankfurt/Main, 1975—), are prefaced by the initials FHA, followed by volume and page number.

In prose quotations, all underlinings indicating emphasis are by the quoted author, unless otherwise indicated.

(Underlinings in verse quotations are by myself.)

In cases of possible ambiguity, 'idea' = German Idee; 'to realise' = verwirklichen; 'subject' = Subjekt. 'To reflect' used transitively = 'to mirror'.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hölderlin scholarship has been dominated by the difficulty of his ideas. The intellectual nature and eventual obscurity of his work, its metaphysical, ethical, political, and theological, content and high degree of learning, especially in the adaptation of Greek mythology, likewise the complex formal structures, have made it appear ideally suited to criticism in the form of commentary, in which specific problems are isolated and explained, like words in a dictionary. This method is, on a different level, comparable to that of classical philology, which, having to bridge the great cultural gap between modern and ancient world, must provide a vast amount of information on specific points before proceeding to aesthetic evaluation; the commentator on a classical text sees himself less as a literary critic than as an historian concerned with literature. Behind this approach to Hölderlin lies the usually implicit justification that he too was a 'classical' poet.¹ The most obvious example is the Große Stuttgarter Ausgabe; but it holds good for the majority of works on Hölderlin not concerned purely with background.

A more recent approach, arising in direct reaction against that edition, is that of the 'left', itself divisible



into two main strands: the one born of the tradition of Marx's more idealistic humanism and its development by the 'Frankfurter Schule', the other concerned with Hölderlin's attitude to the French Revolution and the contemporary social and political situation in Germany. The new Frankfurter Hölderlin Ausgabe essentially exemplifies the former.²

Far apart though these attitudes are, they assume alike that the prime purpose of Hölderlin's poetry is communication, in the one case of ideas, in the other of a wish for social change. This assumption is ultimately moral and rational. Their consequent serious defect is the lack, in Hölderlin scholarship astonishingly pronounced, of an aesthetic criterion. Not only is no immanent standard of evaluation sought (that would be reasonable conduct at least for a commentary), but, because the resultant methods satisfy what they take to be the main purpose, it is actually excluded.

Thus the poet is endowed with an a priori authority, and seems more like a prophet than a fallible human being. Yet individual response, a truly dialectical relationship between the poet, thou, and the reader, I — the adventure of poetry, in which one enters the experience of another — is only possible through aesthetic judgement, acceptance and rejection (even if mistaken). Otherwise the poem becomes 'eine positive Offenbarung, wo der Offenbarende nur alles dabei thut, und der, dem die Offenbarung gegeben wird, nicht einmal sich regen darf, um sie zu nehmen, denn sonst hätt' er schon von dem Seinén etwas dazu gebracht' (B171, 58-61).

Both form and content obey laws, the latter those of logical coherence, the former those of artistic composition.

But the description of such perfection is not literary criticism but paraphrase, a restatement of Hölderlin's conscious intention resulting in the separate existence and consideration of form and content; whereas the very essence of an aesthetic criterion is their inseparability. Critics have treated the form as a more or less adequate means of expressing the content.

The supreme example of this and the crux of a possible literary approach to Hölderlin is his religious poetry: the Hymns and their 'gods', 'the god' who at its very beginning defines 'Paßmos' as a religious poem. If these poems are susceptible of theological interpretation then they are in principle open to any other method of investigation which presupposes that poetic language is primarily a means of communication. For example, if 'der Gott' can be a theological entity, then he is readily available as a humanist ideal or, as in 'Friedensfeier', an allegorical figure.³ The poet has a message, and we dispute what **it is**.

Since the Hymns appear to present a systematic world of coherent religious values, an attempt to introduce a different value would probably seem vague or arbitrary. But in isolating the poems that as a group most naturally lead to the Hymns, the Elegies, and analysing the emergence in them of the strophic form through which the Hymns speak, this thesis attempts a genetic study of Hölderlin's religion such as to prove that other values are involved; and in seeking to show that these are Nature, childhood, and love, things by no means separated from us by an unbridgeable gap but within everyone's experience, I suggest that for the

literary critic, in Hegel's words, 'es kann ... dienlich sein, den Namen "Gott" zu vermeiden'.

If the very principle upon which this poetry seems to be founded, the will, whose factual presence I do not dispute, to communicate a view of life, proves to be aesthetically negative, then the aesthetic criterion is equally founded upon the opposite pole, the socially defective heightening of poetic autonomy. The sheer appearance of communicative potential reveals the poetry's objective imperfection: the intellect, the means of ordering the world, and language, the means of sharing an otherwise private world, have both lost their principal function. For Hölderlin the conscious mind is per se negative; and it is, conversely, the aesthetic criterion that the conscious poetic act should function negatively. One aim of this thesis is to suggest that this phenomenon is not quite wilful, arising naturally, if in an extreme form, out of the premises of contemporary thought.

In that society is thus forced to pass judgement on the poet, it is confronted with something alien which cannot be reconciled with itself. It is a longing for more than life can give. Anyone who, reading the poetry, can sense and recreate this experience in himself is forced to abandon his academic detachment, yet, paradoxically, thus and only thus doing justice to the nature of the object of his study. He must himself, if only a little, be torn, and know what it is to be, in Hölderlin's words, 'ewig glücklich und ewig unglücklich' (B182, 38).

Thus the intellect is confronted with the same problem as by the Gospels; it is capable only of destroying what it

seeks and preserving what it destroys. Here as there,
'whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a
little child, he shall not enter therein'. In this thesis
the interpretation of poetry is subjective; 'damit sei
keiner ... unwissenschaftlichen Willkür das Tor aufgemacht'.⁴
It is intended, in analogy to its object, as a venture into
a different and unknown world.

Background and Context

The context is the Revolution of the mind. The Germans were⁵

... philosophische Zeitgenossen der Gegenwart, ohne ihre historischen Zeitgenossen zu sein ... Die Deutschen haben in der Politik gedacht, was die anderen Völker getan haben ... Deutschlands revolutionäre Vergangenheit ist ... theoretisch, es ist die Reformation. Wie damals der Mönch, so ist es jetzt der Philosoph, in dessen Hirn die Revolution beginnt.

Thus the radical students of the Tübingen Stift looked to Kant and to France as though to the theory and practice of freedom.⁶ Freedom is the single preoccupation of Kant's work, appearing in the Kritik der reinen Vernunft (1781) as the unifying principle ('transzendente Apperzeption') of 'theoretical' (scientific) knowledge, in the Kritik der praktischen Vernunft (1788) as self-determining morality ('intelligibler Charakter').

Such an assimilation of epistemology and ethics shows, however, that Kant is not primarily interested in social behaviour. The negative structure (unthinkability) of the transcendental Subject of knowledge finds its positive analogue in purity of purpose ('Zweck an sich'); the all-embracing dichotomy 'Autonomie'/'Heteronomie' is concerned

not just with the elimination of authority (church, state), but with freedom from the limitations of the human condition itself; it is the search for an answer to the 'Nessus-shirt of Newton'.⁷ Since for human beings such freedom is impossible, already in Kant there is an innate preference for the in fact amoral aspect of thought, its coherence, **over** its correctness; the self-acknowledged impossibility of practical realisation tends to prohibit action of any sort as being inevitably imperfect.

In Fichte the metaphysical interest begins to dominate over the ethical; the universe is reconstructed as a gigantic struggle between the potentially infinite 'Ich' and its finite object, the 'Nicht-Ich'. In this way the structurally simultaneous 'striving' to break through theory into (missing revolutionary) practice is doomed to failure,⁸ and the adoption of Kant's 'categorical imperative' as 'practical' solution to both problems at once deprives it of all moral potential. Because the systematic formulation of revolutionary activity as 'Streben' is, paradoxically, a self-sufficient philosophical solution, the perfection (purity) of the revolutionary thought supersedes the act and becomes a mirror in which the individual towers up to colossal heroic status.⁹

Here is the essential ambivalence of German Idealism: the renunciation of practical will frees political and social idealism from its inevitable undoing, self-interest, yet serves a heightened sense of self, of individual importance, which is ultimately but another form of self-interest.

Kant, with his metaphysical dichotomy 'Autonomie'/'Heteronomie', became the unquestioned legitimation for the conviction of the absolute validity of individual experience. For the students Hölderlin, Hegel, and Schelling in the Tübingen Stift the 'transcendental Subject' both vindicated and was realised in individual 'Begeisterung', which is, since it cannot be measured, infinite and therefore necessarily free from empirical determinism; this highest principle later becomes the 'Geist, der allem gemein und jedem eigen ist', the 'Weltgeist'. The social ideals thus adapted¹⁰ to the German tradition of religious and mystical experience are simply assumed, without practical interest, the sole concern being the divinity of personal experience. Meanwhile the moral law of 'practical reason' implied that any law not self-imposed is dead, abstract, 'positiv'; here the immediate enemy was the Stift itself, which during the revolutionary years became yet more repressive. But beyond this lay the laws of life themselves, now become barriers to individual aspirations.¹¹

These aspirations are formulated in the 'Systemprogramm' (4.297-99), which has preserved something of the spirit in Tübingen in those days. The fundamental idea: 'Absolute Freiheit aller Geister, die die intellektuelle Welt in sich tragen, und weder Gott noch Unsterblichkeit außer sich suchen dürfen' (4.298, 9-11).¹²

Here self-consciousness, the 'Ich bin Ich' which Kant had taken as proof of the unthinkability of 'transzendente Apperzeption', and which for him had therefore never been more than a necessary concomitant of thought, has become

unqualified highest principle of the universe: 'Die erste Idee ist ... die Vortellung von mir selbst, als einem absolut freien Wesen' (4.297, 7f.). Schelling, still the disciple of Fichte, takes this principle as proof that man creates his world: 'Mit dem freyen, selbstbewußten Wesen tritt zugleich eine ganze Welt — aus dem Nichts hervor' (4.297, 8-10); at one stroke physical determinism and the Creator of Genesis are eliminated. The individual arrogates to himself the nature of God, a claim founded upon the formal structure of self-consciousness: 'Ich bin Ich', in which Subject and Object are identical, is now the model for sensual awareness of objects, and so postulates the ultimate identity of the self and the material world. The way is opened for a reconstruction of the world as an I-related infinity; the consequent impossibility of reconciling determinism becomes the projection into infinity of this I-related process.¹³

Hölderlin's conception, formulated in Jena in direct response to and indeed reaction against Fichte, appears in the notes on 'Urtheil und Seyn' (4.216f.). 'Seyn', the object of 'intellectuale Anschauung', is: 'Wo Subject und Object schlechthin, nicht nur zum Theil vereinigt ist, ... so ... , daß keine Theilung vorgenommen werden kan, ohne das Wesen desjenigen, was getrennt werden soll, zu verletzen' (4.216, 22-26). 'Being' is then sharply distinguished from Fichte's 'Identität' (self-consciousness):

Aber dieses Seyn muß nicht mit der Identität verwechselt werden. Wenn ich sage: Ich bin Ich, so ist das Subject (Ich) und das Object (Ich) nicht so vereinigt, daß gar

keine Trennung vorgennommen werden kann, ohne, das Wesen desjenigen, was getrennt werden soll, zu verletzen; im Gegenteil das Ich ist nur durch diese Trennung des Ichs vom Ich möglich ... also ist die Identität nicht = dem absoluten Seyn. (4.216, 28-217, 11)

'Being' is unity, and as such the antithesis ('Gegenteil') to self-consciousness; therefore self-consciousness is 'wounded' 'Seyn'.¹⁴

These ideas, which represent the essence of Hölderlin's thought, pass into the structure of 'Hyperion', but only after the 'flight' from Jena (towards the beginning of June 1795) and abandonment of the metrical version. In the penultimate version (mainly written at home in Nürtingen during the rest of the year, the ideal of a lost unity ('was einst, wie man glauben kann, Eins war' (3.236, 19) is made the end of all human endeavour: 'Jenen ewigen Widerstreit zwischen unserem Selbst und der Welt zu endigen, den Frieden alles Friedens, der höher ist, denn alle Vernunft, den wiederzubringen, uns mit der Natur zu vereinigen zu Einem unendlichen Ganzen ... ' (3.236, 24-27). The ideal, 'die seelige Einigkeit, das Seyn, im einzigen Sinne des Worts, ist für uns verloren' (3.236, 15f.).

Already in the 'Fragment von Hyperion', written during 1794 at Waltershausen, the 'Seeligkeit' of this 'unity' means far more than 'bliss'.

Verloren ins weite Blau, blik' ich oft hinauf an den Äther, und hinein ins heilige Meer, und mir wird, als schlosse sich die Pforte des Unsichtbaren mir auf und ich vergienge mit allem, was um mich ist, bis ein Rauschen im Gesträuche mich aufweckt aus dem seeligen Tode, und mich wider Willen zurückruft auf die Stelle, wovon ich ausgieng. (220/11-16)

It is loss of self, death-in-life; and the experiences of Hyperion in the final version, whether love, friendship, or heroic action, are of the same quality: an end to consciousness ('weiter hatt' ich kein Bewußtseyn', Hyperion, I, 127/16f.) and to time ('Wir schwelgen ... , wir tödten im Rausche die Zeit', I, 53/4f.; 'Laß uns vergessen, daß es eine Zeit giebt', I, 94/11; 'Mahne mich nicht an die Zeit', I, 150/12), a surrender of self ('Laß mich dein seyn, laß mich mein vergessen', I, 130/9) and death ('die Sinne vergehn mir und der Geist entflieht' (I, 136/1). The moment when the lovers embrace — 'Es ist hier eine Lücke in meinem Daseyn. Ich starb ... ' (I, 128/4) — is formally identical to Hyperion's 'death-like sleep' (II, 61/10f.). The novel is a series of 'Lücken im Daseyn'.

But if the hero's experience is so intense as to be a kind of death, the narrative perspective is not just 'elegiac' (I, 4/2) retrospect and regret, but a means of self-preservation. Only time, which now 'divides' the poet Hyperion from his former self ('Ich will dir immer mehr von meiner Seeligkeit erzählen', I, 122/7; 'wir waren nur um so seeliger zusammen', I, 50/2f.) as from the characters with whom he was involved ('Fern und todt sind meine Geliebten', I, 9/4), can enable him to exist. 'Ich muß mich täuschen, als hätte sie vor alten Zeiten gelebt, als wüßt' ich durch Erzählung einiges von ihr, wenn ihr lebendig Bild mich nicht ergreifen soll, daß ich vergehe ... , wenn ich den Tod der Freude ... und den Tod der Trauer ... nicht sterben soll' (I, 105/15-106/4); 'Es ist unglaublich, daß der Mensch sich vor dem Schönsten fürchten soll; aber es

ist so.

O bin ich doch hundertmal vor diesen Augenblicken, dieser tödtenden Wonne meiner Erinnerungen geflohen ... ' (I, 122/17-123/2). Narration is the transcending of experience in its intensity, the preserved unity of the personality, 'Geist' as opposed to the individual 'Be-geist-erungen'.¹⁵

If experience is divine through its freedom from time (I, 133/3-7), then the divinity of experience exists, and can only exist, in the form of memory. 'Ich baue meinem Herzen ein Grab ... ; in seeligen Erinnerungen hüll' ich ... mich ein' (I, 110/15-17). Experience as present reality is an illusory alternative. The contemplation of his past by the 'Eremit in Griechenland' (sub-title) is not the 'Mönchsmoral' (4.235, 20) of an hermetic withdrawal from life; on the contrary, it absorbs love and action into itself. Unlike the hero of Schiller's tragedies, Hyperion does not struggle and fail, but seeks failure and, finding it, succeeds; failure does not change him, but proves quod erat demonstrandum, his divinely superior nature. Hölderlin's 'Scheue vor dem Stoffe' (B144, 7f.), 'Jungfräulichkeit des Geistes', a sensitivity too fine for harsh reality, is also the preconception that unless transformed and heightened by artistic fiction life will never satisfy the aspirations of the individual.

Art purifies the mirror of the self that life has clouded, and its function is to heighten experience, sense of self. What appears in the mirror is not mimesis, but the divine beauty of Narcissus.¹⁶ This is the basis of the

aesthetics placed at the heart of the novel, those of 'der schöne Mensch': 'Der Mensch ist aber ein Gott, so bald er Mensch ist. Und ist er ein Gott, so ist er schön' (I, 141/8f.); 'der göttliche Mensch ... will sich selber fühlen, darum stellt er seine Schönheit gegenüber sich' (I, 141/18-20).¹⁷ The recreation of divinity out of reality presupposes that of itself real life would resist such heightened sense of self; if the 'schöner Mensch' is a microcosm of the divinely-ordered cosmos, then no longer, as in the Renaissance tradition, through his actions in the world. The unity of the work of art makes it an 'island', set apart: 'Ich lebe jetzt auf der Insel' (I, 83/2), 'hab' ... mir eine Hütte gebaut' (I, 83/6).¹⁸

Experience is thus 'ex-centric' (3.236, 13), an entry into life which always presupposes withdrawal, return to 'rest' (Hyperion, I, 110/15): 'Ausflug und ... Rückkehr zu sich selbst', 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens' (I, 65/9f.). Hyperion's 'elegiac character' arises not through grief and regret at the passing of time but through his unreality as his creator's self-projection. Hölderlin had not yet lost his Diotima. But the part played by this self-projection, the structure of entry into and withdrawal from the world in surrender and regaining of identity, is erotic, and implies the ideal synonymy of 'leben' and 'lieben'.¹⁹ Entry presupposes submission, surrender (where-as meeting is encounter, clash); withdrawal to 'rest' is the return from the heightening but enervating dream, 'erschöpft von glühenden Phantasien' (4.218, 14f.).

Love between man and woman is thus paradigmatic,

highest, form of relationship, but no more than a form, a phenomenon; it takes place against the assumption of the infinite potential not only of Hyperion's 'spirit' (whose potential is also potency),²⁰ but also of the erotic object, which is Life itself, the All; and when, after they have lost one another, Diotima says to Hyperion: 'Ich wußte es bald; ich konnte dir nicht Alles seyn' (II, 68/4), the contrast is not with other possible objects of devotion but with (hypostasised) infinity itself: the Infinite.²¹ The model for loss of self is therewith cosmic, and appears as such at the beginning and end of the novel, thus providing a regulative ideal for all that takes place in-between. Prior to narration: 'Eines zu seyn mit Allem, das ist Leben der Gottheit ... , in seeliger Selbstvergessenheit wiederzukehren in's All der Natur' (I, 10/11-14); ending narration: 'So gab ich ... der seeligen Natur mich hin und fast zu endlos. Wär' ich so gerne ... geworden, wie der reine Lichtstral, um ihr näher zu seyn!' (II, 121/8-11). The 'Lichtstral' is the piercing, fertilising, 'organ' of Hyperion's 'Nahmensbruder, der herrliche Hyperion des Himmels' (I, 130/7f.), and the definitive confession comes at the very beginning: 'O seelige Natur! Ich weiß nicht, wie mir geschieht, wenn ich mein Auge erhebe vor deiner Schöne, aber alle Lust des Himmels ist in den Thränen, die ich weine vor dir, der Geliebte vor der Geliebten' (I, 10/2-5; cf. already 'Fragment von Hyperion', 220/7-10). Nor can 'fast zu endlos' be taken as self-critical distancing,²² for the implicit criterion is not the gap between ideal and reality, but the insubstantiality of what the imagination

can achieve in comparison with the lost reality of childhood.²³

The child is undivided 'being', unity with Nature, and therefore divine: 'Ja! ein göttlich Wesen ist das Kind, solange es nicht in die Chamäleonsfarbe der Menschen getaucht ist.

Es ist ganz, was es ist, und darum ist es so schön ... Es ist unsterblich, denn es weiß vom Tode nichts' (I, 13/7-14). The national and historical contrast between Greece and Germany in the Athens letter is not based upon cultural phenomena ('Athenische Kunst und Religion, und Philosophie und Staatsform ... sind Blüten und Früchte ... Ihr nehmt die Wirkungen für die Ursache' (I, 138/7-9), but upon the ideal of 'organic' and 'free' individual development (Rousseau's educative precept): 'Ungestörter in jedem Betracht ... erwuchs das Volk der Athener' (I, 138/12f.); 'Laßt von der Wiege an den Menschen ungestört! treibt aus der engvereinten Knospe seines Wesens, treibt aus dem Hüttchen seiner Kindheit ihn nicht heraus!' (I, 141/1-3). When Hyperion says: 'Aber schön ist auch die Zeit des Erwachens, wenn man nur zur Unzeit uns nicht weckt' (I, 14/3f.), he refers to himself; his nature too has been 'injured'.²⁴

If loss of childhood is indeed injured 'Seyn', then the recreation of union with Nature in the world of the imagination is the memory of beauty, and all experience will be shaped according to the ideal of the child's freedom from consciousness, its 'Seeligkeit', divinity. That it must be shaped, ^{that it} is therefore not naturally so, makes it 'Kunst' as opposed to 'Natur'.²⁵ Both the 'Idee der

Schönheit' and its form, memory, find legitimation in the (freely-adapted) philosophy of Plato (cf. 3.237, 7f.).

The paradox that childhood 'Seeligkeit' is immortality (unawareness of death) and infinity (union with the All), and yet itself, through absence of consciousness, equivalent to death, can only be satisfied by a compromise:²⁶ a temporary elimination of consciousness, holding the foreknowledge of return to the self, so that poetic existence is not actual identity with Nature (absolute), but the nearest possibility (relative). The act of love, although of literally de-voted intensity, presupposes difference, separation, 'subject-object'. Whereas childhood is a 'melody' ('Fragment von Hyperion', 183/10), adult consciousness is a 'harmony' of 'opposites'.²⁷

Thus the poetic act seeks reunion with Nature; but on its, the subject's, side it seeks the child's freedom from the mortality of finitude. In that the act of love is also death-in-life death is drawn into life and, from the free perspective of ultimately regained consciousness, watched and, if ^{only} partially, overcome. The mirror of art reflects not just the divine beauty but, since even death is thus relativised and transcended, the divine immortality of the soul. As the individual's life is in the end governed not by chance, but by the archetypal destiny, appearing through him, of being 'cast out of the garden of Nature' (I, 12/1f.), so too 'peace' ('Frieden', 'Ruhe') is ^{the} reconciliation of the finite state with infinity, so far as that can be achieved. The self that watches itself die has power over death.

But it is also passive, detached from its acting alter ego, cut off from life. The child's world, although melodious, is egocentric; it 'knows nothing of death' because it is unaware of and so unrelativised by others, existing in the arms of Mother Nature, the All. Consciousness, bringing with it masculine will and purpose, presupposes individuation, multiplicity of wills. As cosmic Logos-Eros, Hyperion represents not just the adaptation of masculine desire to the child's world, but the purification of masculinity from involvement in the adult world, from the danger of institutionalisation, relativisation: of forfeited infinity. Similarly, the 'I' re-flects because it is thrown back by the resisting hardness of a world which ought to have dissolved at a touch of its lover's hand, but which turns out to be governed by the harsh outline of individuation.²⁸

Thus the relationship of narrating to narrated 'I' is not, as the Bildungsroman proper would demand, structured by past and present, but by the identity-in-difference of self-consciousness. The insubstantiality of the cosmic role is a necessary aspect of its creation.

Eines zu seyn mit Allem, was lebt! ...

Auf dieser Höhe steh' ich oft ... Aber ein Moment des Besinnens wirft mich herab. Ich denke nach und finde mich, wie ich zuvor war, allein, mit allen Schmerzen der Sterblichkeit ...

(I, 11/1, 8-10; cf., again, 'Fragment von Hyperion', 220/7-10)

Self-consciousness is a 'Zurückschrecken'. 'Es ist, als säh' ich, aber dann erschrek' ich wieder, als wär' es meine

eigne Gestalt, was ich gesehn, es ist, als fühlt' ich ihn, den Geist der Welt ... , aber ich erwache und meine, ich habe meine eignen Finger gehalten' (I, 16/7-10). For Nature offers no resistance, is purely passive object, the discord and clash of intersubjectivity having been eliminated; but the price is ^{the} absence of human contact, of a hold on life, of spiritual certainty. And, despite the masculine form, the absence of conflict will always give to Nature a feminine role, so that masculine slides into feminine divinity. 'O wenn sie eines Vaters Tochter ist, die herrliche Natur, ist das Herz der Tochter nicht sein Herz? Ihr Innerstes, ist's nicht Er?'

Self-consciousness is also 'Zurückschrecken' from real life, ending in isolation, 'living-death'; this is the price of the divine quality of experience, the 'dream'. 'O ein Gott ist der Mensch, wenn er träumt, ein Bettler, wenn er nachdenkt, und wenn die Begeisterung hin ist ... ' (I, 12/3f.). The heightened significance of life, its infinite potential, depends upon withdrawal, so that the work of art is trapped between the two poles of the retrospective ideal and the outside world, and thus doubly a prison: the prison of consciousness itself which, one imagines, closed about the growing boy when childhood freedom ended in the monastic schools;²⁹ and the prison of self-hood, of the enclosed world of the imagination. A priori, narration is lost immediacy: language as opposed to reality.

This insoluble dual deficiency, towards childhood/infinity and towards reality, is the basis of the novel's open form. Since the subject-matter is the poetic self in

search for what it has lost, the novel achieves pure communication free, at least in conception, from any other possible purpose (thus the conventional view of art as entertainment or instruction, the rational attitude of the Enlightenment, is explicitly renounced in the 'Vorrede'). The presence of an ideal recipient, the 'schöner Deutscher' 'Bell-armin', presupposes the opening polemic ('Ich versprache gerne diesem Buche die Liebe der Deutschen. Aber ich fürchte ... ', I, 3/2f.): ' ... nur dir, mein Bellarmin, nur einer reinen freien Seele, wie die deine ist, erzähl' ich's' (I, 123/7f.). Thus communication itself becomes thematic; because the artist has to seek others to speak to his work is pure self-expression, and this is the condition of its open-ness to the future, to practice.

Such formal openness corresponds to the subject-matter, the undefined vision of the All which is the very perspective reality would deny. The division between the poetic self and Nature both makes possible communication with the outside world, which absolute self-dissolution would end, and attacks contemporary society. 'So dacht' ich. Nächstens mehr', the end of the novel, is at once ^{the} restoration of consciousness and ^a turn to Bellarmin. Thereby the statement of unity which otherwise would be the conclusion is left as renewed 'Trennung' and greatly intensified, as one may judge by leaving off those last five words: Hyperion would then end with a placid and potentially didactic philosophical statement. As it is, the Absolute remains in ('injured') relationship to the self; the world is excluded, and yet this self-exclusion is communicated.³⁰

The formal structure of Hyperion thus represents a refinement, not a rejection, of the simpler idealisation of individual potential by Fichte and in the 'Systemprogramm'. There self-consciousness was proud assertion. Here too it is ^{the} first principle of the universe, but negatively. 'Man muß im Norden ... zum selbstbewußten Geiste werden, ehe man Mensch, zum klugen Manne, ehe man Kind ist' (I, 147/10, 13f.). The 'titanic' Promethean theft of immortality, the colossal but tragic projection of the individual onto a universal stage, is found wanting against the ideal of childhood union with Nature; 'striving' is softened into 'love'.³¹ The underlying acknowledgement of an intractable obstacle to individual aspiration, of a rock (destiny, Nature) against which the Sturm und Drang hero can never prevail, has gone. The Goethean-Fichteian original 'Tat' is for Hölderlin the premature tearing-open of the bud and tearing-apart of the soul, a violence which associates readily with Fichte's 'ethical' idealism and revolutionary 'Streben', indeed, with the will itself, and for which the poem must literally atone.

In his brief stay at Jena Hölderlin had found in both Schiller and Fichte the harsh manhood of the categorical imperative.³² While still in Waltershausen he writes to Schiller, adapting, as always, the tone and ideas of his letter to the personality and views of its recipient: 'Indessen ich muß wollen, und ich will. Ich will zu einem Manne werden' (B76, 52f.). Schiller's own philosophy was not won without struggle:³³

Wohl darfst du dir das ruhige Naturglück zum Ziel in der Ferne aufstecken, aber nur jenes, welches der Preis deiner Würdigkeit ist ... Jene Natur ... liegt hinter dir, sie muß ewig hinter dir liegen. Verlassen von der Leiter, die dich trug, bleibt dir jetzt keine andere Wahl mehr, als mit freyem Bewußtseyn und Willen das Gesetz zu ergreifen, oder rettungslos in eine bodenlose Tiefe zu fallen.

The paternal command to go out and find a place in the world is the law of purpose; practised, it both creates the split between subject and object of purpose, and implicates in the world: in institutionalised forms — work, marriage, children — which must pass away into death. It contradicts the perspective of metaphysical freedom, from which 'naive' acceptance of ordinary life appears as a surrender not to Nature in her ideal totality but to the mediocrity of 'bürgerliche Verhältnisse'. This is a sacrifice of divine status, an exposure to the meaningless mechanical laws of the physical universe. 'Die Natur, wissen wir, obgleich eine unendliche Größe im Ganzen, zeigt sich in jeder einzelnen Wirkung abhängig und bedürftig.'³⁴

This conflict is characteristic of the early Romantic movement; the eagerness with which the artist embraced his new freedom accompanied profound changes in his relationship to society. While in the middle classes public and private life become separated and the man goes out into a hostile world, literature, even when, like Hyperion, it contains moral and heroic subject-matter, is addressed typically to the closeted woman; and if, as often, it did not provide enough to live on, the first resort was to become a Hofmeister, social equivalent of the homeless Wanderer.³⁵

For Hölderlin the poet is virtually definable as one who

'looks upon a whole' (4.156, 6f.). In Hyperion the Germans are attacked for their 'mutilated', fragmented, existence, their contentment with institutionalised lives, their 'Sorgen', 'Geschäfte', 'Treiben', 'Notwerk': their 'Chamäleonfarbe'. Next the metaphysical measure of human life is concentrated in the figure of Empedokles, whose conception (in the Frankfurt plan) overlaps with the completion of Hyperion:

Empedokles, durch sein Gemüth und seine Philosophie schon längst zu Kulturhaß gestimmt, zu Verachtung alles sehr bestimmten Geschäfts, alles nach verschiedenen Gegenständen gerichteten Interesses, ein Todtfeind aller einseitigen Existenz, und deswegen auch in wirklich schönen Verhältnissen unbefriedigt, unstät, leidend, blos weil sie besondere Verhältnisse sind und, nur im großen Akkord mit allem Lebendigen empfunden ganz ihn erfüllen, blos weil er nicht mit allgegenwärtigem Herzen innig, wie ein Gott, und frei und ausgebreitet, wie ein Gott, in ihnen leben und lieben kan, blos weil er, so bald sein Herz und sein Gedanke das Vorhandene umfaßt, ans Gesez der Succession gebunden ist —
(4.145, 5-15)

Here is the Empedoklean idea, consistent throughout all three versions. The conflict with life is metaphysical and so never becomes the basis for a tragedy.³⁶ Yet the ultimate cause of this failure is the overpowerful element of self-projection into the hero, extending to Empedokles' attitude to family:

Er sagt, daß er sein Weib und seine Kinder mit sich nehme, daß er sie am Herzen trage, nur meint er, können sie ihn nicht behalten. Der Horizont sei ihm nur zu enge, meint er, er müsse fort, um höher sich zu stellen, um aus der Ferne sie mit allem, was da lebe, anzubliken, anzulächeln.
(4.146, 25-29)

The outlines of personal relationship dissolve into a

universal vista ...

The first letter to Neuffer describing love for Susette Gontard expresses a simple joy; so too does the second, some six months later, but with a slight shading.

Ich habe eine Welt von Freude umschifft, seit wir uns nicht mehr schrieben. Ich hätte Dir gerne indeß von mir erzählt, wenn ich jemals stille gestanden wäre und zurückgesehen hätte. Die Wooge trug mich fort; mein ganzes Wesen war immer zu sehr im Leben, um über sich nachzudenken. Und noch ist es so! (B136, 3-8)

One senses, if not a conflict, a division graphically visible in the paragraph ordering. The first paragraph is 'reflection'; the following exclamation is a self-correction. The motifs and images are familiar from Hyperion: 'Ich seh', ich sehe, wie das enden muß. Das Steuer ist in die Wooge gefallen und das Schiff wird, wie an den Füßen ein Kind, ergriffen und an die Felsen geschleudert' (I, 136/3-5).³⁷ Love's intensity is experienced as an overpowering force, a loss of self 'im Leben' — 'Ach! ich könnte ein Jahrtausend lang in seeliger Betrachtung mich und alles vergessen', the letter continues — and calls forth the 'Rückkehr zu sich selbst': 'Nachdenken' ('Reflexion'), 'Geist'.

Some five months later the days are already darkening. In an atmosphere no doubt poisoned by rumours and malicious gossip, the poet speaks of 'Liebe und Haß' (B140, 23f.).³⁸ Yet not just society, love itself is in question: 'Das Schiksaal treibt uns vorwärts und im Kreise herum ... , wie einer, mit dem die Rosse davongegangen sind' (4-7). The image comes, consciously or not, from the myth in Plato's Phaedrus, which Hölderlin knew so well; but a charioteer

who loses control of those horses, of energy spiritual and physical, is bound to destruction. This sense of psychic endangerment underlies the longing for 'Ruhe' (27); again, 'peace' presupposes that emotional and sensual life is a venture of the self into an alien realm rather than a self-commitment to another.

Now letters to his brother take up the tale. The first is still in the summer of 1797.

Es war mir noch vor wenig Jahren unbegreiflich, daß irgend eine Situation, die unsre Kraft zurückhält, ... eine günstige genannt werden könne. Jetzt fühl' ich manchmal, Welch ein Glück darinn liegt, wenn ich sie mit andern vergleiche, die uns oft zu viel aus uns entfernen, die für uns das sind, was der Rübsamen für die Äker, die zu viel Kraft aus uns ziehen, und uns für die Folgezeit unbrauchbar machen.

(B142, 15-21)

It is not just the terrible circumstances in Frankfurt but fear of the force that has drawn him into them that speaks through these lines: a succubine seizing and draining of vitality and potency (the images themselves come from the fertilising process in agriculture), an experience of daemonic intensity known only by those to whom love is by nature strange.

At the same time as the parting is thus obliquely anticipated, Hölderlin forms 'den ganz detaillirten Plan zu einem Trauerspiele ... , dessen Stoff mich hinreißt' (27-29): the Frankfurt plan, in which Empedokles, partly on the pretext of a domestic quarrel, leaves wife and children, and sets off for freedom.

In the letter of 2 November Frankfurt has become a hostile world epitomised by the malicious jealousy of the

tyrannical master of the house; the line of thought runs naturally from 'Kälte und geheime Unterjochungssucht' (6f.) to 'Bewußtseyn meiner Freiheit' (35), but again with the fear of 'Überspannung', 'unmäßige Anstrengung und Bewegung meines innern Lebens' (8f.). The poet's emotional involvement and the specific environment merge into a single conception, a process decisive for the later poetic development.

Und wer vermag sein Herz in einer schönen Gränze zu halten, wenn die Welt auf ihn mit Fäusten einschlägt? Je angefochtener wir sind vom Nichts, das, wie ein Abgrund, um uns her uns angähnt, oder auch vom tausendfachen Etwas der Gesellschaft und der Thätigkeit der Menschen, das gestaltlos, seel- und lieblos uns verfolgt, zerstreut, um so leidenschaftlicher und heftiger und gewaltsamer muß der Widerstand von unsrer Seite werden. (17-22)

One must imagine the impact of Frankfurt, now the most important commercial centre in Germany after Hamburg, on one who had been raised and educated in so cloistered an environment. Gontard himself was a leading business man. Here, in utter contrast to the world of thought, whether the Idealism of Jena or theological studies of Tübingen, is a world of myriad interests and purposes, of material concerns, practical problems, in the face of which the great philosophical crux of late eighteenth century thought, the contradiction between reason and senses, becomes harmonious abstraction confronted by intractable reality. The 'Bewußtseyn meiner Freiheit' taught by Kant, the 'Zweck an sich' which liberates from heteronomous determinism, seems undermined by the man of affairs, the 'Realist'.

'Abgrund' expresses the 'Nichts' of meaningless causality,

of futile mortality;³⁹ the 'tausendfaches Etwas' is the chaotic 'Thätigkeit' of the middle class, the reality, as opposed to Fichte's 'Streben', of bourgeois revolution. Such things are 'armseelige Mitteldinge von Etwas und Nichts' ('Fragment von Hyperion', 183/6f.), and such 'activity' has become typical of involvement in a metaphysically chaotic multiplicity of wills quite irreconcilable with the still island of childhood existence in the All; in this chaos love too, being masculine will, is implicated.

The same is expressed yet more clearly in the letter of February 1798: 'Lieber Karl! es ist oft wünschenswerther, blos mit der Oberfläche unsers Wesens beschäftigt zu seyn, als immer seine ganze Seele, sei es in Liebe oder in Arbeit, der zerstörenden Wirklichkeit auszusezen' (B152, 19-22). The adventurous pilot far out at sea has 'suffered shipwreck' (32), and peaceful organic development, the way of Greece, now seems impossible: '... schwerlich wird mir etwas ganz gelingen, weil ich meine Natur nicht in Ruhe und anspruchloser Sorgenlosigkeit aufreifen ließ' (36-38). In the letter of 4 July (B162) the two quotations from Hyperion have biographical significance; Alabanda's assertion of freedom defies the humiliating treatment of the Hofmeister, Hyperion's affirmation of suffering points to self-expression through the form of tragedy.

Thus the loss of Susette Gontard, conflict with the world, and above all the problematic nature of love, follow Hölderlin into the seclusion of Homburg. What is needed is no less than the reconstruction of a world that was

through love divine; and 'divine' is not a metaphor equivalent to 'wonderful' or 'supremely right', but to be understood literally: 'Seeligkeit', an end to time, infinity. In the draft of a letter to her Hölderlin writes: 'Täglich muß ich die verschwundene Gottheit wieder rufen' (B182, 1); in retrospect, from Hauptwil to his brother: 'zu Anfang meines Aufenthalts in Homburg ... hatte ein Unglaube an die ewige Liebe sich meiner bemächtigt' (B231, 4-7). It seems that tragedy and elegy will be closely related.

The paradox of Sophoclean tragedy, the highest artistic unity depicting the bitterest conflict, now comes to symbolise the appearance of suffering that expresses utmost divine reality. The experience of Frankfurt becomes a distorted image of the divinely-structured self, henceforth necessarily expressed indirectly, through suffering, not directly through love. 'Das tragische ... Gedicht ... ist die Metapher einer intellektuellen Anschauung' (4.266, 6-8).⁴⁰ Now Hölderlin remembers the supreme example of divine suffering: 'O, Lieber! wann wird man unter uns erkennen, daß die höchste Kraft in ihrer Äußerung zugleich auch die Bescheidenste ist, und daß das Göttliche, wenn es hervorgeht, niemals ohne eine gewisse Trauer und Demuth seyn kann?' (B169, 23-26). The humble 'island' of love, the humiliating departure, indeed the whole abysmal gap between aspiration ('Ehrgeiz') and reality, find justification in the figure of Christ, whereby the dualistic adaptation of the Judaeo-Christian tradition in terms of spirit and matter, already intimated in the 'Phänomenologie'

of Hyperion, emerges more clearly now that it is enriched by suffering. The tradition is that of God's self-revelation to man: the 'still small voice' heard by Elijah, the suffering Servant of the Lord proclaimed by Isaiah, the lamb brought to slaughter, and finally the passion and death of the son of God, in Johannine Christology the highest act of love of the divine Logos towards the world. It now provides a philosophical structure enabling the 'Gott in uns' not only to be preserved, but to remain what it was in Hyperion: a spirit of love.

Thus the separation and suffering anticipated in Hyperion have become reality. Like Empedokles, Hölderlin withdraws to the heights, to Homburg vor der Höhe, and looks down upon the world, 'upon a whole', namely, Frankfurt. 'Da ... steige ich auf den Hügel ... und sehe über Frankfurt in die weiten Fernen hinaus' (B174, 64-67; cf. the last strophe of 'Wohl geh' ich täglich ... ').⁴¹ The 'weite Fernen' of an infinite perspective have absorbed both the world of men and the love which implicated in that world. But not only are they thus transcended; they merge.

Man kann jetzt den Menschen nicht alles gerade heraussagen, denn sie sind zu träg und eigenliebig, um die Gedankenlosigkeit und Irreligion, worinn sie stecken, wie eine verpestete Stadt zu verlassen, und auf die Berge zu flüchten, wo reinere Luft ist und Sonn und Sterne näher sind, und wo man heiter in die Unruhe der Welt hinabsieht, das heißt, wo man zum Gefühle der Gottheit sich erhoben hat, und aus diesem alles betrachtet, was da war und ist und seyn wird. (B170, 52-59)

Withdrawal is thus the premise not only for forgiveness but for the priestly role of conversion. Empedokles'

injury ('Aergerniß') at the hands of the people, his withdrawal, and subsequent reconciliation, are a memory of Christ's agapē upon the Cross, 'Keinen Fluch! er muß lieben ...' (4.481, 20) of 'Father, forgive them; for they know what they do'. Yet the pleas beseeching Empedokles to come down from Etna and back into human life are, by analogy to Christ's temptation in the wilderness where, on an 'exceeding high mountain', he is shown 'all the kingdoms of the world', rejected. The magnitude of the 'Aergerniß' is too great: the disruption of the lovers' 'geheimere Welt' was an offence against the Divine by the egotistic Frankfurt world. Such extremes preclude compromise: life is either Beauty, 'goldne kindische Ahnungen' (B115, 13), or the Beast.

The injury done by Frankfurt (so too, in John's Gospel, 'the world knew him not') finds expression yet more readily in the figure of Achilles. Homer 'läßt ihn zurücktreten (weil sich der Jüngling in seiner genialischen Natur vom rangstolzen Agamemnon, als ein Unendlicher unendlich belaidiget fühlt)' (4.225, 10-12). Yet this sense of 'Belaidigung', so feelingly conveyed in the first letter from Homberg, is no more than a confirmation of what the poet already knew and had, in the only underlined passage of the novel, put into the mouth of Diotima.⁴²

Wem einmal, so, wie dir, die ganze Seele belaidiget war, der ruht nicht mehr in einzelner Freude, wer so, wie du, das fade Nichts gefühlt, erheitert in höchstem Geiste sich nur, wer so den Tod erfuhr, wie du, erhohlt allein sich unter den Göttern. (Hyperion, II, 68/11-15)

It is, then, an archetypal hurt which has merely re-
occurred in the loss of Diotima: the Fall from 'Seeligkeit'
(self-forgetting divine existence) into consciousness.⁴³
In transcendental terms, Subject and Object, which first
fell apart when childhood ended, have divided again. The
memory of childhood and the loss of Diotima become formally
identical in the definition of tragedy: 'Der Gott und
Mensch scheint Eins, darauf ein Schiksaal, das alle Demuth
und allen Stolz des Menschen erregt und am Ende Verehrung
der Himmlischen einerseits und andererseits ein gereinigtes
Gemüth als Menscheneigentum zurückläßt' (B203, 38-41). Yet
this definition of tragic catharsis would serve as a sum-
mary of 'Elegie'.

The withdrawal from love is necessary, 'destiny', and
follows an archetypal myth of discord; it reflects a choice,
preferring that love should always remain something strange,
mysterious, wonderful, and never enter the mediocrity of
life. The love-affair remains nevertheless the event of
Hölderlin's life, and whereas in Hyperion Diotima was no
more than the highest example of Hyperion's relationship
to the world and the most important stage in his 'Bildung',
now the unique and physical reality of experience defines
and concretises the cosmic ideal. What life has lost,
poetry gains. The withdrawal of Empedokles to his lonely
heights, of Achilles to his tent, makes clear that she was
and is the world and that in her, the one person, was con-
centrated, in a loss of self in which all else was forgotten,
an entire capacity for relationship. This synthesis of
abstract and concrete, fulfilling the theological structure

of the divine individual, carries out an impossible compromise between love for the All, Hyperion's *raison d'être*, and love for something, someone.

The progressive 'Verlängnung alles Accidentellen' (B183, 47f., 66f.) throughout the three versions,⁴⁴ above all in the elimination of Empedokles' social environment, reflects the poet's own progressive cutting of the bonds that tie to real life. By the 'Grund zum Empedokles' Hölderlin can say: 'In diesem unabhängigen Verhältnisse lebt er' (4.160, 18); and we can no longer tell whether the sequestered garden is meant, or the lonely heights of Etna where the third version begins, the town, like Frankfurt, left behind, a city of the plain,⁴⁵ and Empedokles close now to heaven, 'frei, wie Fittige des Himmels' (III, 24). When he dismisses Pausanias —

Habt ihr zum Dolche die Erinnerung
Nicht mir gemacht ... ?
Nein! du bist ohne Schuld — nur kann ich, Sohn!
Was mir zu nahe kömmt, nicht wohl ertragen.
(III, 152-56)

— the last human figure leaves his world, and thereafter he speaks only to 'Manes' (Latin for the (shades of the) dead): 'Seit ich den Lebenden/ Gestorben bin, erstehen mir die Todten' (III, 341f.).⁴⁶ He speaks with himself.

That Achilles is, through the loss of Briseis, 'als ein Unendlicher unendlich belaidiget' (cf. 'Unendlich trift es den Unendlichen', of Empedokles (I, 2048)) is the negative corollary to the divinity of love, the conviction that it is an infinite Spirit of which lovers partake (and

upon which they bestow 'Dank', finite form). The absolute validity of individual experience now takes revenge in the 'endless'-ness of pain and resentment. Both the objectivising projection onto a mythological character and the conceptualisation ('infinite') itself are an attempt to understand and overcome this emotion. The search for detachment to which the last letters of Frankfurt and the first of Homburg bear witness can be summarised in one concept: 'Verstand'. ' ... wer nicht leiden will, leidet auch niemals. Es ist freilich eine Arbeit, bis man die äußeren Zufälle ein wenig gleichgültiger ansehen gelernt' (B157, 17-19).

... die Welt zerstört uns bis auf den Grund, wenn wir jede Belaidigung geradezu ins Herz gehen lassen, und die Besten müssen schlechterdings ... zu Grunde gehen, wenn sie nicht ... alles, was die Menschen ihnen aus Nothdurft und Geistes- und Herzensschwäche anthun, in den ruhigen Verstand aufnehmen, statt ins gute Gemüth, das auch, wenn es gekränkt ist, von seiner Großmuth nicht lassen kann, und den armen Belaidigungen der Menschen die Ehre widerfahren läßt, sie hoch zu nehmen ... der ruhige Verstand ist die heilige Aegide, die im Kriege der Welt das Herz vor giftigen Pfeilen bewahrt. Und ich glaube ... , daß dieser ruhige Verstand ... kann erworben werden. (B172, 8-23)

'Es ist freilich nicht gut, daß ich so zerstörbar bin' (B173, 20f.). 'Verstand' is 'Bestimmtheit', limitation in and therefore certainty regarding the emotion and its object.

... bin ich nur einmal so weit ... , im Mangelhaften weniger den unbestimmten Schmerz ... , als genau seinen eigentümlichen augenblicklichen, besondern Mangel zu fühlen und zu sehen, und so auch im Bessern seine eigene Schönheit, sein charakteristisches Gute zu erkennen, und weniger bei einer allgemeinen Empfindung stehen zu bleiben ... , so wird mein Gemüth mehr Ruhe, und meine Thätigkeit einen stetigeren Fortgang finden. Denn wenn wir einen Mangel nur unendlich empfinden, so sind wir ... geneigt, diesem Mangel

nur unendlich abhelfen zu wollen ... (B179, 14-49)

In this sense he writes to Sinclair: 'Du weist, wie sehr das solche Verhältnisse, wie unseres ist, sichert, daß man sich begreift und recht bestimmt im Auge hat' (B171, 19f.).

For Empedokles withdrawal is the premise for a Christ-like act of reconciliation through sacrificial death. This death, the essential continuum throughout all three versions, is the theme of the fascinating 'Grund zum Empedokles'. The 'Grund' itself, the basis, is the harmonious relationship of man and Nature: 'Natur und Kunst sind sich im reinen Leben nur harmonisch entgegengesetzt ... dann ist die Vollendung da, und das Göttliche ist in der Mitte von beiden' (4.152, 12f., 18f.). The immediate motivation, however, is the alienated relationship between man and Nature in the historical Empedokles' environment. He is 'ein Sohn seines Himmels und seiner Periode, seines Vaterlandes, ein Sohn der gewaltigen Entgegensezungen von Natur und Kunst in denen die Welt vor seinen Augen erschien' (4.154, 25-27), and 'ein solcher Mensch kann nur aus der höchsten Entgegensezung von Natur und Kunst erwachsen' (4.155, 20f.); 'So ist Empedokles ... das Resultat seiner Periode, und sein Charakter weist auf diese zurück, so wie er aus dieser hervorgieng' (31f.).

This is a most powerful emphasis on the historical relativity of Empedokles' deed, which thus seems to contrast utterly with the absolute meaning of Christ's death. 'So sollte ... Empedokles ein Opfer seiner Zeit werden' (4.157, 14). What he does is comprehended by the universal

formula 'man and Nature' ('Subject-Object'), and therefore is, so the polemical implication, at least in theory possible for anyone.

It transpires, however, that the supposedly unique historical context is based upon the supra-historical polarity: Germany (= modern world)/Greece (ancient world), and that Empedokles' world is simply the reversal of Hölderlin's own. With climate, 'der glühende Himmelsstrich und die üppige Sicilianische Natur' (4.158, 7f.; cf. 29), as physical determinant, Nature rules over Magna Graecia: 'Die Natur ... beherrschte seine freigeisterischen Zeitgenossen mit ihrer Macht und ihrem Reize' (4.159, 22-24). 'Bei uns' — that is, in the cold north (cf. Hyperion, I, 147/6) — 'ists umgekehrt' (B236, 30). Presumably the contrast is between the speculative cosmogonies and cosmologies in the pre-Socratic tradition and the scientific approach of Newton and Galileo whose theoretical voice was Bacon's empiricism.

However, the sheer vagueness of the terminology enables Hölderlin simultaneously to treat Agrigent as though it were its opposite, the Europe of circa 1800 that 'appeared before' his own 'eyes'. Thus the relevance of Empedokles' solution, already guaranteed by the reversibility of settings, becomes acute: 'die freigeisterische Kühnheit ... mußte bei Empedokles ... um einen Schritt weiter gehen, er mußte des Unbekannten Meister zu werden suchen ... , sein Geist mußte der Dienstbarkeit so sehr entgegenstreben, daß er die überwältigende Natur zu umfassen, durch und durch zu verstehen, und ihrer bewußt zu werden suchen mußte' (4.158,

30-159, 4); yet without Hölderlin having to abandon the historical polarity which makes Empedokles' act a response to Nature's power over men.

Thus sacrificial death appears as the supreme solution not just to the one distortion of harmonious relationship, but to the other: man's mastery over Nature.⁴⁷ And although the type of such mastery is certainly science, the 'freigeisterische Kühnheit' thus acquires yet more immediate relevance; 'dieses negative Räsonniren, Nichtdenken des Unbekannten, das bei einem übermüthigen Volke so natürlich ist' (4.158, 31f.) can refer to the philosophical systems by Fichte and Schelling. The fact that at least the former must represent rule over Nature ('Nicht-Ich') by Reason ('Ich') does not impair the symmetry: Hölderlin, like Empedokles a poet, must 'go one step further' than they.⁴⁸ Since this further step is also the furthest, death, the historical-fictional distinction between the author and his creation becomes critical. The Empedoklean act is described thus (4.152, 12f., 22-153, 13):

Natur und Kunst sind sich im reinen Leben nur harmonisch entgegengesetzt ... Aber dieses Leben ist nur im Gefühle und nicht für die Erkenntniß vorhanden. Soll es erkennbar seyn, so muß es dadurch sich darstellen, daß es im Übermaße der Innigkeit, wo sich die Entgegengesetzten verwechseln, sich trennt, daß das organische das sich zu sehr der Natur überließ und sein Wesen und Bewustseyn vergaß, in das Extrem der Selbstthätigkeit und Kunst und Reflexion, die Natur hingegen wenigstens in ihren Wirkungen auf den reflectirenden Menschen in das Extrem des Aorgischen, des Unbegreiflichen, des Unfühlbaren, des Unbegrenzten übergeht, bis ... die beiden ursprünglich einigen sich wie anfangs begegnen, nur daß die Natur organischer durch den cultivirenden Menschen ... , hingegen der Mensch aorgischer, allgemeiner, unendlicher geworden ist. Diß Gefühl gehört vielleicht zum höchsten ... , wenn beide entgegengesetzte, der verallgemeinerte geistig lebendige künstlich rein aorgische Mensch

und die Wohlgestalt der Natur sich begegnen.

The 'Grund' is the relationship between man (as civilising instance, 'das Organische') and Nature (the infinite 'Nicht-Ich' which has no consciousness and therefore, in Fichteian terms, resists organisation: 'das Aorgische'). The initial 'Trennung' expresses the state of alienation and discord pertaining in the world of Magna Graecia: a division was the necessary reaction against the overpowering warmth of Mediterranean Nature, so that the first stage ('Innigkeit', 'Selbstvergessenheit') has given way to a 'freigeisterische Kühnheit'. The effect of this 'Trennung' upon Nature maintains the historical polarity (ancient/modern), for she passes to 'das Extrem des aorgischen, des Unbegreiflichen', so that the Agrigentiner have a similar destiny to the Egyptians' in Hyperion: 'Wie ein prächtiger Despot, wirft seine Bewohner der orientalische Himmelsstrich mit seiner Macht und seinem Glanze zu Boden ... das Höchste, was der Aegyptier nennt, ist ... ein schauerhaft Räthsel ... Isis' (I, 146/12-147/3). But the effect upon man again blurs the polarity; 'Selbstthätigkeit und Kunst und Reflexion', although it could refer to Greek intellectual life, is supremely apt for the Enlightenment.

The next paragraph analyses the role of the individual: 'In der Mitte liegt der Kampf, und der Tod des Einzelnen' (4.153, 18), a 'death' that therefore 'mediates' between man and Nature. The individual who dies thus is divine: 'das Göttliche ist in der Mitte von beiden' (4.152, 18f.). If this 'struggle' (between the individual and Nature) is

to have such supreme importance for his country and/or for mankind, if his act is to be fitted into the historical process described in the first paragraph, in which at first sight a specific individual seemed irrelevant, it must be located 'in the middle' of that paragraph, namely, where 'das organische ... sich zu sehr der Natur überließ und sein Wesen und Bewußtseyn vergaß'. The disadvantage of thus identifying the individual death with the 'self-abandonment' of the people to Nature (which can be contrived by treating 'das organische' as the general consciousness and the individual's death as its extreme but characteristic manifestation) is that the historical aspect has to be discarded; for the self-abandonment was not 'Kampf' but the opposite, the warm intimacy of 'Innigkeit'.

Logically, then, the 'death' of the individual belongs at a later stage (atonement) than that of alienation, and at least two stages after the initial 'Innigkeit' whose 'Übermaaß' causes the trouble. Perhaps it could be fitted into the 'Fortgang der entgegengesetzten Wechselwirkungen', a most vague phrase which by no means follows from the state of extremes (why should there be any further 'Wechselwirkung' at all if alienation has become so severe?). Hölderlin avoids the whole problem through consistent vagueness: for example, the depiction of a cultural epoch is only hinted at; 'Kunst' and 'Mensch' are used interchangeably in polarity with Nature; the ambiguity of 'Kunst' (art/civilisation) leaves open the possibility that the individual may specifically be an artist.

Thus the individual's 'death', because it corresponds

terminologically to the 'self-abandonment', slides unhindered into place 'in the middle' of the first paragraph and therewith of the historical process: 'derjenige Moment, wo das organische seine Ichheit, sein besonderes Daseyn, das zum Extreme geworden war ... ablegt, indem das besondere auf seinem Extrem gegen das Extrem des aorgischen sich thätig immer mehr verallgemeinern, immer mehr von seinem Mittelpuncte sich reißen muß' (4.153, 18-24) (even though the initial premise of 'extremes' again locates the 'death' after the alienation). This surrender of self reunites man and Nature through a reversal of roles (4.153, 22-154, 1), whereupon 'der vereinende Moment, wie ein Trugbild, sich immer mehr auflöst ... , dadurch aber und durch seinen Tod die kämpfenden Extreme aus denen er hervorgieng, schöner versöhnt und vereinigt, als in seinem Leben ... , so daß die beiden Extreme, wovon das eine, das organische durch den vergehenden Moment zurückgeschreckt ... und die Innigkeit des vergangenen Moments nun ... klarer hervorgeht' (4.154, 10-24).

The fact that this individual is Empedokles, and that the 'death' is his suicide in Etna, remains so far unmentioned. Thereby Hölderlin retains the possibility that 'death' is a figure of speech for 'intense' experience rather than literal cessation, but in so doing creates for himself an insoluble problem. If the 'death' is literal, then it is bound to time and place (fourth century B.C., Sicily) and to an individual, and is therefore unique; otherwise, Empedokles' death is irrelevant. (There is here a latent struggle between the democratic conviction that all men have

divine potential, and worship of the aristocratic difference of the demi-god (or Homeric hero) with its longing for a similar super-human role.)

The ambiguity of 'Tod' (resulting partly from mythopoeic personification (of 'Moment') reminiscent of Hegel; is it the individual or the 'moment' that 'dies'?) not only suggests the mimetic possibility of art, but the historical significance that such a 'Nachahmung' (4.283, 26) might possess. Similarly, Empedokles dies not only in order that man and Nature may be reconciled, but so that 'the Divine no longer appears sensually' (4.154, 16), as flesh and blood; therewith the act is open to all. One intention of the drama, the superseding of Christ, would thus be achieved, but only if the death loses all but purifying significance. If, however, physical death remains paradigmatic loss of self, then Christ has merely gained a rival. This dilemma is reflected in the appended 'und durch seinen Tod' (4.154, 13), which implies that the reversal of roles just described is not itself the 'death' — an implication contradicted by the programmatic opening of the paragraph (the ambivalence in 'seinen' ('des Einzelnen' or 'des Moments'?) smooths it over).

The progressive 'Verläugnung alles Accidentellen' is no longer merely the projective withdrawal from social chains; reflected here is an increasing will to break down the barrier between the fictional hero and the author. If Empedokles is to replace Christ, so too the poet is obstructed by the 'sensuality' of his creation from himself fulfilling a deed open to all. The physical is giving way to the

imaginative 'death'. This subordination of the dramatic to the lyric⁴⁹ treatment is clearly anticipated in the preceding 'Allgemeiner Grund': 'Es ist die tiefste Innigkeit, die sich im tragischen dramatischen Gedichte ausdrückt. ... wenn wir ... das eigene Gemüth und die eigene Erfahrung in einen fremden analogischen Stoff übertragen ... dieses Bild der Innigkeit ... muß ... überall mehr dem Symbol sich nähern ... , je näher dem nefas die Innigkeit ist' (4.150, 1f., 15f., 20-23). In short: the opening paragraph of the 'Grund zum Empedokles' refers to the poetic experience as Hölderlin now, in Homburg, conceives it:—

Although expressed in terms of 'Natur' and 'Kunst', and thus potentially applicable to Greece, ultimately the lost harmony is that of childhood union with Nature; the antithesis between 'Gefühl' and 'Erkenntniß' reveals that the 'Trennung' is the Fall 'aus dem Garten der Natur': from innocence into consciousness. In the loss of self to Nature and ensuing 'Trennung' is also conveyed the act of love with its cosmic significance, now 'preserved' in the 'vessel' of memory (and so in the past: 'sich ... überließ und ... vergaß') and thus assimilated to the elegiac structure of cosmic harmony (lost divinity is lost 'Seeligkeit'). The 'Extrem der Selbstthätigkeit und Kunst und Reflexion' expresses the poet's independence and solitary brooding in Homburg; but the opaque and daemonic infinity ('das Extrem des aorgischen, des Unbegreiflichen, des Unfühlbaren, des Unbegrenzten'; 'aorgisch' suggests Greek orgē, 'wild passion') is the natural world, above all the sky, before which the spiritually homeless poet stands as before the

endless universe itself, an experience whose wonder has been bought at the price of its terror:

Denn, wie die Pflanze, wurzelt auf eigenem Grund
Sie nicht, verglüht die Seele des Sterblichen,
Der mit dem Tageslichte nur, ein
Armer, auf heiliger Erde wandelt.

Zu mächtig ach! ihr himmlischen Höhen zieht
Ihr mich empor ...

These lines from 'Mein Eigentum' (25-29) were probably written at this very time.

Yet the process of loss and the moment of fear are harmonious stages in the genesis of the poetic 'spirit' whose end is a meeting of lovers: 'Diß Gefühl gehört vielleicht zum höchsten, was gefühlt werden kann, wenn ... der ... Mensch und die Wohlgestalt der Natur sich begegnen.' It is the fruit of an erotic loss of self to Nature. In all three passages describing the Empedoklean act it is not a death; it is like a death; Empedokles 'mußte nach Identität mit ihr ringen, so mußte also sein Geist ... aorgische Gestalt annehmen, von sich selbst und seinem Mittelpuncte sich reißen, immer sein Object so übermäßig penetriren, daß er in ihm, wie in einem Abgrund, sich verlor' (4.159, 5-9; cf. 152, 23-153, 1; 153, 18-24). The suicide in the 'Abgrund' of Etna has become loss of self in the 'abyss' of Nature, the Unknown, the Other, and the gap between the artist and his work caused by the form and content of the drama has become an obstruction to the perfection of this act. By the final version Empedokles has become a 'Trugbild' (III, 333; cf. 4.154, 10), his very reality questioned

by an alter ego.

'Erkenntniß', the Fall, is both self-awareness and knowledge of death.

... im Kind' ist Freiheit allein.

In ihm ist Frieden; es ist noch mit sich selber nicht zerfallen ... Es ist unsterblich, denn es weiß vom Tode nichts. (Hyperion, I, 13/10-14)

The antithesis is 'Wissenschaft':

Die Wissenschaft, der ich in den Schacht hinunter folgte, von der ich, jugendlich thöricht, die Bestätigung meiner reinen Freude erwartete, die hat mir alles verdorben.

Ich bin bei euch so recht vernünftig geworden, habe gründlich mich unterscheiden gelernt von dem, was mich umgiebt, bin nun vereinzelt in der schönen Welt, bin so ausgeworfen aus dem Garten der Natur, wo ich wuchs und blühte, und vertrokne an der Mittagssonne.

(Hyperion, I, 11/14-12/2)

Nun sprach ich nimmer zu der Blume, du bist meine Schwester! und zu den Quellen, wir sind Eines Geschlechts! ich gab nun treulich, wie ein Echo, jedem Dinge seinen Nahmen.

(Hyperion, I, 73/15-17)

Science is man's mastery over Nature: the Age of Reason.

'Der bloße Verstand, die bloße Vernunft sind immer die Könige des Nordens' (Hyperion, I, 147/16f.). The Empedoklean act, death, is, mutatis mutandis, restoration of harmony for northern man too, for Germany; and if then the times demanded a sacrifice from one born to be a poet (cf. 4.156), now they demand 'song', but song like unto death. The poet who thus reverses the roles of man and Nature (4.159, 20f.) also reverses the balance of power, which swings back to Nature in that the poetic self becomes

passive.

Voll schweigender Kraft umfängt
Den ahnenden, daß er bilde die Welt,
Die große Natur,
Daß ihren Geist hervor er rufe ...
('Empedokles' II, 535-38)

The poet who submits to Nature's 'embrace' perceives her 'power'. Empedokles' act had been an assertion of power, a search to gain mastery (4.159, 1-4), a masculine will. But the poet of the Age of Reason must perform the opposite; loosening the bonds of mastery, surrendering to the 'Unknown', his is a feminine act. And it takes him 'a step further' than the philosophical 'freigeisterische Kühnheit' of the transcendental 'Reflexionsphilosophie', even though this was itself an attempt to attack and replace the abstract dogmatism of the Enlightenment with living, 'practical', revolutionary, philosophy. This 'step' that confronts theory with practice is existential: relationship. And poetic relationship with Nature — love — is a revolutionary paradigm for the 'Vaterland'.

Despite the apparent diametric opposition between the Empedoklean and poetic (modern) paths, they are effortlessly interchangeable, for the real structural 'basis' is not historical; it is the antithesis between love and action. The act, the entry into another ('penetrieren'), is also a surrender of power, indeed, both physically and figuratively, of life itself, from which the lover emerges, 'returns to himself', but (in Idealistic terms) enriched through his other. The distinction between Empedokles and

his creator lies solely in the gap between author and his creation. The poet dreams the death of Empedokles, 'ein furchtbarer aber göttlicher Traum' (4.283, 26) whose protagonist is a cosmic agent. A dreamer is necessarily passive. The distinction is therewith reducible, as the 'Allgemeiner Grund' itself shows, to the degree of 'intensity' of that dream.

Thus the 'sacrificial' death readily functions as a 'Meta-pher' for the poetic process. Mastery over Nature through knowledge, physio-crazy, is bewailed in Hyperion: 'Oder ist nicht göttlich, was ihr höhnt und seellos nennt? ... Ihr entwürdiget, ihr zerreißt, wo sie euch duldet, die geduldige Natur, doch lebt sie fort ... ' (II, 115/14-116/5); in 'Wie wenn am Feiertage ... ': 'In Knechtsgestalt ... / Die Allebendigen, die Kräfte der Götter' (11.35f.); in 'Dichterberuf': 'Zu lang ist alles Göttliche dienstbar schon' (1.45). But it is equally man's enslavement to determinism, 'Maschinengang' (4.278, 9), 'fear of death' (Hyperion, II, 117/16), a 'fearful dream' ('Der Archipelagus', 1.247), and therefore itself spiritual death. Empedokles and Hölderlin therefore share the struggle against human servitude (cf. 4.159, 2). But beyond all motivation the poetic and Empedoklean acts are one and the same: love is the antithesis to mastery, loss of self to self-centredness. The act of love is, in contrast to all other acts, an opening of the personality, a receptivity which is, since its 'object' is Nature (the All), absolute: 'wo ... das ganze Leben des Gegenstandes das verlaßne durch die gränzenlose Thätigkeit des Geistes nur unendlicher empfänglich gewordene

Gemüth ergreifen ... muß[te]' (4.159, 9-12).

The mind, 'spirit', is washed clean and becomes ready for the encounter, this hieros gamos, through absolute elimination of will. What is here, in Fichteian terms ('gränzenlose Thätigkeit'), described as 'activity' is also a type of personality.

Er scheint nach allem zum Dichter geboren, scheint also in seiner subjectiven thätigern Natur ... jene ungewöhnliche Tendenz zur Allgemeinheit zu haben ... , zu jener ruhigen Betrachtung, zu jener Vollständigkeit und durchgängiger Bestimmtheit des Bewußtseyns ... , womit der Dichter auf ein Ganzes blickt, ebenso scheint in seiner objectiven Natur, in seiner Passivität, jene glückliche Gaabe zu liegen ... , jene Bildsamkeit der Sinne und des Gemüths, die ... der künstlichen Thätigkeit mehr zu sprechen, als zu thun giebt. (4.156, 1-13)

Since this contemplative detachment and universality in his 'active' nature amount to an absence of activity, 'passivity' follows naturally, and indeed 'durchgängige Bestimmtheit' appears in the 'subjective' half of the character study.

The poetic process is thus dependent upon withdrawal from the world, a purging of all involvement, interest, which might attach to any specific object. The type of such attachment, binding to a specific person, is love; its intensity, now remembered and thus purified of self-interest (passion, 'Leidenschaft'), is devoted to the All. The thus vacant mind is 'seized', overpowered, by what is perceived, but in the moment of withdrawal, as the folds of the dream sink back, what began as infinite potential has now taken form — whether sky, night, light — and, relinquishing its fearful absoluteness, becomes 'Wohlgestalt

der Natur' ('-gestalt' has slight transitive force). The essence is not the specific nature of the object (that is the concern of scientific mastery), but the sheer fact that it has form at all, which presupposes and arises out of the opposite possibility: the infinity of self-dissolution, of death. In this way a value accrues to the object-world and its plasticity which far exceeds utilitarian interest; sheer existence is a value, and this value is purely existential. Hölderlin writes that 'das sprachlose' becomes 'Sprache' (4.155, 3): language arises out of an encounter with the Infinite and, through an act void of self-interest, the 'word' becomes a sign of the All.

The poetic act, which restores, defectively but as best it can, childhood oneness with Nature, is an archetypal corrective to masculine will, to the now remembered ('idealised'; that is, given archetypal significance) 'Egoismus' (B179, 54; cf. B222, 27) of Frankfurt: 'daß sich der Mensch ... nicht als Meister und Herr der Natur dünke und sich in aller seiner Kunst und Thätigkeit bescheiden und fromm vor dem Geiste der Natur beuge' (B179, 125-29). The ethical 'cure' has metaphysical origin; forgiveness of men is love that resolves the finite consciousness; agapē is erōs.

'Verstand' is thus more than mere stoic detachment and control of the emotions. It is a positive aesthetic principle; and this emerges from the letter to Neuffer of November 1798, in which Hölderlin's reflections on his personality and its sensitivity pass into a description of the poetic process. Strength and 'organisation' in the face

of 'zerstörende Wirklichkeit' (B167, 54-64) are not a negation but liberation of a love too soft for this world, 'voreilig, mit den Menschen und Dingen unter dem Monde sich zu verschwistern' (compare the effect of a possible 'unter der Sonne sich zu verbrüdern'). Released from those aspects of life which present the cleft of individuated difference, the spirit enters a world in which 'organisation' can become 'meinem wahrsten Leben dienlich' (68f.), can become love. This world is the totality of Nature, which as pure object offers no resistance. 'Verstand' is the 'organisation' of the world into two parts, 'Menschen' and 'Dinge', and if response to the former is defence ('fest', 'unzerstörbar'), in the latter it is free deployment of energy and personality. The will no longer acts, like a man, but sees, like a child; the poem is therewith 'Zweck an sich', antithesis to science and entrepreneurial 'Thätigkeit' (cf. B179, 54-81).

Such idealism is acutely ambivalent. The words 'Ach! die Welt hat meinen Geist von früher Jugend an in sich zurückgescheucht' (B167, 57f.) are a condemnation of the effect of the world's brutality on a 'sensitive' nature; but the words 'ich scheue das Gemeine und Gewöhnliche im wirklichen Leben zu sehr' (49f.) show that this judgement is not simply ethical. If the activities of men are rejected not just for their self-centred callousness but for their mediocrity and 'bornirte Häuslichkeit' (B172, 52) — 'wie die Unbedeutenheit uns mehr als alles andere schmerzt' (4.226, 23f.) — such condemnation is metaphysical, seeking self-preservation for a higher destiny. 'In guten Zeiten giebt es selten Schwärmer. Aber wenns dem Menschen an großen

reinen Gegenständen fehlt, dann schafft er irgend ein Phantom ... , und drückt die Augen zu, daß er dafür sich interessiren kann, und dafür leben' (4.236, 2-5).

Such a 'Phantom' is Empedokles. Another is Achilles, that 'enfant gaté der Natur'; the two pieces on him for 'Iduna' must have been written about the same time as the letter to Neuffer, and represent the private expression of what there is expressed publicly to the friend. On the one hand: 'Der Idealische durfte nicht alltäglich erscheinen' (4.225, 8); on the other: 'Das Reine kan sich nur darstellen im Unreinen' (B167, 75f.). Achilles is the type of metaphysical purity: Homer 'wollte den Götterjüngling nicht profaniren in dem Getümmel vor Troja' (4.225, 6f.); 'er kont' ihn wirklich nicht herrlicher und zärtlicher besingen, als dadurch, daß er ihn zurüktreten läßt' (8-10). Through his youthful death (4.224, 4) Achilles, paradoxically, preserves his divinity, his beauty and strength, and is thus a prime example of the Divine that proves itself through suffering. His nature is defined not by his actions, but by his absence; and thus the world appears as 'Schatten' to his 'Licht' (B167, 73).⁵⁰

Thus the complex concept 'Verstand' contains the seeds of the terms 'Nüchternheit' and 'Präzision' in the letter to Böhlendorff (B236) of three years later, as indeed of the 'paratactic' concreteness of the last poetry with its 'apriorität des Individuellen über das Ganze' (2.339). Words such as 'precision' and 'empirical' — 'Der idealische Kopf thut am besten, das Empirische, das Irdische, das Beschränkte sich zum Elemente zu machen' (B145, 23-25) —

suggest a scientific virtue. But poetic 'precision' is the revolutionary opposite, a suspension of will. For all activity, every product of will, that lies between childhood and Frankfurt is comprehended by the term 'Nüchternheit': loss of infinity, institutionalisation. 'Zurückgescheucht' by the world, the poet is liberated to experience 'Zurückschrecken' from the Absolute, an experience endowed with the fascination of death; and it is the dramatic objectivisation, the figure of Empedokles, that 'holds' him on the brink of the abyss.

Most critics find a decisive change in Hölderlin's work around the year 1800, whether in the transition from second to third version of 'Empedokles', or in the abandonment of the drama, or during the Elegies and with the first of the Hymns. But this change is merely the intensifying of a purpose already present, and now moving towards its logical conclusion.

The fragmentary essay 'Über die Verfahrungsweise des poëtischen Geistes' belongs directly within this context. It is an attempt to prove the statement 'Das Reine kan sich nur darstellen im Unreinen'. Poetry is conceived of as a meeting (mediation) of the universal Spirit ('der Geist, der allem gemein und jedem eigen ist' (cf. 4.241, 3f.) with the totality of life ('das Leben überhaupt', 4.246, 27) within and through the harmonious unity of the poem, and, conversely, the poet participates in the infinite Spirit, and so in the Divine, through his entry into life and consequent acquiescence to partiality, imperfection, finitude. Infinity is achieved by becoming finite, and the attempt to claim pure infinite status by avoiding the impurity of

life ends in isolated self-contemplation: self-consciousness. Equally, the universal Spirit, unlike the Christian God, has no transcendent personal will; its very existence depends upon the act, the 'Aus-sich-herausgehen' (4.257, 11), of the individual 'spirit', and it would otherwise remain (following Kant's epistemology) an unknowable, dogmatic abstraction. The 'poetic spirit' (4.250, 27) descends into the material world in direct analogy to the universal Spirit; each abstract concept ('time', 'change', 'matter', 'reality') is itself an infinity (since the logic is purely deductive) and thus a further stage in its progress. A separation of the finite individual from God cannot be achieved by these means, but this very failure is a purpose of the essay, since for Hölderlin God is not an object of knowledge, but the Subject of feeling: not 'Geist', but 'Begeisterung'.

Thus the thought-process culminates first not in God, but in the 'Ich', the negative peak of self-consciousness: 'es ist ... der kühnste und letzte Versuch des poëtischen Geistes ... die ursprüngliche poëtische Individualität, das poëtische Ich aufzufassen, ein Versuch, wodurch er diese Individualität und ihr reines Object, das Einige, und Lebendige, harmonische, wechselseitig wirksame Leben aufhöbe, und doch muß er es ... ' (4.252, 13-18).⁵¹ That the thought-process nevertheless takes place suggests that if God were an object of knowledge he would be none other than the 'Ich', the 'pure poetic spirit'; similarly, the failure of philosophy does not prove that the self is not divine, only that reason is incapable of realising that divinity.

One recognises in this 'last' stage the first^{stage} of the 'Grund zum Empedokles': the Fall through 'Erkenntniß'. Here too the 'doch muß er es' expresses the destructive quality of this 'freedom' that defies the dangers of the act: 'die unendliche Einheit' 'kann und darf schlechterdings nicht durch sich selbst begriffen werden, sich selber zum Objecte werden, wenn sie nicht statt einer unendlich einigen und lebendigen Einheit, eine todte und tödtende Einheit ein unendlich positives gewordenes seyn soll' (4.251, 19, 252, 4-8). The unknowability of the 'transcendental Subject', for Kant a fact, has here become an experience: the dividing of the in-dividual in self-consciousness.

As the mirror of the self, consciousness is a closed circle in which all ties with the outside world have proved to be an illusion. The journey from the 'Weltseele' to the cul-de-sac of the 'Ich' shows that the essential Romantic problem, the insubstantiality of a cosmic experience that leaves the individual holding the shadow of reality, is acutely present. The 'Ich' is isolation: 'in diesem Allein-seyn, in diesem Leben mit sich selbst' (4.255, 12f.). The entire process through which the infinite Spirit descends into matter is revealed as a metaphor for the poet's search for relationship; reflection is the inner circle of the self, and the solution is to break out — 'Alles kommt also darauf an, daß das Ich nicht blos mit seiner subjectiven Natur ... in Wechselwirkung bleibe' (4.254, 29-31) — and go beyond oneself.

Yet this life-affirming act has already taken place, in

the analysis of the aspects of a poem which simultaneously depicted the descent of the Spirit into matter. The thought-process returns to its first and fundamental assumption: the individual can only 'express' himself through poetry. Thus a stasis is reached in the question of relationship to the outside world ('Verfahrungsart in der äußern Welt', 4.257, 11f.), and a future is eliminated. Existence 'within the self', isolation, has not been at issue; it is a necessary correlative to poetic creativity. And thus the third part of the essay, especially the 'Wink für die Darstellung und Sprache' with its more flowing and 'harmonious', indeed 'poetic', style, represents the transition to poetry on the basis of the truth of philosophical negativity.⁵²

The pre-ordained negativity of the intellect has undermined its function as ^acritical and self-critical instance. [^] The 'poetic spirit' is left in a formal analogy to the universal Spirit in which their potential identity remains an unsolved problem. The crux remains the 'wie' of Hyperion: 'Du mußt, wie der Lichtstral, herab ... , du mußt erleuchten, wie Apoll ... , beleben, wie Jupiter ... ' (I, 157/12-15); and the relationship of finite consciousness to infinity continues to define that of the 'poetic' individual to the world. This relationship is conceived in terms appropriated through abstraction from Judaeo-Christian theology; God's love for the world, his 'Entäußerung' in Christ (Philippians 2. 7), has been translated into the neo-Platonic dualism of the infinite Logos.

If poetry supplies the missing practice of this theoretical relationship between spirit and matter, the philosophy

of the apotheosised individual has here gone beyond Fichte. He had left his system open simultaneously to infinity and to revolutionary practice:⁵³

Insofern das Ich durch das Nicht-Ich eingeschränkt wird, ist es endlich, an sich aber, so wie es durch seine eigne absolute Thätigkeit gesetzt wird, ist es unendlich ... und so würde der Streit in's unendliche fortgehen, wenn nicht durch einen absoluten Machtspruch der Vernunft, den nicht etwa der Philosoph thut, sondern den er nur aufzeigt — durch Den: es soll ... überhaupt kein Nicht-Ich seyn, der Knoten zwar nicht gelös't, aber zerschnitten würde.

For him the concluding act is absent. Here it is present, in the reality of poetic practice; the 'solution' no longer lies in the political and social arena, as a product of communal action, but in the poem, the product of an individual.

Thus the gap between theory and practice has become 'harmonious', and indeed is bridged by that third, poetic part of the essay. The impotence of practice (absent German revolution) has ceased to be a problem. The way is open for the poetic act as self-sufficient mimesis of revolution. The problem with which Fichte and Schiller were confronted was: how any practical involvement, even if revolutionary, could satisfy the aspirations of the individual with his 'Sturm' and 'Drang', and overcome the barrier of mortality. 'Der Idealist ... vermag nichts, als in sofern er begeistert ist ... Aber das wirkliche Leben ist keineswegs geschickt, jene Begeisterung in ihm zu wecken ...' ⁵⁴ This impasse of the 'categorical imperative' has now moved from the public to the private sphere.

The self-sufficiency of the aesthetic solution imputes

violence to Fichte's philosophy. That 'Titan' had cut the Gordian knot, the contradiction binding absolute Self to relative Non-Self, 'with the sword', a metaphor suggesting the 'heroic' Jacobin option. From the Hyperion writings in Jena it is clear that Hölderlin felt this to be an act of violence against Nature; the disciple of the 'categorical imperative' — 'Das Gesez der Freiheit ... gebietet, ohne alle Rücksicht auf die Hülfe der Natur ... Vielmer setzt es einen Widerstand in der Natur voraus ... ' (4.212, 3-6) — says ruefully that he had become 'tyrannisch gegen die Natur' (3.199, 9-11). Nature was excluded from the political-ethical solution. Yet the 'Streben', the potential infinity, of the relationship between 'Ich' and 'Nicht-Ich' was itself 'Wechselwirkung' between the self and Nature; the deficiency precluding 'practice' was the lack of acknowledgement that the 'Ich' is not undifferentiated, but conditioned by inter-subjective relativity — the assumption of structural identity between the individual 'Geist' and the 'Geist, der allem gemein und jedem eigen ist'.

The violence Hölderlin rejects is therefore the will to turn ideal into reality, to break the philosophical infinity; in renouncing such will, the 'Verfahrungsweise' seeks unconditional preservation of metaphysical status. The 'schöne Re-flexion' is not a turn to reality, but to Nature. Society and Nature cannot simply be subsumed under the term 'reality'; for what compromises metaphysical status is not Nature, but the fact of other people. Were the individual consciousness ^{the} sole instance in its universe, it would speak as does God in the first verses of Genesis. All

would gather about it, like the animals about Adam, the first man.⁵⁵

If harmony between 'spirit' and 'life', self and Nature, is indeed 'das Göttliche', the highest good, then violence is rejected not primarily for its revolutionary implications, but as that which has brought discord into harmony: self-awareness as a finite individual. In that the thought-process culminates in the 'Ich' as object of self-consciousness, the Fichteian 'That-handlung' has ceased to be a theoretical basis for action, and become an ultimate principle. 'Urtheil. ist im höchsten und strengsten Sinne die ursprüngliche Trennung des in der intellectualen Anschauung innigst vereinigten Objects und Subjects ... , die Urtheilung ... "Ich bin Ich" ist das passendste Beispiel ...' (4.216, 2-4, 8f.). It has torn apart 'Subject' and 'Object'. In the 'Verfahrungsweise' and elsewhere Hölderlin indeed accepts this division as necessary; but such acceptance treats necessity as though it could have been otherwise, as though there were an alternative to finite consciousness.⁵⁶ Deceptively, descriptive appears as prescriptive philosophy.

Thus self-consciousness, the 'kühnster und letzter Versuch', is the non plus ultra of the intellect, and is treated purely as division from Nature, as Fall. Never allowed to become the basis of a system, it is rather, and per se, the type of action: 'Handlung', presupposing prior to all specification a gap between itself and its object. Conversely, the poet's 'Verfahrungsart in der äußern Welt' is such as to preserve the archetypal significance of action,

its root in will and purpose, and thus also to preserve memory of absolute oneness with Nature. Thought stands under a negative sign; the archetype of lost innocence hangs over life.

Und bei mir

Das wilde Feld entzaubernd, das traur'ge, zog
Der Halbgott, Zevs Knecht, ein, der gerade Mann
('Chiron', 11.16-18)

At least here, in Hölderlin's philosophy, the deductive 'Triplizitätsstruktur' is designed to reconcile 'Seyn' (absolute union) with 'Identität' ('Ich bin Ich').⁵⁷ When the 'Ich' in its 'Auf-fassen' swallows up the relationship between 'spirit' and 'life' it has done what Fichte's 'Ich' could not do. It appears that Hölderlin saw reflection as leading inevitably to the epistemological primacy of the self; whereas for Fichte reflection remained necessarily 'Wechselwirkung' of subject and object, for Hölderlin it is 'Wechselwirkung' of the 'Ich' with its own 'subjective Natur'. Epistemological primacy is existential imprisonment.

Reflection thus faces two ways, back towards childhood, and out towards reality; and each is closed. Thought is existence 'in diesem widersprechenden Mittelzustande zwischen natürlichem Zusammenhange mit einer natürlich vorhandenen Welt, und ... dem höheren Zusammenhange ... zwischen Kindheit und reifer Humanität' (4.255, 13-15, 18f.); 'er muß also resigniren, in Kindheit zurückfallen oder in

fruchtlosen Widersprüchen mit sich selber sich aufreiben, wenn er in diesem Zustande verharret ... dieser traurigen Alternative' (4.255, 26-29).

Childhood is a melodious but egocentric world. Entry into life is relativising institutionalisation, 'Accommodation eines gewöhnlichen Menschen' (4.255, 32), the in this case admittedly depressing mediocrity of a clergyman without faith, a marriage without love.⁵⁸

In the consistent rejection of Fichte's 'Ich' there is, then, a shift in its meaning: the 'I' becomes the archetypal wound of consciousness that must be healed.⁵⁹ Thus the Fichtean I appears, 'aufgehoben' in triplicate synthesis, in Empedokles' hubristic swallowing-up of Nature.

Wo seid ihr, meine Götter? weh ihr laßt
Wie einen Bettler mich und diese Brust
... stießt ihr mir
Hinab ...
Die Freigeborne, die aus sich allein
Und keines andern ist? Und dulden sollt ichs ...
Ich habe mich erkannt; ich will es! Luft will ich
Mir schaffen, ha! ...
Bei meinem Stolz! ich werde nicht den Staub
Von diesem Pfade küssen, wo ich einst
In einem schönen Traume gieng — es ist vorbei!
Ich war geliebt ... ('Empedokles' I, 309-22)

Here, briefly, speaks the 'heroic' pathos of the Fichtean-Goethean Prometheus; but its moment of defiance is merely a repetition of its original hubris (I, 334-42). 'Freiheit', 'Wille', 'Sich-erkennen', 'An-sich-denken' (I, 339f.), all these for Hölderlin return to one concept: 'Ich'.⁶⁰ The transcending of the 'heroic' mode (reflected in the sequence 'naive-heroic-ideal', the basis for the 'Wechsel der Töne') also discards the insistence on struggle in the world.

Hölderlin's conception of the self betrays the fear, alien to Fichte, that the world may end in solipsism. Witness his first reaction to the philosopher: 'sein absolutes Ich ... enthält alle Realität; es ist alles, u. außer ihm ist nichts' (B94, 48f.); a misconception which has become embedded in Empedokles: 'the individual must perish' 'weil sonst das Allgemeine im Individuum sich verlöre, und ... das Leben einer Welt in einer Einzelheit abstürbe' (4.156, 29-157, 2).

The two seemingly inconsistent yet mutually reinforcing feelings — life's wound and life's 'Unbedeutenheit' — combine to create an unqualified demand for 'freedom' (it pervades the first letter from Homburg). When, in the 'Verfahrungsweise', the 'Ich' at last performs the act whereby it 'contains all reality', the stylistic abnormality of the essay, gigantic sentences built on an additive principle, seems to express a near-pathological search for self-preservation, a closing of one door after another whereby each time the shell cracks anew. On the other hand there is the disdain for institutions, so that Empedokles can say to the 'glebae addicti' (B172, 53) of 'Agri-gent' ('Erden-kinder' (I, 1519)): 'So wagts! was ihr geerbt, was ihr erworben ... / Vergeßt es kühn ... ' (I, 1537-40).

The solution found within the 'Verfahrungsweise', within philosophy, is controlled loss of self to the world: 'Hingabe' governed by 'Eigenmacht' (cf. 4.259, 1-14). It finds its 'Äußerung', practical realisation, in poetry.⁶¹ If relationship with others has been in question, nevertheless this solution makes clear that isolation from Nature

is decisive, for in terms of human relationship poetry is no less theoretical than philosophy. Yet poetry has the reality that philosophy lacks. If these are not mere words, then the 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht' of poetry will replace the abstractions 'Geist'/'Leben' with real union with Nature after the model of human relationship.

Therefore not just any relationship is involved, but the one which directly contradicts the closed sphere of self-preserving thought: 'Hingabe', loss of self, self-forgetfulness: Eros. Love, which most seeks to break down the gap between separate beings, which momentarily resolves their very separateness, is closest to the undivided unity of childhood; yet, once surrendered to, it loses this ideal potential and becomes the type of involvement, prone to institutionalisation, determinism, death, compromising 'das freie idealische poetische Leben' (4.246, 15). In that the act, root of evil, is transformed into love it becomes the highest possible mode of separateness ('destiny'), so that the poet abides by the rules of life (renouncing absolute 'Seyn'), while life becomes a striving after the unattainable. The solution is thus a carefully-formulated (self-preserving) compromise between freedom and determinism: 'Zusammenhang mit einer auch natürlich vorhandenen aber mit freier Wahl zur Sphäre erkornen voraus erkannten und in allen ihren Einflüssen nicht ohne seinen Willen ihn bestimmenden Welt' (4.255, 15-18; cf. 254, 31-33; 255, 30-256, 1; 257, 5-7). The powerful stress on ultimate freedom from determinism is the memory of love in Frankfurt.

The 'sphere' of the poem will be such as can be 'observed'

by the poetic self: 'wo die reine Individualität ... sich selbst als ein durch eine Wahl bestimmtes, empirisch individualisirtes und charakterisirtes betrachtet' (4.254, 4f., 255, 1f.); thereby the simultaneous apotheosis and fear^{of}emotion, the insistence of the ex-centricity of experience, are satisfied. Yet the problem of self-consciousness, of the primacy of the 'Ich', is thus merely transferred from philosophy to poetry: 'wo sich der Mensch ... , eben weil er mit dieser äußern Sphäre nicht so innig verbunden ist, von dieser abstrahiren und von sich, in so fern er in ihr gesezt ist, und auf sich reflectiren kann, in so fern er nicht in ihr gesezt ist' (4.257, 5-10).

The Elegiac Couplet

At the heart of the elegy is the elegiac couplet.
Schiller's description is also a model.⁶²

Im Hexameter steigt des Springquells flüssige Säule,
Im Pentameter drauf fällt sie melodisch herab.

It is a rise and fall; specifically, the rhythmic basis is established by its three internal units (the first half of the hexameter and the two halves of the pentameter) which begin and end with stressed syllables, in contrast to the second half of the hexameter, which begins and ends with unstressed syllables. There is thus in a succession of couplets a constant generation and release of tension, whereby the dactylic second half of the pentameter, releasing the tension, echoes and fulfils the always dactylic fifth foot of the hexameter. Thus the couplet is essentially a self-contained unit, in Hölderlin's elegies yet more so through the preference for a strong ('masculine') third-foot caesura, which results in the three parallel units having the same number of feet, while the second half of the hexameter begins and ends with an unstressed spondaic syllable, and thus provides a regular foil.⁶³

Rise and fall is therefore the couplet's profoundest meaning. In 'Elegie', the type, as the title suggests, of elegy, the fundamental triadic structure — love, loss, and their harmony in memory — is guaranteed by time: the eternal birth, death and rebirth whose symbol is the seasons,

whose origin is Nature. The final line — 'Und von neuem ein Jahr unserer Liebe beginnt' — expresses the unity of the elegiac world.

Such a unity in which 'Bilder aus hellerer Zeit' (1.24), and above all the 'Bild' of Diotima, can appear is the form (manifestation) of the 'Idee der Schönheit' (4.298, 12), 'das Höchste': 'Ich frage nicht mehr, wo es sey; es war in der Welt, es kann wiederkehren in ihr ... Sein Nahme ist Schönheit' (Hyperion, I, 93/13-94/3). Cosmic harmony, still as a reflection in water (11.41-45), is the opposite of linear, 'mortal' time where

Tage kommen und gehn, ein Jahr verdränget das andre,
Wechselnd und streitend; so tost furchtbar vorüber
die Zeit
Über sterblichem Haupt, doch nicht vor seeligen Augen ...
(11.33-35)

As the couplet symbolises order in a chaotic world, so the poem is the image of a protected world:

So auf Erden wandelten wir. Und drohte der Nord auch,
Er, der Liebenden Feind ...
Lächelten ruhig wir ...
So im Frieden mit uns kindlich und seelig allein.
(11.45-50)

'Elegie' opens with the poet's grief, his 'searching': 'Täglich geh' ich heraus und such' ein Anderes immer'; therewith the symbolic meaning of the hexameter is defined: through its second half, which breaks, yet thereby first creates, the harmony of the couplet, it is the type of (necessary) discord. It expresses search, movement, striving;

just as the pentameter in whose harmony the poem must always end expresses rest, peace.

This peace, then is Nature's harmony, and appears already as the first half of the hexameter, which, in establishing the rhythmic norm to which the couplet must return, conveys an eternally-lost ideal. For the second half, the contradiction, tears open this harmony; it is, by virtue of unstressed syllables, open both at beginning and end, so that the hexameter itself, which in the basic (self-contained) form ends with a pause (typically a comma), is open. The pentameter, but therewith also the couplet as a whole, is closed. Enclosure and openness are therefore not of equal value; openness is appearance, transcended by the reality of the greater form.

From this structure spring up archetypal images of wholeness: the rise and fall of the breathing breast;⁶⁴ the blooming and withering of flowers; the eye, opening with the coming of day, closing in sleep, night, death. Behind these images and more lies the mysterious assurance of a troubled mind, the answer to the question asked by the pain and chaos of life: the 'Grund',⁶⁵ the Spirit of Nature, to whom the poet returns out of the outside world, and who comes, like a mother to her child, when called. Rhythm is then a magic art, invoking a 'spirit'.⁶⁶

Thus the open hexameter's 'searching' has archetypal meaning. It is the venture into the outside world, the 'Herausgehen', which a priori is a — necessary — error: 'sage nur niemand, daß uns das Schicksal trenne! Wir sind's, wir! wir haben unsre Lust daran, uns in die Nacht des Unbekannten,

in die kalte Fremde irgend einer andern Welt zu stürzen' (Hyperion, I, 25/7-9). It is the act itself, the 'That-handlung' of consciousness and will, source of all suffering and 'destiny'; so too Adam's act cast mankind out of the Garden (cf. Hyperion, I, 13/15-14/2). And the couplet renounces this 'Irrtum' and returns to the origin; it symbolises the 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens', for the poet in his relation to the outside world an 'Ausflug und Rückkehr zu sich selbst'.

Yet the discord of this 'Streben' is not really social. Its nature is defined by Hyperion.

Alles altert und verjüngt sich wieder. Warum sind wir ausgenommen vom schönen Kreislauf der Natur? Oder gilt er auch für uns?

Ich wollt' es glauben, wenn Eines nicht in uns wäre, das ungeheure Streben, Alles zu seyn, das, wie der Titan des Aetna, heraufzürnt aus den Tiefen unsers Wesens.

(I, 27/11-16)

The potential infinity of the epic hexameter, its 'Unendlichkeits-Streben',⁶⁷ is the desire of the 'Ich' to be absolute; then the pentameter, which states the limitation of the couplet, relates to the hexameter as the limitation of mortal destiny upon divine aspiration.

Essentially this form is the same as in the opening line of the asclepiadic ode 'Lebenslauf': 'Größers wolltest auch du || aber die Liebe zwingt'. The first half expands outwards and upwards, the dactylic second foot dissolving the weight of the first ('Größers') and leaving the 'du' open, undefined, briefly of an infinite potential; the second half, reversing this sequence, descends, whereby the

weight of 'aber' 'forces' down the 'will' to 'greatness'. One sees that the effect is not simply resignative; the very extremity of the contradiction ('aber') of aspiration leaves 'Größers' quite undefined, unqualified, so that the natural continuation — a closer definition of 'Größers' which might explain the content of aspiration, and so why it fails — never comes.

Infinity is not renounced; it is remembered, and the contradiction ('destiny') is not reality, but love. The 'Streben' of the hexameter ends and is received in the arms of the pentameter; but this return from the outside world to Nature — the 'kehre wieder dahin, wo du ausgiengst, in die Arme der Natur, der wandellosen, stillen und schönen' (Hyperion, I, 8/18-9/1), the 'βῆναι καὶ θεῖν, οἴεσθαι περὶ ἡκεῖ' (Hyperion, II, 2/2) — is an act of love, as, equally, poetry is the transformation of action, the way of the world, into love. In the rise and fall of the couplet is the entry into and withdrawal from the world by the pro-creative Spirit ('Geist', the 'breath' of life), and the hexameter relates to the pentameter as masculine to feminine principle.⁶⁸

Thus the elegiac couplet recreates, but in concentrated, intensified space, the essence of Hyperion's 'character', which is only superficially 'elegiac'. Resignation towards reality is not on moral grounds, but takes place because reality has never entered the fundamental dualism of Hölderlin's idealistic thought, and is therefore incidental, superfluous. The alternatives, on the contrary, are childhood 'Seeligkeit' and the 'Seeligkeit' of love, and the

latter is inferior to and serves the former. The memory of love, enacted ultimately by each couplet, both recreates its reality in heightened ('divine', 'infinite') form and is an act of self-preservation, but one which fears not only, nor even primarily, the overwhelming power of emotion, but rather its transience. So human relationship is beauty, and exposed, like Achilles, like a rose, to swift death: 'So ist schnell/ Vergänglich alles Himmlische ... ' ('Friedensfeier', 11.50-51); unless preserved by art. As the fear is ultimately of loss of self to time, so the key is the dream of Greece, of eternal, golden youth: 'O laß dir deine Rose nicht blaichen, seelige Götterjugend!' (Hyperion, I, 115/12). The elegiac couplet is Hölderlin's preservation of Susette Gontard, but more exactly of his love for her: 'um seine Totalempfindung ... , wie in einem Gefäße, zu bewahren' (4.151, 14-16). Within such a vessel this 'Totalempfindung' becomes 'Empfindung der Totalität', and poetry becomes the universalisation of individual experience. Thus the 'spirit' draws its vitality from life itself, and by these means Hölderlin achieves that missing element, 'das Lebendige in der Poësie' (B167, 31): 'wo der Mensch ... als unendlicher Geist im unendlichen Leben sich fühlt' (4.263, 6, 8f.).⁶⁹

This ideal and symbolic potential in the elegiac couplet is not achieved until the strophic form is fully developed. This form is itself anticipated in the essay 'Über Religion' (4.275-79):—

The 'higher life' is 'ein mehr als nothdürftiges Leben', 'mehr als mechanischer Zusammenhang' (4.275, 28, 7); it takes

place within a 'sphere' elevated above mechanistic causality ('Maschinengang', 4.278, 9). Metaphysical freedom ('Geist') is directly opposed to dependency on the physical laws of Nature. The concept of the 'sphere', bound up with Renaissance humanism (man as microcosm) transmitted by Shaftesbury and Winckelmann, here expresses the Idealistic elevation of art which culminates in Schelling's Philosophie der Kunst (1802).⁷⁰ What seems an elementary anthropological discussion as to how men differ from animals really seeks to define the possibility of freedom from determinism, the crux of Idealism: such freedom is achieved through memory ('Wiederholung im Geiste', 4.276, 7), which therewith holds the qualitative distinction between poetic and 'real' life. Memory stands between the abstract ideal and participation in physical reality, and is therein structurally identical to myth (unity of abstract and concrete), towards which the thought-process later drifts.

It must now be more than what it was in 'Elegie', a means of reconciliation with loss; it is, and progressively so, a self-purification, catharsis, from physical reality such as to yield the Divine, ideal beauty: 'wie wir die Zweige der Erde sehn, wenn sie verschönert aus dem güldenen Strome blinken' (Hyperion, I, 125/6f.). As the 'Bild' of 'Elegie', Diotima, passes out of elegy the poetic sphere arises: the strophe, which, reproducing and thereby first realising the symbolic potential of the couplet, replaces the duality of relationship with the ex-centricity of experience.⁷¹

The 'sphere' of the poem is the concrete image and

proof of the possibility of the divine structure, micro-cosmic harmony, of the individual's world, prior to and independently of any relationship with the outside world. 'Und jeder hätte demnach seinen eigenen Gott, in so ferne jeder seine eigene Sphäre hat, in der er wirkt und die er erfährt, und nur in so ferne mehrere Menschen eine gemeinschaftliche Sphäre haben ... haben sie eine gemeinschaftliche Gottheit' (4.278, 12-16). That this divine 'sphere' should be shared is a sufficient but not a necessary condition of its existence.

Because the poetic 'sphere' has replaced the irrationality of relationship with an ordered but therefore abstract form, it is ultimately self-related: 'living-death'. The hexametric impulse which in 'Elegie' was a search for lost love stabilises; therewith it is not only the act of love with its universal dimension, but also the 'search' for, act of, liberation from itself, the enclosed poetic sphere.

Thus the strophe is the type and symbol of memory, but the poem as a whole, which bears the burden of ultimate self-relatedness, is, until 'Heimkunft', governed by a search for reality and for liberation from the ideal 'perfection' of the strophe: 'die Kraft des Menschen wiederhohlt das wirkliche Leben, das ihm die Befriedigung gab, im Geiste, bis ihn die dieser geistigen Wiederholung eigentümliche Vollkommenheit und Unvollkommenheit wieder ins wirkliche Leben treibt' (4.276, 6-9). Yet the 'perfection and imperfection' of the sphere 'drives' the poet 'back' not into reality, but into the following strophe, which therewith becomes the memory of its predecessor.⁷²

II. 'DER WANDERER': IDYLL

The first version of this elegy (1.206-08) was written in Frankfurt during the happiest time of the poet's life; it reflects the deep peace he found through Susette Gontard and which became for him a spiritual homecoming after the 'Höllengeister' of Waltershausen and 'Luftgeister' of Jena (cf. B128, 35-38). The two extremes, North Pole and desert, are depicted in sections of eighteen lines each, of a strict parallelism with direct correspondences (in the fifth lines); the rest of the poem, the return 'an den Rhein, in die glückliche Heimath', flows in unbroken happiness to its conclusion: 'Friedlich zu werden und froh unter den Blumen zu ruhn.' North and South have no value in themselves, and are purely a foil to the 'glückliche Heimath'; their formal symmetry represents a lifeless principle, like the subject-matter arid and cold, which now melts into the ease and harmony of the temperate landscape, whose carefree succession of images, of laudes Sueviae, speaks the effortless language of Nature and the heart. Thus the form of this earlier poem is a true mirror of the poet's own experience. There, 'in der Fremde' (B101, 58), he can see 'wie schülerhaft all unser Denken und Verstehn vor der Natur sich gegenüber findet' (B123, 12f.).

Yet it is the form of the first part, albeit infinitely deepened and enriched, which is inherited by the later poem. The fully-developed elegiac strophe now governs and orders the whole poem. Written by one indeed 'müd bis in die Seele' (1.46), all his hopes dead, it is the first triadically-structured elegy, and probably belongs to the summer of 1800.

The first effect of the strophic structure is to give to the two extremes, North and South, relative validity. The reality behind their appearance — that God, Love, is everywhere — finds expression through successive strophes each of which is a whole within the greater whole, a stage within a journey. Hölderlin can no longer see any moral dualism in the world; all is, 'in its own way' ('Ganymed', 1.21), 'good',¹ just as 'Nur das ist die wahrste Wahrheit, in der auch der Irrtum ... zur Wahrheit wird' (4.234, 29-31). And it is the role of the poet, the instrument of the universal Spirit, to express this truth; it takes the form of a progressive liberation throughout the first three strophes from the 'living-death' with which they begin.

Liberation presupposes imprisonment. Like 'Menons Klagen um Diotima' the poem begins in captivity indirectly expressed by the rhythm itself. In the first strophe man is excluded from insight into and participation in the Divine; the 'measure' of the 'gods' is 'great', and so too the rhythm of the strophe, with syntax and metre almost as one, weighs down upon the reader with oppressive regularity. It is a 'sphere' of fruitless and barren monotony, mighty but opaque, self-enclosed like the couplet itself. Yet even

thus it prepares for the second strophe. Here the dead weight of the elegiac couplet, the 'eherne Schaale', has itself become the means of release; with the signal 'zer-sprengest' (l.33), the verse is broken open by powerful inversions, an effect which is only achieved in so short a space because the ear has become so accustomed to the monotony of rise and fall. Line 34 'tears itself free', throwing 'Los' and 'Licht' forward without connection (the alliteration reinforces this, as does that of 'reißt' and 'grüßt'), and delaying the subject till an emphatic final position, so that it does indeed emerge out of the chaos, reborn, an 'entbundene Welt' (compare the earlier, 'shy', version: 'Und die knospende Welt windet sich schüchtern heraus'). It is as though a sudden vitality can no longer tolerate ordered expression but must needs reach out for 'light' before it is there, thus bringing it into the first half of the pentameter. Therewith the whole final triad, the ordered flow of the earlier poem ('Und ... / Und ... ') giving way to a dynamic 'Daß ... / Los ... ', becomes a single movement rising to a climax in l.35 ('-flammt') before falling back to rest with 'im kärglichen Nord'.

But the emphatic final position of 'im kärglichen Nord' amounts to a self-reassertion by cold reality. The captivity inherited from the first strophe has become the premise for a glimpse of liberation, a brief lifting of the veil, which now becomes a mere memory as the elegiac sphere closes once more about the poet. Already the heightened significance of the inherited and developed formal principle is emerging: it presupposes a negativity far

exceeding that of the earlier poem, where the negative forces had been a mere preparation for joy and peace. The given form — the 'world' of the poem — has become enclosure, self-enclosure.

Hölderlin begins the third strophe by altering simple contrast into sequence: 'Aber jetzt kehr' ich zurück ... ' becomes 'Also sagt' ich und jetzt kehr' ich ... '. 'Home' too now has only relative validity; it is no longer the end of a journey, but the furthest stage so far. In other words, it is no longer the destination but the journey itself which has the highest value. Accordingly, this strophe presupposes and depends upon what has gone before. As the preceding strophe arose out of the captive state of the first, so now the glimpse becomes fulfilment of release. The second strophe has the form of a titanic struggle in which the 'gathered strength' finally bursts its bonds. Only now, through what has been achieved, can the liberation of the third take place; and do so in the second triad, not at the end, that is, no longer as a mere glimpse but as a shaking-off of all bonds.

Nowhere else in the poem is the elegiac rhythm, the regular matching of metre and syntax in rise and fall, question and answer, so completely resolved as here (ll.43-48). This triad therefore contains the final break-through, and with it the condition for creativity and for the poem as a whole. Five discrete units — 'auch] am letzten der sterblichen Tage]/ Fernher kommend und müd] bis in die Seele] noch jetzt]' — suggest the plodding-homewards, the infinite weariness, of the Wanderer, and at the same time

build up a powerful tension stretching over the metrical divisions ('noch jetzt/ Wiedersähe diß Land'); these words, being still within the protasis, bring a false climax and thus intensify the sense of anticipation; and thus the whole force of release falls on 'Blüh'n'. And this release is definitive liberation from the elegiac rhythm; like a final blow the second enjambement has broken it open. The darkness gives way, the eye opens; and before it lies a new realm.

The final triad (ll.49-54), a wonderful example of the disciplined power of Hölderlin's art at this time, is the prospect that opens up before the Wanderer's 'eye'. The opening exclamation is truly a Sprachgestus (the words are dramatic, imply a gesture).² All in the first two couplets is, in this moment of release, caught up in a dionysiac surrender to the spirit of wine, which flows around and through the verse, dissolving outline, binding all things to one another. The form is that of dissolving order; 'kein Hügel ist ohne den Weinstok', with its cautious litotes, is followed by a line — 'Mauer und Garten bekränzt' — in which definition (definite articles, auxiliary verb) is already lessening, and then, as the movement accelerates, the last outline ('die Schiffe') is washed away, and l.52 runs away with the river. All phenomena have passed into a single undifferentiated 'sie'. Assonance ('Traube ... Laub ... Mauer', and the un-sound) and alliteration (tr) also symbolise a life-force in which sensuality (sound) prevails over distinct meaning; most powerful, however, is the sibilant alliteration that pours over from l.51 to the pentameter: there is a distant suggestion of the great

spiralling motion of the River, its serpent's being and power. The sense of inexorable flow is intensified by the stream of unresisting 'und's; and above all the hyperbaton of 1.51 (normal order: 'Und die Schiffe im Strome sind voll des heiligen Tranks') is the very image of a Bacchic dance in which normal, conventional being, the rigid fixity of inanimate objects as we see them, has become informed by spirit, 'Geist'. In this line there is no suggestion of outline until 'die Schiffe', so that 'des heiligen Tranks' flows directly into 'im Strome', wine and river uniting to become one principle, more than a drink or a river; in a vitalistic sense, the River of Life. Into this 'the ships' are absorbed, and thus become personified, not mere cargo-vessels, worshippers of Dionysus. The beginning of 1.52 reverses the order of verb and substantive, thus continuing the dancing movement; and the whole reaches its climax with 'trunken', catching up the two alliterative strands, summarising. Perhaps 'Weinen', in association with 'Strome' and the whole feeling of streaming flow, carries the idea of weeping.

In these two couplets, then, the elegiac rhythm has come alive. The line-endings are all observed, for the crucial break-through has already been achieved (in the preceding triad). And thus the final couplet, which closes not only the third strophe but the first half of the poem, enacts the principle of form itself by completely restoring the elegiac rhythm: the pentameter returns to its role as answer to the hexameter, with duly parallel syntax (connective, descriptive clause, verb, main substantives). Form

and content are one: the poem has reached its summit, and 'rests'. The emphatic 'Aber', interrupting the flow, sets the mountain apart; transcending dionysiac release, he symbolises the paradoxical unity ('lächelnd und ernst', 'neiget der Freie das Haupt') of freedom and necessity, genius and art. Of itself, the intoxicated valley tends to formlessness, chaos, darkness; but through the form-giving whole, whose 'spirit' is the mountain, this urge becomes creative force.

What had seemed negative, 'living-death' — the elegiac rhythm, form itself, the world of the poem, poetry — has been transformed into the instrument of harmony and beauty.³ The bonds in which the poetic self existed ('Einsam' is the opening word), the potentially endless monotony of the elegiac rhythm in its rise and fall, now appear as the means to freedom, as the world within which, through the life-giving 'word' (compare 'Empedokles' II, 103, 127, 541f.; 2.596, 21), 'transformation' can take place. The evil — isolation, existence within the prison of poetic form — is ultimately good, being no more than the price paid for the ecstasy of liberation within that world, the joyous discovery that captivity is really freedom. Thus the formal principle is defined by the struggle to break through the bonds of form, and these have become the means to aesthetic harmony.

The elevation of the structure of the first part of the earlier poem to the status of a formal principle has yielded a dynamic form, and nowhere more so than in the first couplet of the second half (ll.55-56). Hölderlin had

written: 'Friedsam geht aus dem Walde der Hirsch ans freundliche Tagslicht;/ Hoch in heiterer Luft siehet der Falke sich um'; the affective epithets of the hexameter were chosen at random, the effect was that of a sequence of events. Now the epithets drop out, and two events are pressed into one line — 'Und jetzt kommt vom Walde der Hirsch, aus Wolken das Tagslicht' — the new vitality enhanced by alliteration, but the resulting parallelism diminishing the concreteness of the phenomena.⁴ Instead of being 'accidental', there for their own sake, they have become part of a movement, a rhythm which the pentameter, itself no longer merely depicting an event, continues. This is achieved not just by the change in words, but, above all, by the overall formal principle. Through the freedom that was the culminating experience of the preceding strophe, this couplet has become a new beginning. It is a radical change, for the couplet is thus no longer part of an idyllic onward flow, as in the earlier poem, but conveys an access of energy of which the very compression is expressive, and what it describes has symbolic force: the 'stag' and the 'day-light' emerge, just as the poem begins anew; and the falcon has become the poet himself, at that moment of taut sensitivity, hovering watchfulness, before the swoop upon the prey.⁵ Here are no longer figures in a landscape, but figures of anticipation, serving a higher purpose.

They are the threshold of the idyll that stretches from 1.57 to 1.80. And with the idyll the elegiac rhythm reasserts itself, a 'bequem Sich-ausstrecken', regular in its rise and

fall, its sense of enclosure, peace and security: a form the image of endlessness. Within this infinite expanse the three monosyllables 'Still ists hier', which are no longer defined and expanded upon, but have become isolated and independent, thus by their very form summarise and symbolise the meaning of idyll: a protected place, an island within the world. Nor is the 'immer geschäftige Mühle' still 'scarcely' heard and so part of the idyll, but 'distant', its busy dactyls and short vowels sharply separated by the caesura from the idyllic peace. In this way the symbolic meaning of form is heightened: 'Still ists hier', in its separateness, no longer introduces a specific idyll, but proclaims the idyll as such; 'hier' no longer refers to a particular place, but to the idyllic sphere itself.

The earlier poem had described freely, formlessly, out of sheer joy, and its conclusion — 'Friedlich zu werden und froh unter den Blumen zu ruhn' — was the final word, not, as here, subordinated to a higher formal principle. For that reason its form was simply additive, a sequence of phenomena even as they appear, and the description was concrete enough to seem that of a real place, an extra-poetic reality; it conveyed immediacy of relationship between perceiver and perceived, between the poet and his material. Here, however, such immediacy, and with it the acceptance by the poet of his material, has gone, and in the process that material — Nature — has taken on different meaning.

Firstly, Hölderlin has introduced time, change, into the idyll (a significant step because idyll is ideally purely spatial, static). It is set in evening; but 'evening' is

not explicitly mentioned, and the periphrasis 'das Neigen des Tages' expresses not a point but a movement in time. Thus the idyll is from the start a falling-away, a decline, descent, and assumes an end and goal. This will be reached with 'lag' (1.79). Furthermore, affective epithets and concrete detail have largely been eliminated. This 'Verlängnung alles Accidentellen' results in an apparent paradox: idyll with purpose:--

Now 'heimkehrend' replaces 'lenkend', and accords with 'Neigen' (which suggests inclination) and 'gerne': a will to rest. The little boy symbolises naive being, for 'Sehen' is used absolutely, signifying perception as such. 'Aber' is no longer a spatial direction; brought forward to sharp juxtaposition with 'entschliefs' at the caesura, it makes the redness of the clouds almost a warning to the Wanderer that he should go on, not lose himself in sleep. Thus the idyll is driven forward; if sleep is left behind, then because the Wanderer has passed beyond the simple idyllic realm. The warning is not an awakening, but a call to yet deeper descent, to where, beyond sleep, the unconscious lies, the world of dreams, where the self is passive, the world autonomous. To this realm the next couplet provides the transition; all deictic and concretising elements ('drüben', 'Ulme', 'alternd') have gone, but the very intangibility ('das offene Hofthor') is a statement, for the gate has become an invitation to enter, and gained the archetypal significance of a door. The stripping of all concreteness is not simply an idealising tendency;⁶ it joins with and intensifies the downward movement, the dynamic, of the

rhythm, for absence of detail is here a lack of resistance, and therefore has positive function, since the very essence of idyll is passivity. And even those aspects which Hölderlin has retained unchanged, for example the plastic enjambement of 'Übergrünt', have within this rhythm new, dynamic function, accelerating the downward motion; especially the simple comma providing (ll.66/67) the transition to the final triad of the strophe no longer merely links one couplet to the next, but makes a vital contribution to the formal principle itself, for the elegiac structure has become the means to a slipping deeper into darkness, a giving-way.

Thus the verse glides effortlessly into the final triad, so that its first couplet (ll.67-68), although almost unchanged, assumes deeper meaning. Now 'empfängt' reacts with the 'open' door, powerfully reinforcing its archetypal quality; it receives, draws, the Wanderer (who is now also assuming archetypal significance) into itself and its 'heimliches Dunkel'. Within this context 'house' and 'garden' too can no longer be located; they have become that inner sanctum each man carries with him, one day to return, symbols of the past, and together form the very heart of the idyll, into which the Wanderer now enters. And the darkness, since it is now contrasted with the 'golden light' outside, is freed from concrete reference, becomes one part of the great mythical duality; 'heim-lich', it suggests the origin, the mother of all things. Thus the transition to the final triad has gained the power of myth; the 'golden light', in which all things are clear and differentiated,

has become the threshold, 'gate'-way, to a realm of darkness in which there is no hold and the control exercised by consciousness is let slip; what outline is left is that of the past, of a dream.

In this triad all the concrete words which had suggested a particular little boy amid Nature have been replaced; for they had conveyed a habitat warm and pleasing, but encumbering and obstructing ears, eyes and mind. Now all the nouns suggest freedom from limitation: 'frei' for 'froh' (happiness clogs the mind), 'wie Geflügelte' (unencumbered by Earth), 'auf luftigen Ästen' (lightly airy); and the gaze is freed from the cloying sensuality of the sweet-smelling hay to look upwards into the aethereal blue, the infinite. In this context 'spielt' hardly refers to childish games but rather conveys the idea of play, its sheer freedom, pure as the infinite blue sky. Such depiction of boyhood eliminates the gap of memory, for it no longer consists of specific memories, so as to be an object of nostalgia, but is reduced to a single idea, the antithesis of the adult world with its 'Zwang' and 'Geschäfte' and 'Sorgen'; just as the darkness, through its contrast with light, had assumed absolute quality. The stripping-away of specific context deprives — or frees — the mind of all 'Halt', restriction, and enables submission to a dream. Because boyhood appears as purpose-free, it becomes subordinated and contributes to an overall purpose, becomes a stage in a journey.

The full function of this formal principle appears in the final couplet (ll.71-72). In fulfilling the strophic whole, bringing a sense of culmination and rest, it completes

a pure submission to the power of another. That this can happen is the measure of how utterly personal the elegiac form has become for Hölderlin. As the renunciation of freedom becomes complete the self is 'aufgenommen', absorbed; within the bounds of the strophic 'sphere' the freedom to act has been exchanged for the freedom that idyll bestows — not just from 'Sorgen' and 'Geschäfte', but from change, purpose, itself. Hence the disappearance of the exclamations which in the earlier poem had formed the climax and had expressed energy, the joy of renewed youth, for the sight of his native country had filled the Wanderer with new strength. Not so here, where through its anaphoric triple repetition 'treu' gains incantatory force intensified by the 'einst' that echoes from l.68. The striking regularity of the fourth strophe in terms of metre-syntax relation is wedded to the formal principle; such irregularities as there are (ellipse of verb in l.55, trisyllabic sentence in l.59, enjambement at ll.65/66) actually contribute to the overall sense of flow, as does the eased triadic transition at ll.66/67. A spell is being woven about the Wanderer, taking from him his strength.

If one imagines the poem ending here, in rest and acceptance, the effect would be closer to that of the earlier poem with its 'Friedlich zu werden und froh unter den Blumen zu ruhn'. The strophe, however, is a whole within a whole, and completion, rest, takes place only upon the condition of relativisation within the greater form, the whole poem. But the imposition of form upon the home-coming idyll does not really reflect an austere discipline; on the

contrary, it indicates the force necessitating but at the same time generated by that discipline: an overpowering intensification through the will to submission of the idyll in its sensual allure, soft power. For the effect of the strophic division and of the sense of transcending form is to drive the poem forward and carry the Wanderer deeper into the idyllic realm. Indeed, the individual strophe in its completeness has the force of an image. Not only does the idyllic 'sphere' close about the Wanderer; this moment is at the same time an opening on the part of the Door, of idyllic Nature. Both ideas are contained in the final 'auf'.

Thus the strophic transition has become a passing from one 'sphere' to another; the Wanderer, the poetic self, has passed through the 'Gate', and looks about itself within the 'garden'; and the Garden — that is, Nature's side — is no longer passive, what is, as in conventional idylls, seen and enjoyed, but a source of 'wonder', active, alive. The progressive entry into a dream, submission, on the part of the self has been a restoration of autonomy to Nature. That this is above all an effect of the formal principle (and that therefore form is not so much the vehicle for a statement as an instrument for the intensification of experience, of beauty) is easily felt by reading over the strophic division. The effect will be gone. As it is, it is in the first triad of the fifth strophe that the Idyll reaches its climax.

The strophic structure is only the most external aspect of the formal principle, towards which all rhythmical elements are working. In ll.73-78 the same forming will is at work

as in the purifying of light, darkness and childhood from specific reference, and here it is Nature that appears in pure form. Again, the principal aspects are elimination of affective epithets and concrete detail, so that Nature, like childhood, becomes free: free from dependence upon man, the perceiving Subject. For whereas the random images of an idyllic landscape thoughtlessly subject her to the vagaries of perception, here freedom necessarily takes the positive form of autonomy vis-a-vis a passive self.

Where previously the Wanderer had reacted with simple happiness to her spontaneous responsiveness, here he has become the registering spectator in the realm of a self-sufficient power. Even enjoyment is an evaluation and so a form of control; therefore the words expressing this ('gefällig', 'köstlich') drop out. 'Mir an's Fenster', 'Lokend', 'Schmeichelnd zieht mich', had suggested Nature as a charming mistress anxious to please her master (she comes to his window); now there is only the neutral 'wundern', and the window, as it leaves the verse, takes with it the firm outlines with which man civilises Nature. The happy reciprocity of the corresponding original line has given place to a 'Strauch' not evaluated, self-sufficient in the power ('Fast, wie die Bäume') of its growth (its position before the caesura gives strong emphasis to 'steht', which, thus freed from any qualification, gains phallic 'Eigenmacht'). Line 75 has been given a 'heavy', 'dark' sensuality heightened by the suggestion of a process of which the Wanderer was unaware ('ist worden indeß'), this in turn throwing the stress of the pentameter onto its second half, 'reichen ...

sich selbst'. Another effect of these changes is to turn the one dative of advantage into an ethical dative expressing above all wonder (the other drops out). Through the deconcretisation the words 'Aus dem Garten der Pfad' become juxtaposition of archetypes, and 'hinab' (the whole line is retained) fits effortlessly into the overall descending movement. The moving of 'wie sonst' in l.77 till after the caesura draws out, gives 'drawing' power to, 'zieht'.

Thus the idyllic self-sufficiency of natural things has been transformed into a daemonic Nature of which all that appears is merely representative. The passivity of the self is her will. All emphasis has passed from the remembering (and so, thinking) Subject to the self-sufficient images, the Object. What remains of control, the transcending form, only exercises this function indirectly, as the totality of its parts, and is therefore itself an instrument of the direct and sensual power of Nature. This process finds its climax in the first words of the following triad — 'Wo ich lag' — into which, again, the preceding triad effortlessly slips with a comma. Since the beginning of the idyll there have been no exclamations or questions, and the regularity of metre-syntax relation has been almost unbroken in a sea of rise and fall (ll.75-76 represent the ideal type); ever-increasing in weight and darkness, the elegiac rhythm bears down upon the self. Now these words suggest not only the content but the very nature of memory, of elegy, in its supine passivity; and in the dream of the 'sailors', the heroes, viri, who by acts shape the world, the elegiac mode has reached its furthest extreme.

Idyll as the epic renewal of language: the problem of
creativity

In line 80 there takes place a 'Re-flexion'; the Wanderer, who had descended to the depths of a dream within a dream, is startled out of himself as he remembers how his fascination with the heroic sailors led him to leave home and begin his wanderings and with them his sufferings. He realises that the home he has left can never again be his, but this very sense of cosmic isolation ('Und so bin ich allein') gives him the freedom to become aware of the cosmic forces ('Aether', 'Erde', 'Licht') that rule man's destiny and to whom his highest allegiance is due. This leads to the toast in which lost and found are reconciled in final harmony. Before assessing these lines I would like to consider the meaning idyll has gained for Hölderlin.

Like his intellectual contemporaries he believed that man and Nature had become unnaturally divided, that the individual, both as human being and as artist, now lived in a state of lost spontaneity ('die Trennungen, in denen wir denken und existieren', 'der Widerstreit zwischen dem Subject und dem Object, zwischen unserem Selbst und der Welt', B117, 30-33), that language bore a crucial relationship to this division. As the vehicle of thought, it is the instrument of man's mastery over Nature, and therefore appears as dead, abstract, metaphorical, symptomatic of the self-centred, one-sided, uncreative, enslavement of Nature to man's knowledge and needs. As this situation is, however, a distortion of original harmony, so too language is originally and by

nature poetic, spontaneously creative, divine. The original name-giver, whether Adam or Orpheus, was the poiētēs, Subject of the ideal linguistic act, the creative miracle which in naming confers existence, and equally, the naming process is itself purely creative, an end in itself, purpose-free. Consciousness is the mirror without which the picture is incomplete. Such a conception is founded upon the transcendental structure of an anthropocentric idealism for which the human mind is, was, and always will be the condition of existence, and therefore the agent ('Subject') of creation.

Therewith the highest status devolves to poetry, as the ideal, pure and selfless, language. But its nature thus becomes problematical; the moral foundation creates a sharp division between poetry and society (in contrast to the traditional conceptions of art as entertainment or instruction), and thereby exacerbates the problem it ought to solve, for how can poetry be spontaneous when it has to fulfil an intellectually-conceived role? The question points back to the wider problem: just as the spontaneous use of language has no ideally abstract basis, but presupposes the will and purpose of the individual user, so too when thought ceases to be the vehicle of a specific purpose it becomes reflection as opposed to action. The mind that can no longer find any place in the world projects its own isolation, abstraction, onto the world. To such 'reflection' the infinite singularity of particular interests in society appears futile, for neither the single action nor the sum of actions yields a transcendent value. Then the social whole appears

as an abstract system which the active individual perpetuates through pursuit of self-interest; and language appears as symptomatic of such alienation. Yet the essential problem remains the alienation, and not the symptom language.

In such terms the history of human culture must appear as a fall from naive genius into conscious art. Adam, the first man, had named the animals out of pure joy, without civilising intent. Mythology, especially the Greek, was the poetic language, naively concrete and visual, of the childhood of the human race, a free, spontaneous naming — of gods, men, trees, birds, flowers — through which man fulfilled and worshipped Nature: a pure enrichment of the world.

Thus Homer, the type of the epic poet, had been the true naive artist. A.W. Schlegel writes: 'Im Epos sehen wir die Menschheit noch auf der ersten Stufe der Bildung, wo sie auf dem Boden der Sage erwachsen mit derselben zusammenhängt und in unbestimmter Ausdehnung sich wieder darein zurückverliert.'⁷ Homeric epic is seen as a dream-like consciousness and semi-forming of life, still closer to reality than to art. It is 'objective', its form, an endless succession of hexameters, is a true mirror-image of natural causality (an endless chain of events), and its author is not yet, like the tragic poet, an individual in the full sense, but the One Poet, as good as nameless, a disinterested observer, but for that very reason a lover, of life.

This supposed oneness with Nature and freedom from the restless striving of modern man lends to the 'naive' poet a restfulness which associates him with the longed-for childhood state. The 'natural tone' is above all rest for those

who have no rest, from consciousness, purpose. Homer's mind is free from distracting emotion or intellect; his hexameters are like the sea, resting and purifying in its endless rise and fall, in which also the deeds of men, selfhood, appear and are gone again, leaving nothing behind. In this sense, at the end of the hexametric epyllion 'Der Archipelagus', Hölderlin prays to the 'Meergott':

... und wenn die reißende Zeit mir
Zu gewaltig das Haupt ergreift und die Noth und das Irrsaal
Unter Sterblichen mir mein sterblich Leben erschüttert,
Laß der Stille mich dann in deiner Tiefe gedenken.

Idyll is not least an attempt to recreate the 'naive' peace which Homer (despite the violent content of his work) imparted, and to achieve the same serene freedom from form and subjectivity. It is conscious recreation of prelapsarian innocence, a formed formlessness and artless art. Consciousness in its capacity as organising, forming principle, as the Subject imposing its will on the Object, is dismantled, and man's harmonious existence in Nature is expressed through the epic, formless, form with its looseness of connection (interpreted as the primacy of 'chance'), its 'additive', 'paratactic', 'democratic', structural principle.⁸ In so far as a self appears within this world, it is at peace with its surroundings, perceiving rather than reflecting; and the artist's role is similarly to paint what is there and himself as far as possible to be absent. Idyll represents an invitation to set aside consciousness, but within a world amply signalling its artistic origins and thus guaranteeing return to the outside world. There is no suggestion of

contradiction, threat, or rebellion; the purpose remains the illusion of an abdication of mastery over Nature.

The second part of the earlier version of 'Der Wanderer' had expressed the happy 'Ehe (Synthese)' of man and Nature.⁹ Compared with the later poem, it is relatively formless in precisely the above, 'epic', sense; the idyll is an expression of joy, and intended as such. A.W. Schlegel's description of elegy is very appropriate here:

Unter allen antiken Formen ist keine, welche sich so an das Leben anschmiegt ... In diesen engeren Privatbezirk konnte sich ... die Poesie hinüberretten, wenn sie auch aus den öffentlicheren Verhältnissen des Lebens längst verscheucht war. Die Elegie ... gewährt in ihrer sorglosen Freiheit den schönsten Spielraum ... Zur Lyrik im großen Stil muß das Gemüt in seinen innersten Verhältnissen strenger geordnet sein ... Die Elegie darf aber auf die hingeebenste Art subjektiv sein ... mit freiwilliger Verirrung erzählend.¹⁰

In 1800 Hölderlin, whose 'engerer Privatbezirk' in Frankfurt had ceded to 'Dichterberuf', and for whom every poem must in its own way, austere or gentle, fulfil 'das Ideal eines lebendigen Ganzen' (B183, 48), could no longer write out of simple happiness. He subjects the earlier poem to the elegiac formal principle he is in the process of developing. But this imposition of formal discipline is not simply the decision of an artist approaching maturity; it serves exclusively to confirm and intensify the poetic experience.

The key is the relative validity of each 'sphere' (strophe) in the first half of the poem, which actually performs the intimated liberation to new life, through the 'life-giving word' of the poet. Liberation comes, then,

within the poem itself, so that the 'living-death' with which the poem began, and which is familiar from the beginning of other poems in this period, for example 'Der blinde Sanger' and 'Der gefesselte Strom', proves not just to be mere appearance, like mist before the coming sun, but the actual condition of new life. If liberation takes place within the poem, and reveals what seemed bad to be good, then the initial situation is captivity within the poem and poetic isolation.

The poem's symmetry, the succession of strophes, is the music of the spheres. The whole is the 'world' (cf. 4.250, 24f.) of the poem, of which the first half, hemisphere, is liberation to exist within the poetic world. What follows is actual poetic existence; the strophe is no longer that within which release takes place, but the form taken by Life itself; no longer dead, but alive. The initial correlative (to isolation), the outside world, has given way to living relationship with that which is within the poetic world: the Other, Life, Nature. If form is self-enclosure, then self-enclosure is the means to liberation of dynamic, elemental forces, so that the poetic act, the life-giving word, is, and always was, a renunciation of activity and struggle.

With its effortless succession of 'accidental' perceptions, the earlier elegy will have seemed mere 'Leben' lacking 'Geist': 'blos angenehm und glucklich', 'zu angenehm und sinnlich' (4.259, 8, 24).¹¹ Here the idyll has been idealised; its formal principle and 'suspension of activity' have taken on the heightened meaning of the purposefulness of the Object. The magic space has become a magic spell; no longer a

mere irresponsible illusion, but the model for a radically new relationship between the individual and Nature which would end that of mastery and slavery (the Age of Reason) for ever. The pleasant illusion of selflessness is replaced by the absorbing seriousness of loss of self.

Poetic form is the indirectly exercised control over this process. That is, the safeguard is the instrument of, and engenders, the danger, and danger is, ultimately, wanted; the key of the door to a world not normally known. Poetry has become a venture into the Unknown, with the attendant joy and fear, the sensuous tremor, of loss of self in another. It is agapē, being the means whereby man overcomes the 'höchste Entgegensetzung' (4.155, 20) between himself and Nature, the cold relationship and self-centred existence of the dawning industrial age:

Aber weh! es wandelt in Nacht, es wohnt, wie im Orkus,
Ohne Göttliches unser Geschlecht. Ans eigene Treiben
Sind sie geschmiedet allein, und sich in der tosenden
Werkstatt
Höret jeglicher nur und viel arbeiten die Wilden
Mit gewaltigem Arm, rastlos, doch immer und immer
Unfruchtbar, wie die Furien, bleibt die Mühe der Armen.
Bis ...

... der Liebe seegnender Othem

Wieder ...

Wehet in neuer Zeit ...

Uns der Geist der Natur ...

('Der Archipelagus', 11.241-52)

But it is also erōs, the private act, however exemplary, of love.

In Hyperion and 'Empedokles' the form of fiction provided a safeguard against the intensity of the imagination. Here, in the lyric poem, that safeguard is in principle no

longer available. Nor is it provided by poetic form in the classical sense, the difference between art and reality, for here the unreality of experience is the very condition of its imaginative intensity. In this poem, however, there remains the clear difference between lyric and real 'I': the Wanderer is not the author, for his home is the Rhineland, he had grown up with both parents, and both have since died (l.89). He is a fictional character.

The 'Re-flexion' of l.80 represents, I would suggest, the 'Zurückschrecken' of the two extremes, finite Subject and Nature. The controlling instance is therefore still the difference between the poet and the poetic world, and it preserves what the formal principle tends and threatens to destroy: the poet's ultimate freedom from his creation, his 'freie Wahl'.

Yet it is the formal principle upon which the aesthetic value depends. The commentator of the Insel-Ausgabe writes: 'Am Schluß der drei Elegien' ('Der Wanderer', 'Stutgard', 'Heimkunft') 'geschieht jedesmal die entscheidende Wendung von der irdischen zur geistigen Heimat, die Erinnerung göttlichen Daseins nach beglücktem Schaun auf das äußere, sinnenhafte Dasein, und zuletzt wird beides, himmlischer und irdischer Bereich, in der Feier übereins gebracht' ¹²

This is not an aesthetic value. One might reply that it is not intended as such, that the commentator is only providing a basis for appreciation, leaving aesthetic judgement to personal taste. But he speaks of an 'entscheidende Wendung'. Thereby the value of the poetry is made identical with its logical coherence, so that the reader is presented with a

closed system and denied a feeling response. This value, of the 'entscheidende Wendung', is philosophical (essentially metaphysical-dualistic, but with a moral tone). Its presence in this poem I am not disputing, so that the commentator is, at least regarding this elegy, right; but this rightness is quite negative.

For Hölderlin poetry was to be the marriage of harmony and life, of ideal unity and reality. If one asks what is meant by harmony, an immediate answer is provided by contemporary music (we think first of Mozart and Haydn), which, however, could be called philosophically defective because it does not touch the 'Dissonanzen der Welt', at least not radically; its harmony remains apart from life, in the seclusion of art.¹³

But the marriage of music and language, or elevation of harmony to a universal principle, an aim clearly reflected in Hölderlin's theory of 'Wechsel der Töne', leads only to an abstract ideal ('wo Geist und Leben auf beiden Seiten gleich ist', 4.262, 15f.) which has forfeited the sensuality of music and therefore remains theoretical. The artist/philosopher ('Idealist', to use Schiller's term) remains excluded and aloof from life, detached.

This same exclusion and crisis of creative spontaneity has, however, proved to be the very premise and condition of the poetic act, and the harmonious world created by poetic — the strophic — form has proved to be the negativity of isolation and 'living-death'. This negativity has functioned, creating the bounds of an existential 'sphere'. If this is so, then the aesthetic criterion depends upon an a priori

identification of metaphysical coherence with poetic form, rather than with an intellectual process and rational purpose.

Here, however, this necessary negative quality in the intellect is missing, and poetic form has been subordinated to (become the vehicle of) metaphysical coherence: a problem (11.80-97) and its solution (11.97-100). The rhetorical questions of lines 83 and 91 are all too patently designed to lead up to 'Und so bin ich allein' in line 97. Form has become a 'shell', a merely external sign or authoritative assertion that the solution found by the intellect is also sensual; therewith reflection returns empty-handed to its initial aporia: how is ideal harmony between man and Nature to be truly restored, realised? A sure indication of this aesthetic failure is that the solution is the naming of the 'Divine' (11.97-100); this is a contradiction in terms, for in Hölderlin's *Weltanschauung* words are dead abstractions (language being the means to man's mastery over Nature). The Divine is not something that can be named, but the living relationship, which takes place within the poem, between the individual and Nature: 'das Göttliche ist in der Mitte von beiden.'

Freedom and necessity

The final triad, however (11.103-08) is again of the highest poetical quality. Perhaps the security of metaphysical truth has provided a balance to the daemonic intensity of poetic experience, so that an intellectual solution was

needed as a restraining safeguard ('Zurückschrecken'), despite its compromising the complete aesthetic experience. For here the ending vindicates poetry as the integrated, and thus self-sufficient, harmony of existence.

The preceding couplet (ll.101-02) is like the up-beat to a final bar. Its self-contained chiasmic structure (the couplet begins with 'Aus-', ends with 'zurück') is itself the image of a completed journey, sealing off the entire wanderings and preparing for fulfilment. Thus 'Darum' is felt to refer not just to the immediately preceding lines with their solution, but to all that has gone before, and the ending as a whole is full of a disciplined triumph, a dionysiac restraint, which embraces the whole poetic experience rather than any single moment or idea within it. There is a sense of liberation, reflected in the imperatives, which being the first in the poem (apart from those in line 86, which are at once cancelled out by line 89) express the freedom to command ('reiche ... reiche'); reflected also in the exclamations, and in the image of wine which by enjambement pours over the hexameter ending to reach the pentameter's caesura, an image given sensuous support by alliteration and assonance, the combining r- and ei-sounds, the hyperbaton drawing 'Wein' to 'Warmen'. This is not just pleasurable sound-poetry; it symbolises the work of Dionysus himself, of the 'spirit' of wine, flowing through and binding all things together. Yet this intoxication is 'effort'-lessly held throughout by form:—

The dissolving enjambement is embraced by the anaphoric

'reiche', yielding an inner tension that actually strengthens the couplet's enclosed form. And this couplet, expressing a controlled ecstasy — joy — is itself held within an ascending movement, so that the exclamation is no more than a pause. For here, in contrast to the lines leading up to the naming of the 'gods', the logical hierarchy ('parents and friends' below 'heroes', 'heroes' below 'gods') is in rhythmic tension with an expanding tricolon of mounting anticipation which finds release temporarily in 'und dann' (l.106), finally in 'Eltern und Freund!'. Thus the climax, which is that of the whole poem, is made to span the couplet-division itself; the third member of the tricolon stretches from 'und dann' all the way to the final 'sei', so that the tension dissolves in the ensuing flow of ideas. With this sense of achieved climax, the final couplet cascades downwards to rest; in a stream of 'und's (including by sound 'unter', and really beginning in l.105, so that the last two couplets are bound together) disparate ideas join with one another ('Mühh' with 'Eltern und Freund'', 'schnell' with 'Heut' und morgen') by virtue of the caesuras. All is, in form as in content, effortlessness and easeful forgetting. Thus the last dactylic cadence is a falling-away to rest, and since this pentametric cadence is a necessary feature of each elegiac couplet, the whole poem with its seemingly endless sequence of couplets is felt as a never-ending wandering which now at last has ended.

Here, then, there is no sense of conflict between freedom and form. The verse flows freely and effortlessly, but always with measure. This is the effect not just of its

internal rhythm, but of its contrast with the corresponding triad which ended the first half of the poem, and to which it is an antiphonal response. There, liberation and restraint had been, if 'harmoniously', opposed, and 'Aber lächelnd und ernst ... ' had brought firm outline, 'Halt', to the valley with its dionysiac dance. Here, liberation and restraint have become the identity of freedom and necessity; all six lines have dionysiac quality, but, since they form the climax of the poem, are also a supreme acceptance of the necessity of form. Thus the fulfilment of formal necessity has become freedom, and complete freedom. The image of this harmony is the river Rhine, which appears in both triads. In the first climax, the flood of inspiration that strives against the bonds of form is the 'spirit' of the youthful stream; in the second it is the calm strength of the river that appears, its odyssey over.

Thus captivity, liberation, and the surrender of love are all embraced by poetic form, whose necessity is not just artistic discipline in the classical sense, but the freedom to possess heightened and intensified experience, achieved through existential autonomy. And so far as it serves this purpose, metaphysical harmony is not an object of communication, but the — in itself negative — potential of a self-enclosed world which exists for its own sake. Thus the end of the poem is purely at the service of its overall unity; it does not exist on a 'higher level', nor is it an arrival at the truth (the true meaning of the poem). It is the moment at which there is no need for anything but poetry; and the poem has been the journey (wandering) to discover

this truth. This truth therefore existed prior to the journey, and was (to use the Leibnizian term) prestabilised. Because the end therefore does not possess the precedence over the beginning proper to rational thinking, the sense of final harmony is possible despite the intervening aesthetic failure where metaphysical coherence did become an object of communication. It remains, of course, true that the poem as a whole communicates, and was intended to do so; but this has not been its prime purpose.

It will be seen that the elements which here extend over the whole poem later come to constitute the single, opening and archetypal, strophe. Thus the first half of the poem, which after all consists largely of material from the earlier version, is, in its captivity and liberation, essentially parallel to the first three couplets (the opening triad) of the typical strophe, while the second half, with its loss of self (surrender to love) and final identification of freedom with poetic autonomy, anticipates the rest.

III. 'DER GANG AUFS LAND': WISH AND FULFILMENT

This elegy is incomplete. After and alongside his last attempt to finish it Hölderlin wrote: 'Singen wollt ich leichten Gesang, doch nimmer gelingt mirs, Denn [es] machet mein Glück nimmer die Rede mir [leicht]' (2.583, 9-13). This is almost certainly a reflection on the unfinished poem. It is indeed, at least to start with, 'light song'; a light but sure artistry allows town and countryside to appear with, perhaps, simpler and more pleasing immediacy than in any other poem by Hölderlin. The lighter art is, however, certainly not a descent to 'descriptive poetry'; rather, the landscape functions as a natural and unstrained background to the 'Gang aufs Land'. Stuttgart is not, as in the elegy of that title, clad in priestly robes, but wears everyday clothes, and this is altogether true of the 'heimatliche Natur' in this poem.

And the theme of the opening triad (ll.1-6) is quite simply the weather. It is a drab, gloomy day for an outing, but the poet is eager to get outside and walk up with his friend Landauer and the others from the valley in which Stuttgart lies and which in summer becomes that oppressive 'Kessel', and into the surrounding hills. The overcast sky is like a prison, but he refuses to let it depress him, and

already at the beginning of the second triad he can say (1.7): 'Dennoch gelinget der Wunsch' One can sense the 'light'-ness of Hölderlin's approach here by only reading as far as the end of the fourth couplet. The first four couplets could form a natural unit expressing little more than a 'wish' for good weather and an enjoyable day. If certain themes and motifs in these lines have a special meaning, then it does not derive from themselves. Hölderlin was writing for Landauer, and wanted a poem that the merchant and family-man would enjoy (compare the rhymed 'An Landauer', celebrating family life).

The unity of the first four couplets is strengthened by their strikingly parallel structure. In each there is a strong third-foot caesura followed by an enjambement whose apparent irregularity is always firmly corrected, as it were, by a complete clause (in the first, second and fourth couplets a complementary 'und'-clause) and an end-stopped pentameter. The slightly varied rhythm (weak third-foot caesura) of the third couplet merely has the effect of reinforcing the basic impression of order and form, which the fourth then restores. Thus the remarkable span of the third hexameter seems to convey the endless stretch of grey sky — even in its furthest extent, then, the negative spirit is comprehended and overcome: 'Dennoch ... '.

Thus the slight tension between the 'wish' and a recalcitrant Nature is dissolved. The rest of the second triad continues the parallel regularity (with the variation of a weak caesura in l.11), so that the pentameter, whose end-stopped complementary 'und'-clause has created a pattern of expectation, is now almost a statement of proper order. The

effect of the second triad is not so much to continue as to fill up the poem, its 'measure', and the inevitability of the elegiac rhythm seems to outweigh the individual couplet and its content.

This rule of form over content is, however, deceptive. The second triad, which introduces the theme of 'Rechtgläubigkeit' and then expands it into the cosmic perspective of the fifth couplet (an ultimately benevolent deity whose sparing kindness is also a kind of grace), sets the first within a cosmic order, a 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens', of which the ordered rhythm is a concrete image. Thereby the weather, the scanty sunlight and the gloomy sky, becomes mere appearance in the light of cosmic reality. At once the details of the opening scene assume ideal significance. The scanty sunlight ('ein Weniges') becomes the sign of a self-restraining god full of love, but wishing to test man's 'faith'; 'Himmel' ('sky') becomes 'Himmel' ('heaven') (so that both 'Weniges' and 'Himmel' are personified); the missing 'Gesang' is an archetype of which poetry too is a manifestation; and the 'bleierne Zeit' is the 'dürftige Zeit' of 'Brod und Wein'. The 'wish' (the theme has been subtly introduced in 1.4) is no longer an everyday 'I hope it's going to be fine', but the transforming act through which man fully achieves his 'humanity', the life-giving word. Thus the second triad idealises the first and gives it universal significance; and the emerging strophic form which carries the succeeding wish forward, beyond its limited occasion in time and place and to a higher meaning, is the concrete manifestation of this cosmic



harmony. It gives to the first four couplets, which if they were complete in themselves would be merely a formless sequence, an overriding structure, that of the triadic strophe, itself a microcosmic image ('Welt in der Welt', 4.250, 25) of the All.

Similarly, this context transforms and heightens the opening exclamations 'Komm! ins Offene, Freund!'. They undergo a 'Verläugnung alles Accidentellen' which frees them from the specific occasion (the 'walk', Stuttgart, Landauer) to become pure exclamation: pure wish. Pure — ideal — wish is itself the wish to be purely free: to leave behind ('Komm!') all the material concerns that beset the spirit, and to sense the Infinite ('das Offene') of which the endless blue sky is the purest symbol, and to share this experience ('Freund!'), to be truly (but purely) communal. The utterly undefined wish that has no object is the longing to be free from all objects, indeed, to lose self and identity in sheer infinity.

Thus the opening exclamation works on two levels, that of specific address (to Landauer) and of pure wish, of reality and ideal, and furthermore, the second is the contradiction of the first. For the wish for pure freedom is dragged down to earth by the reality in which the 'naive' wish was spoken. The poetic process is therefore an 'Idealisiren' (B179, 70, 88) and 'Bildung' (in the semi-transitive sense; cf. 'Empedokles' II, 536; 4.221f.), a forming act which first makes the 'Stoff' poetic; the poet's role in a Gelegenheitsgedicht is not merely imaginative recreation but 'Er-innerung', and the necessarily retrospective situation

is not just commemorative but universalising. The purpose of the poem contradicts the original and real purpose of the 'Gang aufs Land' because it contradicts any and every real purpose.

The 'naive' wish was apparently frustrated by the weather, but this tension dissolved in the fourth couplet. The wish succeeds. Even as it is carried forward and elevated to metaphysical status, however, it can no longer be satisfied with that naive success, and is formed into a will to pure freedom. But that will now finds itself equally hemmed in — by poetic form. For the closing-in of the sky is also that of the end-stopped elegiac couplet, establishing the formal pattern of the first six couplets, absorbing the initially free impulse (enjambement) of the hexameter into overall order. In the rest of the poem there are no more exclamations, a fact that reflects how the purified wish, now a wish for pure freedom and an end to self — self, subjectivity, is what is closed, enclosed — has been absorbed into the captivity of form, which thus defines indefinability itself. Slowly but surely the initial lightness has become the weight of the sky, the elegiac couplet, poetic form itself: 'Ach! und nichtig und leer, wie Gefängnißwände, der Himmel/ Eine beugende Last über dem Haupte mir hängt' ('Menons Klagen um Diotima', ll.67-68; lines, significantly, not yet in 'Elegie').

Idealisation is thus lost spontaneity and naivety, and produces, paradoxically enough, the very self-enclosure imputed to the world (with its one-sided existence). The developing cosmic perspective becomes the context restricting

the pure and free initial impulse in proportion as that impulse is elevated beyond its occasion. Longing for the Infinite is unfulfillable. The real 'Gang aufs Land' is thus gradually transformed into the captivity of an ideal 'Gang', so that the successful wish, the dissolution of tension, itself becomes the basis of a new tension, that between ideal and reality. If the weather were the only obstacle, the wish would indeed be successful (and the poem could end at 1.8), for to be cheerful despite the weather really does only require an act of will. But that the 'Gang' takes place within a cosmic context — that, and with it the fifth couplet, is sheer and mere assertion, theory; it is admittedly metaphysically coherent, but is also, and for that very reason, mere words, 'Reden'.

The idealising process unites with the increasing weight and weariness of the elegiac rhythm, which reaches a climax in the plodding progress of 1.11; here, the paratactic sentence-structure allied to the trochaic beat (the weak caesura actually holds up the verse, lengthens the stressed syllable 'Red-', and makes the first half a trochaic monotony; compare 'Nur daß solcher Reden' with 'Dennoch gelinget der Wunsch') makes the rhythm walk to the pace of the (thus heavily stressed) 'Schritt' and 'Mühe'. Thus, since the ideas on which the genitives are dependent are still to come, a considerable tension is created, and released in the parallel adjectives 'werth' and 'wahr', linked by the w-alliteration not just to each other, but to the now thematic 'Wunsch'. This wish is thus no longer for good weather, but for a fitting reality to match the ideal;

all the emphasis falls on 'wahr'.

Thus idealising 'Erinnerung', in proportion as it transforms the original wish, encloses the poetic self in its own world and stifles the very feeling it creates. This is a single process. We do not sense the full meaning of 'Komm! ins Offene, Freund!' until the strophe is complete; its infinite aspiration depends upon the captivity of form.

Without this negative experience the liberation of the final triad could not take place. At the summit of a hill, after a long and weary climb, a walker is rewarded with the wonderful view that spreads before his eyes, but whose beauty depends upon the plodding path behind; so too, after the iron grip of winter, spring comes with its refreshing green. Both these symbols of liberation, renewal, are present in the dissolving of form that takes place in this final triad. Its first couplet (ll. 13-14) resumes the established pattern (enjambement + complementary 'und'-clause), but the sentence, quickly taken up by 'Und gefunden', runs (the 'tongue' is 'freed') over the dividing comma to become a flowing succession of clauses, the very image of the countless forms in which spring bursts forth (compare 'aufgegangen', 'entspringt', 'Blüthe'). The couplet-form dissolves away like ice from a mountain stream, and is not restored until the final couplet, completing the interrupted subordinate clause ('es werde ... '), closes the strophe with its firm parallel clauses.

This sense of completeness, of fulfilled form, is itself completed through the double echo ('dem offenen Blick offen') of the opening, now no longer an exclamation but a

measured rhythmic statement. What opened the poem, the will 'ins Offene', which by definition seeks the absolute freedom of the Infinite, now closes the strophe; that is, the formless impulse ends as form. Only now is this apparent: the ending vindicates (the strophic) form as the only true and possible fulfilment of the will 'ins Offene'; and the full — infinite, formless — extent of that will is only felt in the complete form.

The formal structure is lightly but clearly marked. The original wish, pure and undefined exclamation, opens the poem. By the first line of the second triad the wish is no longer 'naive' but defined (named), abstract, lifeless, so that 'Dennoch gelinget der Wunsch' is a contradiction in terms; and 'Wunsch' moves (away from the original inspiration) to the centre. And with a precise symmetry that mirrors the weary climbing of the hill, 'der Wunsch' reappears at the end of the first line of the third triad, abstract, lifeless, but also superseded: 'das Gewünschte'. Hence the overall structure of tension which 'beginnen' is able to release. The lifelessness is itself remembered, past.

But this release is not, as 'Beginnen' suggests, practice; it is a vision, indeed, a wish. The strophe is built upon a subtle 'negative dialectic'. Spontaneity has in the course of the poem drained away to become mere theory, an empty assertion of metaphysical harmony; the imposition of cosmic harmony upon the humble occasion has undermined its reality and isolated the poetic self within its ideal poetic world. Hence the need for the act of liberation; the poet's

achievement is nothing other than the recapturing of the original feeling.

Thus the very deficiency of the poetic, or idealising, process, the experience of lifelessness and unreality, is now comprehended, embraced within 'song', poetic harmony. The poem with its wish for pure freedom now becomes a strophe, incomplete and imperfect, a merely partial (visionary) fulfilment, but for that very reason harmonious. That is not to deny the presence of conflict and tension; nevertheless, the contradiction between 'song' and life, ideal harmony and reality, cannot any more be absorbed into poetry than that between theory and practice can be solved within philosophy. Here this imperfection has become the inner dynamic that drives the poem on, a process more visible than in the other elegies, whose completeness suggests a coherent solution. Yet this implies that the conflict between the lyric I and the world, between ideal and reality, is from the start harmonious. There has been no compromise, as a political idealist, because his will is directed to a specific object, may be forced to adapt his ideal to circumstances.

Form is therefore not the self-sufficient whole, but the insufficiency of the self-sufficient part. As a self-enclosed sphere, the elegiac strophe creates, and is the poetic situation of, isolation, yet the poet is thereby granted a vision of liberation and ideal community whose only imperfection is that it is no more than a vision. This imperfection finds expression in the 'open' strophic form; thus the incompatibility of vision and reality seems overcome, for the vision is pure wish, anticipation, 'offen'.

It is not hubristic, does not claim to know the Divine, and firmly divides poetry from what it seeks: 'Statt offner Gemeine sing' ich Gesang' ('Der Mutter Erde', l.1); ' ... bald sind wir aber Gesang' ('Friedensfeier', l.93). Yet the vision is only 'open' within 'song', within the idealising process and cosmic perspective; it depends upon the absence of any possible fulfilment, and Not-Yet is its only form. 'Zunge', 'Wort', 'Herz', even 'unsere' has proleptic force. The practice that breaks through the lifelessness of mere words is the fulfilment of vision.

Therefore the imperfect — that is, strophic — form is itself cosmic harmony. It is insufficient not because of the conflict between ideal and reality, but because it is the appearing concrete form of the Divine, the 'Äußerung' (4.262, 10, etc.) or 'Ent-äußerung', self-depletion, of the Infinite, through the medium of finite consciousness. The strophic form has not so much preserved as first created a metaphysical perspective.

The second strophe lacks a whole couplet which almost certainly should have followed l.22 and completed the first triad (cf. 2.578, 18-25). Yet the rhythm seems almost unimpaired, and when writing out his fair copy Hölderlin was clearly not disturbed by the anomaly. Perhaps by this time (the poem is later than 'Stuttgart' and the first drafts of 'Brod und Wein'; see the Appendix, below) the triadic structure has become less rigid. Later, in 'Heimkunft', it becomes the barrier overcome by love. Here this barrier is no mountain but a 'hill', the transcending and

ascending 'spirit' not love, 'nicht Mächtiges', but affection. The couplet of transition (ll.23-24) can be read as though it belonged to both first and second triad: as it is read, it follows naturally as an epexegetic infinitive dependent upon 'kommen' and is restrained, 'verständlich'; but once it has been read it forms part of the rhythm of the second triad, which is a single syntactical unit not finally bound together until the main verb ('wollen').

In this way the first ten lines (19-28) yield a single flowing movement framed, like a picture, by the motif 'wollen', supported by w-alliteration. The poetic situation of wish provides the controlling perspective within which the 'Begeisterung', liberating vision, can take place. The first two couplets return to the characteristic pattern of the first strophe, the pentameter completing the sense (here, in each case providing the subject) within end-stopped couplets; as though the hexameter were searching and questioning, and the pentameter replying with a fulfilling embrace (compare ll.19-20 with 9-10; ll.21-22 have the characteristic enjambement, the freedom that states necessity). But the first word is a resumptive 'Denn'; the rhythm is not what it was; it has become an echo which of itself calls forth what in the rhythm of the first strophe had been a liberating, transforming act. For this reason these four lines breathe a calm regularity which is no longer captivity, but a return to the normal pulse of life; to walking-pace, andante, rise and fall of the breast, now felt as preparation for a second ascent whose rhythm casts a single arc to 'Hügel'. The naming signifies the end of the climb.

Thus the central couplet does indeed play a central function upon which all ten lines hinge. The gaze is cast upwards ('droben'), envisaging a second ascent. But the couplet itself is the epitome of order; it does not permit itself the liberties (notably enjambement) which have marked the elegiac couplet in this poem, but divides with emphatic precision into longer and shorter, complete, subordinate clauses, a type so far only exhibited by the final couplet of the first strophe, where the order reflected finality. And this rhythm directly imitates the sense; it is 'verständlich', and states, quite baldly, the purpose of the 'Gang' and the material use of the 'Gasthaus'. If the pentameter were isolated it would become a quite unadorned statement of fact; the unformed sentence says: 'Der verständige Wirth baut den Gästen das Haus.' 'Verständig' is edified purely through the rhythm and context.¹

For while the gaze is cast upwards, to the hill, the sky, heaven, the rhythm is that of life proceeding to its customary measure, that of 'Verstand', and thereupon becomes the prelude to an 'open'-ing of the 'heart' and of the verse so skilfully achieved that the transition is blurred, and the impression is of one total and decisive movement in which all measure is dissolved. The semi-colon has already loosened the structure; but the crucial moment is the collision between 'kosten und schaun' and 'das Schönste'. By themselves 'kosten' and 'schaun' epitomise good bourgeois pleasure, the cautious elimination of enjoyment typical of those whom Hyperion calls 'gesezte Leute' (II, 113/3), a 'Nüchternheit' which for Hölderlin is 'ängstlich': 'Weist

du, worán es liegt, die Menschen fürchten sich voreinander ... , und darum gönnen sie sich wohl Speise und Trank, aber nichts, was die Seele nährt' (B182, 10-12). The realm of good steaks and good views is that of 'Verstand', where enjoyment seems almost routine, indeed, measured. The caesura is meant literally: a gap cutting between 'bornirte Häuslichkeit' and undefinable, pure and absolute, superlative beauty: 'das Schönste'. Yet the collision is no collision, but a smooth transition, for the idealising process is the creation of microcosmic harmony and so an act of love. Lines 23-28 form a single unit; the flowing rhythm has already begun in 23-24, the couplet of measure, so that by l.25 it is in full spate; the work of Dionysus, so often expressed by a concentrated sensuality of sound, is present in the foaming sh ('kosten und schaun das Schönste'). The 'Schaale' of the couplet is no longer full; it overflows with 'des Lebens Wein, der Geist' ('Heilige Gefäße sind die Dichter' ('Buonaparte')), a flood which sweeps away the barriers of the preceding couplet-division and the caesura.²

There is no conflict; reality participates in the ideal. The simplicity of l.24 was not realism, but the highest idealism, elevating and reducing to pure forms. Any detail, for example an individual 'Wirt', would remain obstinately what it is; instead, reality is rhythm, rhythm in the form of limited measure, which in turn depends upon 'Verläugnung alles Accidentellen', and the world has through song become 'schön', though not yet 'das Schönste'.

What is envisaged is no less than a re-revolution, conversion. The secondary (fourth-foot) caesura is virtually a gesture, for the pause disturbs the regular pattern of

caesura in the first three hexameters: it expresses the sudden wonder of an opening eye. The rhythm too is now open, and flows on unpausing through the next two lines, symbolising the opening of the heart; 'Verstand', measure, the wish to control and to have — in short, man's will to power — gives way to the joy of being, which knows no bounds. In this rhythmic context what is named is no longer defined ('be-griffen', 'possessed'), but liberated from enslavement. 'Begeisterung' is the opposite of utility (exploitation); the 'Fülle des Landes' is no longer what it was for the physiocrats, a long list of useful commodities, but freely-given cornucopia, and the meaning of 'das Schönste' is open, a paradigmatic refusal by the poet to define. Poetry is thus 'Beginnen', practising revolution; it does not just teach and preach, but is, liberation from 'Verstand'.

Now this movement intensifies with the anaphoric 'Daß'; the pentameter no longer responds, but catches the hexameter up and lifts it higher. Again there is the finest art here. The key words of the first strophe, 'Herz', 'Wunsch' and 'Offen', join effortlessly to become a single concept, but within the scope of a minor subordinate clause, yielding a powerful but false climax which lends climactic anticipation to the postponed 'Daß'-clause. This merging opens the words' meaning. It is futile to collect examples (cf. 2.583, 18f.) of 'offen' in Hölderlin's work. 'Offen' is an abstraction; thus to isolate a word is to contravene his poetic language, which is intended as a mirror of Nature, whose All is One. Not only do the words mean the living context in which they

stand and nothing else, but their collocation is actually intended to symbolise their democracy. Unlike the word 'God', they do not demand enslaved allegiance; but are 'Sprache der Natur' (4.264, 8), her children: 'jeder sei,/ Wie alle' ('Empedokles' I, 1558f.). To add 'offen' to a concordance may be a respectable scholarly achievement, but it is also clean destruction of Hölderlin's aim: the liberation of language.

The same is true of 'Geist'. By virtue of the preceding thematic concentration this new word receives the principal stress of the line, and becomes the animus, breath of life, that now at last can enter the poem; just as it has been the poet's task to call forth the Spirit. What is 'dem Geiste gemäß'? the poetic rhythm that does not pause to define, but wills forward beyond the 'Maß', the couplet-division, to the climax of the strophe. The Holy Spirit of Christian doctrine exists independently (regardless) of him who experiences it. This 'Spirit' is revolutionary liberation from that Spirit, a self-less love that renounces its 'Herrschaft' ('Friedensfeier', l.28) among words and surrenders to an all-embracing rhythm. In so doing, it is freed from the imprisonment of infinity, what Lessing calls an unbearable 'Langeweile' (cf. 3.195, 131-35), to live within the poet's 'Begeisterung'.

The following line (27) gains its power through resolving the tension that has built up, but so concentrated is the poetry here that even within this space there is a major and minor climax, structured by the caesura. The line as a whole contains five substantives (compare the

original draft (2.579, 31): 'Offen das Mahl und der Tanz ... '). Within it 'Mahl und Tanz und Gesang' forms a discrete unit, separated from the verb, each idea linked to the others with no qualification whatsoever and the totality of ideas held within the irresistible flow of the verse. By themselves 'Mahl', 'Tanz' and 'Gesang' are pleasurable activities. The unqualified conjunction and simultaneous subordination to an overall rhythm that has not yet reached its peak reduce them to what they have in common: X immediacy, there-ness. The substantives are thus the substance, fulfilment, of the vision; but, equally, the vision frees — or deprives — them of substance, pleasurable individuality. The limitations of social intercourse and the insubstantiality of poetic vision are here antithetical 'measures' of life.

The definitive climax is not reached until 'Stutgards Freude'. The vision is thus formed with the most concentrated art. 'Mahl und Tanz und Gesang' were ideal substance. X Now these words too are held in the stream of 'und's characteristic of inspiration, but 'Stutgard' is in fact another collision, is, so to speak, yet more real, the height of fulfilment. Yet at the same time the postponement of the place-name, the most concrete word in the poem, till the climax achieves an utmost deconcretising of reality. Had 'Stutgard' appeared anywhere before it would have brought connotations of time and place, of the Swabian town at the turn of the century. It was therefore this word that demanded the greatest 'Verläugnung alles Accidentellen', and it forms the summit of the idealising process. Stuttgart

had been the starting-point, the valley; it has now become the goal, the hill, while the whole poetic process emerges as an heroic endeavour to transform the town's 'bornirte Häuslichkeit' into 'Freude'. This is not a celebration but a revolutionary act; 'Stutgards Freude' is a paradox, a 'höher Besinnen' that springs 'von trunkener Stirn'; what would, were it not for the poet's act of love, have been a contradiction in terms, but is now 'himmlisch Gespräch' ('Ganymed', l.24).

The rhythmic summit has been reached, the idealising vision 'gekrönt'. With a construction parallel to the corresponding line (18) of the first strophe, the 'Deßhalb'-clause completes the second triad: the entire 'Begeisterung' is contained within the interposed subordinate clause, so that, just as the form of the elegiac couplet emerges through the liberty of enjambement, the triadic structure is heightened by tension and release. Here the thematic concentration has the reverse effect to that of line 26, where it had been a gathering of resources for the final endeavour; the resumption of the themes of will and wish, supported by pervading alliterative w, seal off and frame the vision with decisive finality. The poet returns from inspiration to the level of unfulfilled wish: the vision is mere vision. It is this limitation that holds the vision; poetic form is the necessity, the limitation, to which the poet, as mere individual envisaging community, is subjected. His poem is therewith 'offen' towards the future.

The problem of openness

The poem's starting-point and 'Grund' is the will 'ins Offene', the longing for self-dissolution in the infinity of heaven; a 'reine Innigkeit' (4.149, 3) that would shake off all earthly limitations, an Empedoklean death-wish. But such a wish is both formless and incommunicable, and its logical conclusion is indeed self-destruction.

Thus the poem represents an entry into life. The will 'ins Offene' is from the start limited, by time and place, setting, people, purpose. It is a concretisation of the 'reiner Geist' (4.149, 2) that reaches its height in 'Stutgards Freude', that point 'wo Geist und Leben auf beiden Seiten gleich ist' (4.262, 15f.), ideal and reality reconciled. At the same time it is an idealisation of reality through and by the 'pure spirit'. Reality is therefore not just limitation, but captivity in the finite state. The basic rhythmic pattern — the impulse to freedom which in fact turns the end-stopped couplet into the dead-weight of form — is the concrete image of the will to shake off the incurred shackles of reality; and the 'Äußerung', the concretisation of pure longing in a given situation, has the form of captivity. The imprisonment by form has ambivalent — simultaneous social and metaphysical — significance.

This phenomenon indicates the underlying meaning of Hölderlin's poetic form; it is an acceptance of destiny. The soul no longer seeks exclusive divine union with Nature, but is bound by its 'Stoff', the world of men. Therefore

not only does the will 'ins Offene' appear, become realised, but the human realm, the excursion to the 'Gasthaus', demands liberation from itself. The result is a paradigmatic act whereby men perceive the cosmic significance of their doings. The concrete form of the 'pure spirit' is thus the idealising process; it is the elegiac strophe, and the poem has form, becomes a microcosm, through this acceptance of limitation.

The entry into life is thus severely conditioned. The poem is open towards its future reality, communal fulfilment, so that the gap between poetry and life, ideal and reality, is built into its very structure; the strophe and the poem as a whole are formally identical: 'Welt in der Welt'. Therefore — and this is most apparent in the uncompleted poem — the autonomous totality is really a (potentially endless) 'Streben'. But this means that the defect is itself already comprehended and overcome; it no longer has the power to detract from microcosmic harmony.

This absorption of communication (in the widest sense) into poetry itself transforms it into a function of the poet's own weltanschauung. Thereby the openness of the form is enabled simultaneously to express an endless search for the Divine, an endless regress from the concretised form to the pure 'spirit', whereby the initial act of realisation appears as the vindication of the divinity of of the con-descending 'spirit' through reality. The strophic sphere is thus an image of the purity of the self, its Empedoklean apartness from the world; its open-ness is a part of the vision, and equally insubstantial.

In line 28 the strophe sinks back to rest, fulfilling the triadic structure and returning to the level of 'wish'. By virtue of the journey which is simultaneously the idealising process and transforming act, the 'wish' has become pure, absolute; the thematic concentration, echoing the poem's entire course, is free from any restricting infinitive, and thus refers back to the opening exclamation, fulfilling its ideal meaning, sealing off the poem. The 'walk' is over, and thus the final word 'Hügel' is characteristically deictic; we actually see what (supposedly) still lies before us, because we have in fact climbed, experienced, a rhythmic hill. This plasticity is essential to the poem's aesthetic value. With the word 'Hügel' comes the sigh of pleasure and relief that belongs to reaching the top. The rest of the strophe is drawn towards its conclusion by the echoing memory of the first; the poet and his friends wander away easily over the rhythmic plateau of the hills high above the town: 'Wir ... haben das Unsre gethan.'

Thus the second strophe has assumed and resumed the pattern of the first, and thereby simultaneously transformed it. The unique experience becomes an echo. It is the characteristic rhythm, soft but clear, of the Swabian countryside with its hills and valleys; but this is in turn immediately set within a cosmic rhythm of recurrence, of Nature herself in her 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens', which effortlessly comprehends the ideal of a blossoming humanity. 'Stuttgart', which had been the narrow, self-enclosed world of 'Verstand', is no longer locked in

her 'Hülse', alienated separateness, as a town down in the valley, but has come forth to be the 'spirit' of the Nature that surrounds her, a Nature that, like the Archipelago in spring-time, seeks and misses 'das Herz der fühlenden Menschen' (1.61). And thus the Spirit itself has taken form and become the 'Geist der Sphäre' (4.277, 26), the 'Gott der Mythe' (4.281, 7f.), just as the 'spirit' of 'Heimkunft' is the aethereal god of the Alps. The latter is genus sublime, the spirit of the hill genus humile ('leichter Gesang'); but the poet's role is the same. He 'calls forth' the 'Spirit of Nature' ('Empedokles' II, 531-38).

This cosmic perspective and 'Dichterberuf', and with it the high value of the poem, depends upon what in fact does not exist, the rest of the poem; it would be lost if one thought better, given the poem's incomplete state, to publish it as two (almost) satisfactory strophes and finish with 'Wir ... haben das Unsre gethan'. For this reason the significance of the strophic form is nowhere clearer than here, where it has broken down. What we have is one more complete triad; all we need is its initial 'Aber' to sense the resulting concentric strophic effect and its dynamic, the perspective of endless striving, of infinity. The completeness of the idealisation of the occasion is the incompleteness of the poem; the essence and aesthetic criterion is therefore the need to continue, rather than the content of continuation.

The following and final triad (ll.35-40) depicts Nature's response to man's selfless act; to his abdication

of mastery and the opening of his heart. The up-beat is the plainest of statements: 'Aber schön ist der Ort' (in the draft even simpler: 'Schön der Ort' (2.579, 18)). But this restraint, which again expresses the captivity of human limitation, is now so natural, so easily felt as the threshold of inspiration and joy, that it dissolves even as it is recognised. Liberation has moved, with striking symmetry, from the end to the middle and thence to the head of the strophe; logically enough, for once man has been transformed from self-centred despot to participant in an harmonious cosmos, Nature herself needs no liberation, but only to be what she always was, 'die Geliebte' who was merely awaiting the coming of her lover.

For what follows is Nature as she really is; lines 35-40 are a vision or foretaste of the beauty with which she will greet man if he plays the part paradigmatic in the first two strophes. Man is divided from Nature by the intellect, which observes, divides up into rigid categories, labels as separate phenomena, and enslaves to his purpose. Here, spring is no longer seen through that cold eye which only serves understanding, but is the object of 'intellektuale Anschauung'; the intellect surrenders its hold over Nature, and sees. For poetic form is the Subject's paradigmatic renunciation of extraneous purpose, an act in which the intellect (subjectivity) ceases to act. Because Nature's sensuality, her 'being', is henceforth for its own sake, she comes alive.

With this third act of liberation (revolution), the act has thus become a surrender. The rhythm of ascent gives

way to that of the opening eye, for it is the spring-time not of man but of Nature. Unformed, the opening statement is on the same level as 'kosten und schaun': 'What a fine view!' But this restraint, the banality of a fixed ('ist'), frozen relationship of enjoyment, is through the preceding 'Aber' already absorbed into the poetic rhythm, which now begins, with light f-alliteration, to blossom — an image picked up by 'Aufgegangen', which through enjambement 'opens' the verse-form, and lifted upwards by the anaphoric 'wenn' (compare the 'Daß'-clause of 1.26), which allows no pause and carries the line over the couplet-division. This formal dissolution joins effortlessly with the content; the 'Stromgeist', that flows by divine and not by human law (cf. 5.289f.), informs the (to cold eyes, lifeless) growth on the banks. The thus 'opened' form gives to line 37, in which one after another the various subjects of the sentence are named, a powerful sense of release, but at the same time impels forward to the next line. The effect is wonderfully plastic. It is spring; 'Weiden', 'Wald', 'Bäume', spring up, each in turn, released from the hold of winter. But their substantival quality is not fixed, as in prose, but fluid; besides the formal dissolution, this is enhanced by eliminating all specification, even definite articles (except one): All is One, evolving, but passing away, merging back into the All in selfless abandonment of identity, and granted in return the freedom to reappear in new form (just as Diotima, the 'schöne Seele', tells Hyperion: ' ... wenn ich auch zur Pflanze würde, wäre denn der Schade so groß? — Ich werde seyn' (II, 102/14f.)). The

rhythm, with its (rationally redundant) pleonasm ('grünend' twice, 'Wald' and 'Bäume'), profuse w-alliteration, al(l)-sound and plethora of liquid ls, its 'rocking' rhyme ('Luft'/'Duft'), and four verbal adjectives suggesting vitality, submerges the forms of life with their outlines in the 'spirit' that permeates them. These two couplets depict a cohesive but dancing world whose 'spirit' is the river; the couplet-division (ll.36/37) is like a natural dam, briefly detaining, then pouring forth in the hexameter with redoubled force, to issue out into the pure spring-time of the pentameter, where the subjects of the hexameter have given way to a single all-embracing 'Wallen', infinite and nameless (compare 'Heimkunft', l.45: 'Ein freudiges Wallen').

The 'Aber' of line 39 lifts the rhythm, and with it (again with deictic force) the eye, up over the valley and its luxuriating growth to the slopes and their vineyards. There, all was nameless flow in the joy of spring; here is the one specific thing, its clarity of outline yet firmer through being rhythmically 'concealed', delayed till the key position at the end of the hexameter. But here it is the verbs, postponed till the pentameter, which carry the power; in their concentrated sequence, impelling forward to the end of the triad, they express an inexorable growth that thrusts upwards and outwards. The clear identity of the 'Weinstok' is anything but a dead rigidity; through the contrast the diffusion of spring here seems concentrated in a single vital force which, although it lies above, rhythmically and in Nature's hierarchy is their elemental source. The 'stem of the vine' is, like 'der

Taunus' in 'Der Wanderer', presiding deity, and invested with the same dionysiac fulfilment (characterised by the organically-binding 'und'-assonance) as at the end of that poem. Thus the rhythmic order in this couplet, while seeming closer to that of the intellect, in fact goes further and deeper than the first two; here is not free renunciation of identity and purpose, but the vital pulse ('Dämmert und wächst und erwärmt') of an elemental will and order. It is a Priapean spirit.

Thus the vision of line 25 — 'Daß sie kosten und schaun das Schönste, die Fülle des Landes' — here finds paradigmatic realisation. The poem has been carried forward to seek the Divine; where it could have rested (l.34) with an exemplary vision of the 'open' heart, of human achievement, its purpose is to have no such didactic social purpose, but to exist within the pure and infinite perspective in which alone the individual can 'call forth' and encounter Nature, the All, as her metaphysical 'spirit'.

This purpose, however, arises not as the result of a moment of decision, and so at a specific point within the poem, but as a single process. As the second strophe becomes the echo of the first, the beauty of the vision supersedes its purpose, so that even as the poem takes the form of the strophe the poet seeks the divine beauty of his own vision. Thereby poetic form is affirmed as an end in itself and calls itself forth in new form; the conflict between vision and fulfilment, ideal and reality, and with it the original idealising intention, which reflects the will to change society, is now, through the progressive elimination

of the communicating or social purpose, held within a transcending formal principle, and transformed into a surrender to beauty. Thus in this context beauty is necessarily 'Zweck an sich' and antithetical to purpose; with the 'open' form, an endless, cosmic perspective opens up, like ripples spreading outwards on the calm surface of a lake.

For it is this process of surrender which turns poetic form into the captivity of 'living-death'; the pattern of the elegiac couplet, liberation and captivity, becomes the microcosm of the strophe, and the strophe itself exists 'purely' within the infinite potential of the transcending form. But this elimination of social purpose is not shallow aestheticism. In proportion as the poet no longer communicates, but surrenders to, his vision the strophe assumes the function of existential sphere, of the bounds within which paradigmatic metaphysical relationship may take place. The will to persuade is purpose, and falls under the stigma of using language as the means to an end, and so of perpetuating mastery over Nature. As it gives way to the echoing structure in which the divine beauty of the poetic experience becomes its own end, calling forth itself in new form, the attempt to persuade men to look beyond their narrow horizons (which is of course present) gives way to complete renunciation of individual will, and the fundamental premise of metaphysical status, an absolute rejection of individuation as irrational multiplicity of wills, synonymous with limitation by and through the intellect (the intellect divides), replaces the premise of

moral purpose. But this surrender is itself an act of will and a paradigm.

Thus the echo of the original liberating vision is itself no longer liberating (in respect of others), but fulfils a cosmic rhythm which now absorbs the original vision itself. As this takes place, the second strophe, which could cease in 'leichter Gesang', is itself felt to exist within the transcending elegiac form: the poet surrenders to the divine beauty of the cosmic rhythm he himself has created; the rhythm, as it becomes an end in itself, calls forth its own beauty. It calls forth the word 'schön', and thus the first triad of the third strophe is already liberated: free; there is no longer any need for an ascent, for elegiac form and inspiration have become identical. As the beauty of the vision becomes self-sufficient, Nature becomes her true self and regains her free, unfettered sensuality, for she is of herself beautiful as soon as she is liberated, as soon, then, as the poet, the paradigmatic individual, renounces all purpose other than her revelation, and becomes instrument of her self-depiction.

This process is poetic technique. It is therefore not a series of decisions at certain points (for example, at the beginning of the second and third strophes), but the creation of a 'preestablished harmony'. Thus the elegiac couplet has at the start the heightened meaning of captivity, its limitation being the self-imposed limitation of the pure poetic world, but this experience of captivity is at the same time the microcosmic image of the aesthetic world which will be brought into being by liberation. The

act of surrender which produces the prestabilised harmony of the transcending form communicates itself to the micro-cosmic part, the elegiac couplet out of whose potentially eternal rise and fall that form has been created. What seems a linear process, the transformation of the elegiac couplet from initial captivity (ll.1-2) into released inspiration (ll.35-40), reflects and is created out of the ultimate identity for Hölderlin of captivity and inspiration, necessity and freedom, poetic form and unconditional will 'ins Offene'. It is the nature of individual aspiration, its unfulfillability, which has made freedom possible here only within the pure poetic world.

The poetic process, in seeking its own beauty, reconstructs the divine harmony of the individual self, that first and irreducible assumption of Hölderlin's thought. Thus the poem is essentially complete, and lines 35-40 have a sense of finality (contradicting, of course, the external form; I am not suggesting the poem could or should end here) reminiscent of the final triad of couplets in each half of 'Der Wanderer'. But this completeness (and aesthetic success) fulfils the 'open', transcending, form and merely drives the poem on: 'Schöner freilich muß es werden' (2.582, 5). The hero of the 'Fragment von Hyperion' had told Bellarmin: 'Wir sind nichts; was wir suchen, ist alles' (220/1). Here, seven years later, this conviction has found a logical conclusion in the poetic process which reconstitutes divine beauty as an endless search for itself.

There follow three separate fragments, the last of which (2.582, 13-583, 13) is semi-versified, the first two

(2.580, 23-581, 11; 2.582, 1-12) consisting only of scattered motifs. This further stage was intended to be the epiphany of the gods. Both editors treat it as a plan merely lacking execution ('Den Entwurf der 4. Strophe überliefert die vierte Seite der Handschrift ... ', 2.582, 13; cf. FHA 6. 287f., where the various fragments are simply printed in a single sequence). But the fragment 2.580, 24ff., assuming it belongs to this elegy (this seems likely, although it is written on a separate manuscript the rest of which contains the rough draft of the end of 'Der Wanderer') is already superseded by lines 35-40 and the following motifs (582, 1-12), and since the semi-versified fragment — beginning 'Aber fraget mich eins, was sollen Götter im Gasthaus?' — itself comes to nothing, it cannot be called the outline of the fourth strophe.

Indeed, all three fragments represent a single attempt to bring the poem to its conclusion. The question '... was sollen Götter im Gasthaus?' introduces a cryptic theology whose meaning is much less important than the reasons for the poem's failure to conclude, a failure acknowledged by the poet himself, who wrote the couplet 'Singen wollt ich leichten Gesang ... ' alongside the cryptic theology (rather than the title or the first strophe). Indeed, I hope to have shown that so far as it goes the poem has 'succeeded'. But its value has in the process become its own vision, rather than the idealising celebration of ordinary human life with which it began; the 'Gasthaus', which is substantial and material, has been displaced by the poem itself, de facto the 'sphere' in which gods and men meet. At that

— prestabilised — point where the poetic process becomes a search for beauty, it is transcended not by reality, but by poetic form, the metaphysical perspective. Therewith the occasion is lost.

The Empedoklean situation high above the world has turned poetry into a search for, entry into, an always subordinated reality by the 'pure poetic Spirit'; in principle all poetry is now a con-descension to reality, 'leichter Gesang', and it is in this sense that Hölderlin says he 'never' succeeds. The special demands of the Gelegenheitsgedicht are subsumed under (thereby admittedly highlighting) this overriding problem, so that it too arrives at the critical point, the 'naming' (2.581, 8) of the Divine.

Appendix

1. Date

FHA proposes a redating of 'Der Gang aufs Land': 'Der elegische Entwurf wurde bisher in den Sommer oder Herbst 1800 gesetzt, dem Inhalt nach ist er jedoch im Frühling, vmtl. Ende April oder Anfang Mai 1801 in Stuttgart entstanden ... Neben stilistischen Momenten spricht auch die räumliche Nähe zu Heimkunft I ... für diese Neudatierung' (6.265). Its editors are thus led to assume a visit to Landauer in Stuttgart 'soon' after the 'home-coming' from Hauptwil, whereas the Stuttgarter Ausgabe sets the poem in the long period spent at Landauer's house during the summer and autumn of 1800. A visit after Hauptwil would in fact have had to be immediate to fit the poem, since Hölderlin did not return home till mid-April, and would cramp the time-span of the poem, for in line 24 the 'Wirth' is building, in ll. 29-30 the 'Mailicht' speaks to the guests. But the redating becomes quite superfluous if Hölderlin need not be bound to writing about spring in spring. Spring and autumn are his seasons, for they mark transition, and thus both the divine hen diapheron heautō and the cosmic necessity of change. Rarely does he write about summer or winter. I suggest dating the poem after the 'Herbstfeier' of 'Stutgard', but within the attested period at Landauer's house — in December 1800, with the poet already looking to spring: 'Aber daß der Egoismus ... sich beugen wird unter die heilige Herrschaft der Liebe und Güte ... , daß das deutsche Herz in solchem Klima, unter dem Seegen dieses neuen

Friedens erst recht aufgehn, und geräuschlos, wie die wachsende Natur, seine geheimen weitreichenden Kräfte entfalten wird, diß mein' ich, diß seh' und glaub' ich' (B222, 27-32; written probably in Nürtingen around the New Year 1800/01 (cf. 6.1044, 27-29)). Perhaps he took the poem, which then becomes a parting wish, with him to Hauptwil (he at first did no more than note a possible title; cf. 2.575, 25). This would explain the 'räumliche Nähe' to the first version of 'Heimkunft', which is anyway not evidence. The 'stilistische Momente' in fact suggest an earlier date than 'Heimkunft', where the triadic structure has been loosened; stylistically 'Der Gang aufs Land' belongs with 'Stutgard'.

2. Title

The title of the fair copy is torn off, leaving the letters 'ast', which have been presumed to be part of 'Das Gasthaus'. FHA returns to Hellingrath's assumption that Hölderlin, dissatisfied with this second title, tore it off: 'dadurch wäre der ursprüngliche Titel ... immer noch gültig' (6.284). There seems no reason, however, to doubt Beißner when he says that had Hölderlin wished to change the title he would have crossed it out (Friedrich Beißner, 'Deutung des elegischen Bruchstücks 'Der Gang aufs Land'', in Hölderlin: Gedenkschrift zu seinem 100. Todestag, ed. Paul Kluckhohn (Tübingen, 1944), pp.247-66 (pp.248-49)).

3. '... was sollen Götter im Gasthaus?'

In the same article (p.265), Beißner says that this frag-

mentary ending refers to the conflict between 'the Divine' and 'the Titans': 'Unbedingte Voraussetzung nämlich für das Brautfest zwischen Erd und Himmel ist die Herrschaft des Göttlichen, des Höchsten, dem das "andere" blind gehorchen muß.' The time and place of this statement make it disturbing. A conception of the Divine as in any sense autocratic would be anathema to Hölderlin. There is no reason to introduce the Titans here. The 'Denn'-clause (2.582, 25-583, 1) governs the two ways in which (reasons why) the 'gods' never become 'die Himmlischen uns' (emphatic juxtaposition). Hölderlin probably means the Christian and Greek religions: 'entweder es herrscht ihr Höchstes' (582, 25), that is, the autocratic Almighty and his Son with his claim to unique divinity; 'Oder sie leben in Streit' (582, 28-30), if, that is, one adds the Greek pantheon, which either requires a 'Friedensfeier', or else 'schwindet ... Wie beim trunkenen Mahl' (2.582, 34-583, 1), as did the historical Greek culture (cf. 'Menons Klagen um Diotima', sixth strophe). The 'temples' represent the old, divisive and divided, formal religions, while 'das Gasthaus' is the paradigm of the religion of the heart and of her who is 'über die Götter des Abends und Orients' ('Wie wenn am Feiertage ... ', 11.21-23): Nature.

IV. 'STUTGARD': THE QUESTION OF COMMUNITY

The first strophe of this elegy is a wonderful example of Hölderlin's art; nowhere, except in the first strophe of 'Brod und Wein', is the elegiac form more musically achieved.

The background and condition is 'Dürre', like ice a dangerous extreme, a 'living-death'; the first triad depicts liberation from this state, a palingenesis complete with the word 'Gesang', and has accordingly a burgeoning, swelling, mounting rhythm. The pitiless cruelty of the sun is an enemy power banned at the outset from the harmonious 'realm' of the poem, and appears in the first couplet as something that no longer is. For it appears in poetic form, in the barren regularity with which the pentameter imprisons the prospect opened by the hexameter, in the characteristic answering 'Und'-clause of the end-stopped couplet, emphasised by the weight of the pause at the third-foot caesura; and in this form it participates in the rhythm of liberation which follows. The second couplet with its answering pentameter seems to echo the first, but its opening 'Offen', a Sprachgestus that vividly conveys the throwing-open of the 'Saal', proclaims the expanding structure that carries the first clause over to the fourth-foot caesura and then, moving from the two parallel clauses

of the hexameter to the single clause of the pentameter, is finally lifted beyond this point in an arc rising to the end of 1.5. To this corresponds the hierarchy of phenomena. With the pentameter that completes the second, echoing, couplet the sweet refreshment of rain, wonderfully present in sch-alliteration, enters the poem and, luxuriating like the vegetation, the ideas and rhythm lift the verse in gradual acceleration over the couplet-division; in the fifth line the form dissolves in a stream of dactyls, pouring over the caesura. This entire dissolution, however, presupposes and calls forth the form from which it has been liberated, and thus creates a powerful tension which reaches its climax with 'alle gebundnen'. These words, thus separated from their substantive, at first refer back to 'all', the whole movement of liberation; the whole triad pauses in bondage before finally, its tension dissolved, falling back to rest. This gives to 'Fittige' a sense of pure freedom; the word emerges from the intense unity of the preceding lines with the delicate clarity of wings. The swelling-up of the first five lines is like a purifying storm which must first pass over before the birds can 'venture back' into the now clear air. The complete sense and untroubled regularity of the third pentameter enhance this finality.

This liberation is Nature's palingenesis, and so has an ideal significance beyond the given situation. 'Dürre' is the desolate Garden of man's mastery over Nature (cf. 4.141, 4-15), a self-incurred state of alienation. Here man is excluded, but thus to fulfil his truer role,

appearing indirectly in the paradigmatic person of the poet who renounces all pretension to mastery and thus gains the truer power of 'invoking the living Spirit' of Nature. An aspect of this process is the dissolving of the restrictions imposed upon her by the intellect, for she is in reality not just, for example, an idyllic landscape (like Hyperion's) but 'Eins und Alles' (Hyperion, I, 94/2). Thus the distinctly human sphere, the apparently inanimate 'Saal' and tame 'Garten', which seem static ('steht', 'ist'), is freed from merely functional existence to participate in Nature's panta rhei and, however humbly, in beauty. Equally, the poet does not just describe what is, but restores cosmic harmony by changing the world. When, in the gradual dissolution of outline and fixed identity (of captivity) which runs from the negativity, now no more than a memory, of the opening couplet, through 'Saal' and 'Garten', the luxuriating valley and, swelling like buds, the racing streams, to the triumphant 'alle', the rhythm at last pauses, it embraces all that has gone before: ' ... jedes, in seiner Art,/ Blüht'. Thus the birds, supreme symbol of freedom, also symbolise the liberated unity of Nature.

The act, of liberation, which stretches open the elegiac rhythm is simultaneously the bondage of an extreme tension demanding release and thus transforming captivity into freedom (cf. 'Empedokles' I, 1569-71), dead form into beauty. The self-enclosed and so dead world of the opening couplet is revealed as the 'realm of song'. The finality of form in practice depends upon the act of liberation. In this

sense the first triad is, irrespective of the success or failure of the rest of the poem, itself 'song', an anticipatory microcosm of paradigmatic purity of purpose and an ideal revolutionary act: when the human consciousness is poetic, a pure mirror of Nature, then she for her part, since man no longer speaks (in prosaic intellect), necessarily sings, and the All is no longer an abstraction, but a living unity that exists for its own sake and in which hierarchy ('Herrschaft') is therefore meaningless. 'Dürre', 'Gesang', all is harmony. The microcosmic poem, in which the part is already the whole while the whole is no more than a part, is already achieved.

The transformation of the elegiac couplet from 'living-death' (one must remember that 'Elegie' itself lamented and sought to overcome the loss of Susette Gontard) into song calls forth the echo of its own beauty. Form and harmony are in the sphere of the second triad one. The restoration of order in 1.6 calls forth and echoes on in an effortless succession of ordered couplets, end-stopped and symmetrical, of which the first, with its chiastic enclosure by the predicates 'Voll' and 'erfüllt', is the very image of perfect measure (and perfectly demonstrates what is meant by 'prestabilised' transformation: the elegiac couplet is only experienced as the limpid purity of the full cup because it is initially a 'Schaale' (cf. 'Der Wanderer', 1.33) of 'living-death' that longs for and demands liberation). And the spirit of the birds is the graceful harmony of their community, an order in which the individual freely and spontaneously participates, expressed in the

light paradox of a dispensation of the heart (1.11). They exist as in a Rousseauesque free-state or the 'Anmuth' of the Greek polis (that was the idea of Aristophanes' Birds, while, according to Hyperion, II, 112/8f., Oedipus came to Athens, 'wo ihn der Götterhain empfieng; und schöne Seelen ihm begegneten'; for the Greeks were always children ('Empedokles' III, 347; cf. 'Fragment von Hyperion', 193/2)); line 8 suggests an ideal assembly.

But this element of personification, while creating an implicit contrast to human society, in which (cf. ll.31-36) harmony must first be won, does not serve a didactic purpose. The birds, who dwell in the 'realm of song', are not named as such; the personification turns their 'sphere' into a 'realm of song', an echo of the cosmic harmony. The transformation of form into harmony calls forth its own echo because it renounces purpose; this echo has, naturally, the particular form of ideal (purpose- and interest-free) society, yet its value is not moral, but aesthetic. It is one, but no more than one, possible form, or expression, of the 'Geist der Welt', the universal harmony. Thereby the birds too are liberated, to participate in Nature's order; their harmony is no longer a moral exemplum (something owned, alien, potentially envied), but a pure echo of the poetic experience: a 'sphere'. In each case the final word is also the key word, sealing off the triad; 'Gesang' and 'Geist' echo one another.

Thus the completion and perfection of the second triad calls forth its own echo (and is thus, but only thus, incomplete); it seeks the fullness of the strophe with its

triadic structure. The ideal of cosmic harmony is expressed in the mathematical symmetry of the poetry: the central triad, with its three perfect couplets, is the strophe with its three triads in miniature. It seeks itself, and finds — what it was, a prestabilised harmony. A will to fulfilment is thus generated, and appears as a dionysiac urge; but this Dionysus is not really given free rein; he seeks nothing more than to fulfil the bounds of poetic form and to seal off the world of the poem. The Irrational is here a rational element.

Hence the beautifully-judged contrast, between the 'Wandern' of the final triad and the 'Irren' of the 'Kinder des Himmels'. The 'spirit' of these is an 'harmonisches Ganze von Lebensweisen' (4.279, 23) in which individual existence is entirely fulfilled and with which the 'Irren' is a 'naive', unreflecting accordance. But the 'Wanderer' are distinct, individual, going their own way, seeking rather than finding, willed onwards by a restless dionysiac principle which contrasts with the graceful order of the heart. The ecstatic vitality of the rhythm impels forward to the goal; the anaphora ('haben') immediately resolves the legacy of ordered form inherited from the second triad, and lifts the verse up over the couplet-division to the emphatic 'Voll-': a fullness no longer, as in the second triad (which began with 'Voll' in parallel position), measure, but an elemental spirit whose sinewy green strength reckes nothing of, twines about and over, all boundaries. The form is wonderfully graphic; the word of outline, 'Stab', coincides precisely with the couplet-division,

and the joyfully exuberant dionysiac growth ('Trauben und Laub', with the characteristic sound-poetry of intoxication) bursts out (of this 'Hülse'): Nature's ornament, lovingly embracing the tribute man has wrought and brought. Thus the 'full' cup of the contrasting couplet (ll.7-8) has reappeared embellished by the surrounding border of twining growth we see on Greek vessels — a formal pattern demonstrating the ultimate unity of the strophe, within which Dionysus is but an harmonious aspect.

After this initial break-through, propelling to a fourth-foot caesura, dislocation of metre and syntax forbids any point of rest; line 16 dissolves in a stream of dactyls, a single flow of life merging all outline in a single impersonal will, spirit, an 'es', alive and unaccountable, a 'Jauchzen' in which time and place, the fundament of man's ordering intellect, can themselves no longer be kept apart (the pause at 'Tag' creates an exact echo of 'von Dorfe zu Dorf', 'Dorf' pausing at the purely metrical break of the caesura).

At the end of l.16, metre and syntax meet again and form is restored, so that the final couplet is set apart in its unity. The rhythm, which has been stretched open (a process culminating in l.16, where the impersonal vitality of the dactyls was entirely open and unfettered by identity), now sinks back to rest. The contrasting weight of the opening spondee ('Und wie') marks a turning-back, a 'Re-flexion'. The drawing-out of the hexameter through the delayed subject powerfully intensifies the will to rest; through being denied its promised fulfilment

the hexameter becomes a search for it. Thus line 17 is 'bespannt', the long syllable 'ziehn', marvellously echoed in the rhythm, meaning more than mere motion. For the delayed subject is 'Berge', and what is delayed is the fulfilment of the entire strophe. The drawn-out hexameter thus becomes an upward slope climbed as the word 'Berge' is reached, and this word is the climax, summit, of the whole strophe. The mountains, which Hegel called 'tote Massen', move. Simultaneously the entire strophe becomes a liberation of Nature through — rhythm, sensual opposite of intellect — the poet's orphic word and revolutionary act. Strictly speaking, the mountains are likened to 'Wagen' and are themselves drawn along by 'freies Wild'; but rhythmically it is they who, with grave but inexorable might, 'draw' what now emerges as the disordered order of a procession. As the van ('voran'), they are the summit of the entire strophe as of the poet's achievement: the seemingly deadest weight has come alive, the 'tote Massen' are 'freies Wild'. The entire strophe, not just (cf. Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 50) the final triad, becomes absorbed into this dionysiac procession, this 'Jauchzen'; the very mountains have joined of their own free will, and the poet's achievement is their spontaneity, antithesis of their categorised place among the dead matter, the enslaved 'object', of the intellect.

With 'Berge' the tension of delayed fulfilment is released, and the rest of l.18, responding to the hexameter, slopes downwards to rest. The characteristic¹ concluding paradox 'träget und eilet' sets the seal of

form upon the strophe:—

The opening, or stretching, of poetic form is itself a formal aspect and presupposes the initial prestabilised and microcosmic harmony, so that the elegiac couplet, the triad, the strophe, and ideally the poem itself are each an image of the hen kai pan, divine unity. The perfection of the opening elegiac couplet is, by virtue of its essential statement of the self-sufficient poetic world, a 'Dürre' (for which the occasion, the drought, is merely poetic material) which is, however, simultaneously and immediately (even as it is spoken) absorbed into the overall harmony of a vision of liberation, and is therefore beautiful. The perfection of the strophe with which the poem (briefly) ends is the echo of the opening couplet, and this 'negative dialectic', namely, the failure of the poetic act to touch reality, drives the poem forward, and in so doing creates what I have called the 'open' form.

The fulfilled strophic form echoes its microcosm: the elegiac couplet which, like a bow, stretches open, 'feels itself' (cf. e.g. Hyperion, II, 27/13f.) and 'returns to itself': 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens', 'Ausflug und Rückkehr zu sich selbst'.² As the entire strophe recreates its microcosm (that is, itself) its entire movement and purpose, its 'Streben', which culminated in 'Berge', the moving of the mountains, is absorbed into the cosmic rhythm of rise and fall. The self-created cosmos is, however, what already was: a prestabilised harmony. Within this harmony all is will, 'Streben', but,

equally, all 'strives' 'purely' towards harmony. The individual parts, of which, as they are spoken, one might feel that some, like 11.5 and 16, 'hasten', others, like 11.7-12, 'idle', merge into a mystical unity: the 'Aus-sich-herausgehen des Geistes'. As the strophe echoes itself (the couplet), so the couplet seeks the strophe. The paradox 'träget und eilet' expresses the fulfilment of the poetic experience, the beauty of the rippling echo in which purpose, change and time, the stuff of reality, have become illusion. All is will, 'Eilen', for it seeks this fulfilment; all idles, 'träget', for the fulfilment that it seeks is nothing other than itself. The acts of liberation are comprehended within this transcending rhythm.³

This mystical unity derives from the sealing-off of the poetic world, the drawing of a magic circle within which the potency of a spell is released. Poetry is conceived of not just as a pleasant relief from what Hegel calls 'die Prosa des wissenschaftlichen Denkens', but as its direct antithesis. The liberation of Nature is the endowment of the world with, in the literal sense, fascination, and the spell draws its potency from the eroticisation of the world. The poem falls back to rest, takes strophic form, by moving on to the second strophe, with its resumptive 'Aber' and turn to the 'du', an ideal act of communication. But this very openness gives to the first strophe its beauty. With the word 'Pfad' a perfect symmetry is attained in which mathematical is subordinated to poetic proportion. Not only is the central triad with its three perfect couplets the microcosm of the strophe with its

three triads; the liberation in the first four lines of the final triad responds to that in the last four lines of the first triad, while the final couplet in its self-enclosed formal perfection echoes the first, an effect poetically heightened by the delayed fulfilment of the final line. Thus the overall relationship of first to last triad is one of expansion and contraction (for although ll.13-16 themselves expand within their own triad, they exist within the reverse echo of the first triad), of rise and fall.

Thus the entire rhythm rises (to 'Berge') and falls. The symmetry of this arc is the echo of the microcosmic foundation ('Grund'), the elegiac couplet, whose first half, the hexameter, rises, entering the Unknown, but whose second half, the pentameter, falls back in elegiac loss and longing. Therefore the whole strophe is a 'striving' to complete the arc, and 'Berge' is but its utmost point, that point which seems furthest from the origin, but, given the prestabilised figure, is in fact nearest home:

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Therewith it has the form of ideal consciousness, 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht': the imaginative entry into the world by a spirit of infinite potential.

Thus the word 'Pfad' becomes the point of a fulfilment which echoes but also absorbs 'Gesang' and 'Geist'; and a wonderful sense of peace spreads over the poem. This formal perfection and beauty depends, however, absolutely upon

the transcending 'open' form; through the sense of resumption, the retrospective effect of the strophic form, the strophe is absorbed into many, into, potentially, an infinite cosmos of echoing microcosms. Therewith it is no longer transcended by reality, but by the world of the poem alone, and that is: by itself. An echo must open the prospect of potentially infinite self-reproduction; this potential infinity is not the static entity (the poem as a whole), but the ideal transcending form which, although never more than a phantom of the imagination, is the only true analogy to the All: 'die Welt aller Welten, das Alles in Allen' (4.282, 9f.).

In that the act of communication is already present within the poem, absorbed as the 'open' form, the perfection of harmony is freed from purpose and exists for its own sake. And indeed this is the aesthetic criterion; for the pure renunciation of purpose, of, then, relationship to reality, is none other than the spell that liberates Nature, and that thereby gains the daemonic power of loss of self: of relationship, 'Hingabe', within the existential sphere, the 'Eigenmacht' of an act of self-enclosure.

The perfection of the first strophe echoes on in the second. The opening words open the form, turning with direct address to the second person. Yet the 'du' echoes the 'Dürre' of 1.1; it is the discord, conflict, out of which comes harmony, and like the drought is already absorbed into the poetic world. For the 'Entgegensezung' between the poetic self and the 'du' is also already

'harmonisch'; as often, Hölderlin endows the word with a wonderful softness and intimacy. The three end-stopped couplets act as a soothing incantation; technically each is a question, but first the 'du' with its 'Aber', then the 'umsonst', the vestige of doubt, passes away, and the divine munificence fills the vessel of the couplet (ll.23-24). Thus the 'du', softened already in the opening main clause, 'Aber meinst du nun' (with the characteristic lingering e of the verb-ending; compare Goethe's 'balde/Ruhest du auch' (but Hölderlin's s is soft)), is drawn into microcosmic harmony.

Thus the first triad opens and closes about the 'du' as a dream both unfolds before and envelops the dreamer. It begins with the 'opening' of the gates (the position of 'Aufgethan' in enjambement is a vivid Sprachgestus), first of the gifts of the 'gods'. As these accumulate, the sentence-structure diminishes (with the gradual elimination of the 'Aber', the discord); as each gift is unveiled, so the resistance diminishes, for each is more precious than the last. In the first couplet the gates open; in the second, the table is set; and in the third, the gifts proper (gifts are exchanged at feasts), the 'light' of day and the darkness of 'night', which together are man's world, are given. The second 'schenken' is liberated from all qualification (restriction), and thus gains incantatory power, the soft sch-sound moving to the dominant position; as it draws deeper into the strophic 'sphere' the colours too darken, become more sensuous. The 'light' is not just given, but poured out ('schenken') like deep-red wine.

Virgil (Aeneid, 1, 590f.) speaks of 'lumen iuventae purpureum', 'the ruddy bloom of youth' (cf. Ovid, Fasti, 6, 252: 'purpurea lux'). (The Latin purpureus, although derived from Greek πορφύρα, the shell-fish that provided purple dye, is used quite randomly for reddish colours, and perhaps Hölderlin preferred to derive it from πορφύρος, 'fire-bearing' (used especially of the lightning of Zeus); significantly, Dionysus is a torch-bearer in the ninth strophe of 'Brod und Wein'.) In this way he is able to combine the motif of light with the deepening mood of rhythm.

This movement is accompanied by an ever-intensifying sense of flux in the rhythm, which, beginning with the 'Und' of 1.3 (and thus parallel to the elimination, absorption, of the 'du' and its 'Aber'), accelerating as the connection falls away before the soft sch of 'Schenken' (so that the second couplet flows into the third), reaches a climax as it passes, with two 'und's, in enjambement into the final pentameter (1.24); the effortlessness of this movement (it is not, as in the first strophe, a liberating act) derives, however, from the preparatory flowing enjambements of the first two couplets. This climax of dissolution is the transition to Night, in which all outline dissolves; as in the first strophe of 'Brod und Wein' (which is earlier), the clarity and singularity of daylight gradually recedes before the wondrous numen whose opaque presence fills, is poured over, the elegiac couplet. There, however, the name does not come till the end of the second strophe; here 'Nacht', fulfilling the deepening

(cf. 'tieferem') and darkening poetry, seals off the 'sphere' with the finality of darkness enveloping the world. Here as there the homogeneous unity of darkness and the unity of the triadic structure become one. The charm (in the literal sense of carmen; the elegiac rhythm in its rise and fall has an innate tendency to lullaby, as the entry into 'dream' of 'Elegie' shows), whereby agency, will, passes from the questioning 'du' to the Divine (by virtue of the diminishing sentence-structure); the sense of 'pouring' (heightened by the sch-sound) which turns the elegiac couplet into a cup full, as with wine, with 'Licht' and 'Nacht' (as our 'sphere' is fully comprised of the hemispheres day and night), and which simultaneously fulfils the triad; the intensifying sense of flux — all these elements combine to pour a spell over the 'du', and I think that the 'spirit' of this 'sphere' is the dark stream of oblivion, Lethe (sleep is 'poured' over the mind in Greek literature; compare the use of $\chi\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ in Homer's Iliad, 14, 165, Odyssey, 2, 395; 19, 590).

Night is the crowning gift of the gods, the soothing 'truth' that absorbs the 'error'; the 'du', as in 'Friedensfeier' (1.33) 'übertönt von Friedenslauten', is drawn into the world of the poem, and 'Nacht' sets the seal upon the intimacy of this world. The following couplet, and with it the whole strophe, has become 'Freundesgespräch' in which the poetic self communicates ideally, so that the fourth couplet, which might in another context have seemed brusque, speaks in a magic circle in which a command is also a spell.

The first triad, from the opening (of the gates) to the closing (of Night), is the plastic transformation of the envisaged journey in its entirety into the cosmic hall of a feast (one sees how close the poem is, as sublime to humble genus, to 'Der Gang aufs Land'). Light and Night, the bounds of experience, are the bounds of this room. Its harmony remembers the first strophe; 'Gesang' no longer needs liberation, has become freedom, and sends forth its echoing harmony into the second strophe (thus the first triad is with its end-stopped couplets formally akin to the second triad there (ll.7-12)). The second strophe is accordingly not only an entry deeper into the world of the poem, but a search for the beauty of the first. Thus the 'du' which opens the form fulfils the same rhythmic function as the 'Dürre', but, being therefore no more than an echo, its discord is weaker, the sought-for harmony more easily attained. The result is that the poetic experience in this strophe is so much the less intense. The limitation upon existence within poetic harmony is directly reflected in this fading of beauty, for the beauty fades in proportion as the world of the poem comes into being.

Yet the creation of beauty is dependent upon its fading, and thus partakes of the essence of elegy, loss and longing. In following the course, the journey, of the poem from strophe to strophe, we move as though to a goal and end; but such purpose is, in terms of the whole, an illusion. The poetic process, seeking and surrendering to beauty, frees the poem from purpose and thus creates the

very beauty it is losing. Within the whole the beauty of the first strophe is, and always was, lost, and it is for that reason beautiful. Is this still elegy, where the seal of acceptance, indeed of divine beauty, has been set upon loss? Loss is the necessary form of the Divine: 'Einst war ichs, doch wie Rosen, vergänglich war/ Das fromme Leben ... ' ('Mein Eigentum', ll.17-18).

Accordingly, the climax of the second strophe takes place in the very middle (ll.28-29). The fourth couplet is preparation, 'Freundesgespräch'. In l.27 the decisive 'jezt' is subordinated first to 'Anderes', then to 'komm' and 'Herbstes'; in this way an ascent is constructed, for not until the 'noch jetzt' of the pentameter does the word triumphantly emerge to dominate the whole couplet, and so, given its central position, the whole triad, and given the central position of the triad, the whole strophe. What follows is in each of these three microcosms (couplet, triad, strophe) a fulfilment of form, a falling-back to rest: the ascent is over. Thus the triumphant beginning of the final triad is a 'Darum', a consequence. For the first time in the strophe, a striking effect, the verse breaks over into the fourth-foot caesura — with the word 'Gott', which begins a mighty chord that dies away to fulfil the strophic form. Each of the couplets opens with an emphatic statement, but diminishing over the three couplets from the initial fourth- to the regular third-foot caesura. The first 'Darum'-clause (as far as 'Gott') with its four stressed syllables diminishes first to that of the 'Tisch', falling back to a third-foot caesura but retaining the

four stresses through the detached epithet (creating a secondary caesura) 'der geehrte'; and then to 'Pokale', which subsides to the regular division in the other hexameters of this strophe. This rhythmic figure, the chord, is confirmed by the final, onomatopoeic 'Klang', which reverberates back through the parallel rhythmic units.

This cadence in the hexameters, a musical equivalent of descending steps, takes place within the framework of the near-synonymous opening and closing motifs. 'Der gemeinsame Gott' sits at the head of the table (an underlying image strongly suggested by the word 'Tisch' following in the sequence); but the final word, 'Chor', is that which binds the whole together in harmony. Not only does it absorb all the sounds of the final triad: the 'Säuseln', the humming of the bees (delightfully present in the sibilant buzzing and nasal humming of 'sizen und singen um ihn'), the ringing of the cups; rhythmically 'der Chor' performs the same function as 'der Pfad' in the first strophe, and seals off the second as its echo. Hence the strikingly parallel sentence-structure: 'so träget und eilet der Pfad'; 'darum zwinget ... zusammen der Chor'. Here too a wonderful peace spreads over the strophe, for 'Chor' fulfils the strophic form, the search for harmony and return to rest which had begun in the pentameter of 1.28. The clear and sublime symmetry of this strophe now emerges: the elegiac couplet ('Grund') is stretched (beyond its inherent rise and fall) to 'jezt' (1.28), and falls back to rest with 'blühet die Edle mit uns' (end-stopped); the central triad is stretched open, and returns

to rest in the following couplet (ll.29-30); and the whole strophe too stretches, and returns to itself in the final triad. Such symmetry is best expressed by the image of the rippling pool with its concentric circles.

As the 'Dürre' of the opening strophe ends in the cosmic rhythm of 'der Pfad', so too the isolated 'du' of the second in the divine harmony of 'der Chor'. Each opening is an entry into the contradictions of life, an 'Aus-sich-herausgehen des Geistes' and journey within the overall journey, but also, since for Hölderlin contradiction must always ultimately be a sign of harmony, a return to the starting-point, to 'Gesang'. After the turning-point of the third 'jezt' (and it is this that decisively marks it as a climax), the 'du', overborne by harmony, gives way: to 'uns', 'Eins', 'jeder', and finally to 'der Chor'. A significant relationship between the head, or 'god', of the final triad (of the 'Fest' and its 'Tisch') and this all-embracing point of rest is created. It is 'Chor' that is the key word, the highest good, the Divine; namely, the harmony that embraces God's masculine will to be 'monarchisch ... im Himmel und auf Erden' (B171, 52), appeases and reconciles it. In this way 'die höchste Kraft' (for so most think of God; compare the epigram 'Wurzel alles Übels') is, through love, transformed into 'der gemeinsame Gott'; surrenders, then, his will to rule and be worshipped in return (Kantian epistemology) for living existence: the immanence of the unique 'Begeisterung' of the 'Fest'. The 'höchste Kraft' thus becomes 'in ihrer Äußerung zugleich die bescheidenste', in the sense that it is realised in

the human voices and humane actuality of the 'Chor', the point at which the strophe has subsided to rest. 'Alles greift in einander und leidet' (B171, 54), since All is One, the Divine; and poetry is (cf. 'Waterland', 1.29) a revolutionary act, not least in liberating from the irrational and despotic God of Christianity.

But what is this poetic deity? The second strophe is formally identical with the elegiac couplet (which divides into rise and fall): its 'Entfalten' leads up to the climactic 'jezt' and is answered, embraced, by the 'Verschließen' of the reverse echo. Accordingly, the summit of this strophe is not, as was 'Berge', the furthestmost, but the highest, point ('jezt') of the arc:—



The arc of the second strophe, prestabilised because it has already been experienced in the first, is a shadow, a paler reproduction; the revolutionary act of liberation stretches the bow of poetic form only as far as the centre of the strophe. Therewith the act of the first strophe has become an end in itself, held within the transcending 'open' form of an endless search ('Streben') for itself. The transcending form transforms the paradigmatic act of liberation with its revolutionary social purpose into a purely immanent loss of self; and the freedom of the elegiac form presupposes the necessity of the elegiac

situation.

From the perspective of the poem's linear progress, the second strophe echoes the form of the first, which thereby ceases to bear immediate relation to reality. From the perspective of the whole, this progress is simultaneously a regress, endowing the first strophe with its form and so with its beauty. Surrendering its purpose, the act gains the intensity of loss of self; and only this fading of beauty can create the beauty it loses.

The spell cast about the 'du' is thus the memory of beauty: echoed, it becomes the intense power that draws the discord into the poetic world, and in so doing transforms it into the 'Chor'. The Divine ceases to be the dogmatic assertion of orthodox religion. But nor is 'Chor' an assertion of a social ideal (such an ideal would be no better than the Christian God); it is, paradoxically, a still small voice, the return to rest that fulfils, and is therefore inseparable from, poetic form: '... die Poësie vereinigt die ... Menschen ... zu einem lebendigen tausendfach gegliederten innigen Ganzen, denn eben diß soll die Poësie selber seyn, und wie die Ursache, so die Wirkung' (B172, 168-75). That is, poetry is not a message to, but a model for, society; it already per se is (assuming it is what it 'should be') what society has to become.

The 'Chor' is divine precisely because it is not an abstract ideal, but a living experience of cosmic harmony. These antithetical alternatives leave the poem as not only the analogy but also the only possible realisation of the hen kai pan, the Absolute. But in order to ex-press the

Absolute the poem itself must exist sub specie aeternitatis; this infinite perspective is achieved through the transcending form. The search for the beauty the poem has created is a search by the poetic self for a mirror pure as a pool of water. The object of this search is necessarily insubstantial, fleeting, lost, since the mirror of self-consciousness leaves the poet not with the reality of experienced beauty, but with the 'living-death' of 'Ich bin Ich'. But this is a necessary price. Existence within a self-enclosed world, the defect in the highest idealisation of poetry, becomes a contradiction in the nature of the Divine itself, and so harmonious. Poetic practice, the infinite hen kai pan in the form of the poem with its limited number of strophes and fading beauty — this deficient reality is that of the pure 'Geist', and therefore by no means deficient. The ultimate implication is that the insubstantiality, the eternally lost quality, of beauty — in a word, longing — is the nature of God on earth.

This process has, not surprisingly in view of the close proximity of the poems, proved strikingly similar to that in 'Der Gang aufs Land'. There too the second strophe echoed the form of the first, the act (of liberation) first moving back to the centre of the strophe, then disappearing in the third, which, after a first triad in which freedom and form were one (Nature come alive), disintegrated in the search to name the Divine.

In 'Stuttgart', however, the third strophe concludes the first half of the poem, thereby fulfilling the triadic

structure: couplet, triad, strophe, triad of strophes (hemisphere). Such symmetry is not in itself of poetic value. Indeed, by the end of this strophe the beauty of the poem has almost faded. The three triads are no more than blocks of couplets marking off (obeying) distinct themes, and similarly the couplets flow in monotonous end-stopped sequence. The conflict of the strophe, the poet's grief at the memory of his father, is elegiac in the conventional sense; its resolution no doubt satisfies moral propriety, but not an aesthetic criterion. The lack of formal tension is reflected in the merely harmonious unity of the strophe. In the second strophe the 'du' had been transformed into the 'Chor', and thus the third strophe begins with 'uns', 'Aber damit uns nicht' serving the same rhythmic function as 'Aber meinest du nun'. But beginning and end of the third strophe are the same: 'uns'; and the characteristic resumptive 'Aber', which opened both the second and third strophes and reflected the tension of poetic form, becomes in the fourth a smoothly sequential 'So'.

Yet these defects would vanish if, like 'Der Gang aufs Land', the poem ended after the first triad (1.42). Formally these six lines would make a natural conclusion to what would then of course be an incomplete poem.

The opening 'Aber' opens the form in an ideal act of communication, the turn to the other: the poet's 'Entgegenkommen'. This new impulse is immediately absorbed into the cosmic harmony of the elegiac couplet; the negating force of the 'Aber', the purpose-clause, the

enjambement as time 'flees' over the hexameter, combine to carry the mind over into the pentameter, but with the released main verb this will is exhausted, and ends. It reaches, literally, only 'as far as' (Sprachgestus) the 'limit' of the second couplet: 'Bis an die Grenze des Lands'. This gives to the second and third couplets a lovely sense of peace and rest; and they in their self-sufficiency (end-stopped, complete sense) and rise and fall (each pentameter a syntactical complement of the hexameter) wonderfully express the idyllic whole-ness ('Heilig-keit') of the 'Ort'. Just as the pentameter flows about and embraces the hexameter, so too water and land exist in 'harmonious opposition', in an undisturbed and timeless landscape. The eternal harmonious flow of the couplet is the temporal image of this dream.

The form is opened because the harmonious beauty of the 'Chor' is insubstantial, mere poetic vision and not fulfilment, solitary song and not community: the beauty of the poetic experience is 'allzuklug' if it replaces reality ('diese neigende Zeit') with a dream. Yet this is the very technique whereby the strophic 'Chor' becomes the musical echo of a fading beauty and is freed from extraneous purpose. The 'jezt' of the second strophe, which shook off the dream of the first, the 'Trägen' and 'Eilen' of a purpose-free beauty, echoes on in the 'neigende Zeit' of autumn, in the need for haste itself; and is thus absorbed into the microcosm of the 'Chor'. The impulse that seems to shake off the dream in practice seeks to fulfil it, and the resumption is the definitive closing of form.

The new impulse is the last stretching of the bow that returns to itself. The act of liberation has moved back from the middle ('jezt') to the beginning of the strophe, fulfilling the echoing structure; therewith 'komm ich entgegen' becomes the last 'Entgegensezung', rhythmically echoing 'Berge' and 'jezt', and thereby giving them their rhythmic function, freeing the acts from purpose, sealing off the world of the poem. There is no need for any further act of liberation, for now each couplet presupposes the transforming acts of the preceding strophes; and equally, since the poem is as much regress as progress, these acts no longer seek anything but the poetic world.

Therewith the triadic form has fulfilled its function, and returns to its beginning, the ordered, end-stopped opening couplet of harmony (compare ll.39-40, 41-42, with 1-2). But this becomes diluted and lost within the dead harmony of the strophe as a whole. Why, then, does the poem continue and not, like 'Der Gang aufs Land', cease in incomplete but unmarred beauty? the question is underlined by the thematic parallels deriving from the analogous rhythmic structure: the communal achievement concluding the second strophe; the sense of arrival in 'Heilig ist mir der Ort' and 'Aber schön ist der Ort'. If the poem could end here, this triad would be its home-coming; elegiac couplet and harmony, necessity and freedom, as one.

The purpose of 'Stutgard' is higher than that of 'Der Gang aufs Land'. There the town comes to life (moves and is transformed) through the divine but humble (rhythmic) figure of the hill, and this is achieved when the arc,

the rhythmic image of the hill, is complete. Here the town is to become a priestess (l.76) of the gods, the 'Engel des Waterlands' are to be invoked. The mountains move. The poetic experience must be both more intense and sublime, the 'spirit' of the 'sphere' a higher divinity. The poem has the form of a journey: a constant breaking-off of the 'dream' (cf. l.106) for the sake of reality, of the vision in favour of fulfilment. Reality is place (the poet's journey to meet his friend and bring him to Stuttgart);-time (haste, urgency, autumnal 'Neigen'); communication (each strophe is in this sense a renewed address to the 'du', epistolary almost, like Hyperion's letters to Bellarmin).

This relationship to reality always, however, represents a mere possibility in contrast with the enacted reality of enclosure. De facto the first strophe achieves the utmost in openness that the poem can and will achieve. If the criterion, and perspective both of each strophe and of the whole poem (l.105: 'o kommt! o macht es wahr!'), is relationship to reality, then each strophe can do no more than reproduce what already was, the enclosure of the first. But therefore the first strophe itself exists within the foreknowledge (prestablisied harmony) of this failure; and the regressive effect of the apparently progressive form is to create the condition of captivity within which the act of liberation of the first strophe takes place: the foreknowledge of a 'dream'.

The first strophe and the poem as a whole are the product of a single creative act; therefore the whole poem

(the 'dream') is already present in the first strophe with its search for liberation and, conversely, the experience of the first strophe is only possible within the regressive echoing-structure of a fading beauty:—

The first strophe, rising to 'Berge', falling to 'Pfad', stretches open the form; the second, rising to 'jezt', falling to 'Chor', echoes this act (of liberation); the third echoes this fading echo, and falls back to rest. Within this overall harmony the first strophe is itself but a microcosm; it too in its first triad stretched open the elegiac couplet, the harmony of the second triad was the echo of the first (being a, and not the, 'sphere'), and the third triad ran down to fulfil the form. Only thus does the structural analogy to the 'Welt aller Welten' become possible, for thus each part — couplet, triad, strophe, strophic triad (hemisphere) — becomes the image of the others and of the All.

When, in the third strophe, all tension passes out of the poem, the hemisphere has described a single arc which embraces and absorbs all the major and minor arcs in its diminishing intensity; therewith all tension becomes a single memory and stretching of the bow that now returns to itself. The third strophe has the negative task of fulfilling this harmony.

Why this negative function? It makes of the act of liberation what is already, given the transcending illusion of progress, a past and unreal act; even as it takes place it is no more, lost within the totality. The quality of the

act, its diminishing intensity, reveals it as a surrender of will, a loss of self within a dream, a purpose-free entry into the existential sphere of the poem; and the sphere is existential because, as a superior space and potential, it has replaced reality.

Not just, nor even primarily, evil actions; all will, thought, conscious existence, are subsumed under the 'Trennungen, in denen wir denken und existieren'. Purpose always involves a 'subject' and an 'object'. Poetry has to become the purpose-free antithesis to prose, replacing mastery over Nature with harmonious relationship: love.

The coherent meaning of the poem, what it communicates, is mediated by a unified whole, a succession of strophes which progressively achieve such a meaning. But by being freed from purpose, this coherence, which is metaphysical (moving from 'sinnliche' to 'geistige Heimat', from the earthly to the Divine), becomes poetic form and gains poetic function. This function is negative: the value of relationship (to others) being concentrated in the communicative act, its undermining turns poetic form into the captivity of 'living-death', the elegiac situation. But this negative act becomes the condition for the creation of divine beauty (as opposed to meaning); since the entry into the poetic 'sphere' presupposes the self-enclosure of the coherent cosmos, it is able to become a recreation of action on ideal terms: not as an exercise of will, but as a pure loss of self.

Thus the gradual progress towards relationship with the world becomes a progressive fading of beauty and

'Zurükschrecken' to self-consciousness. This process is poetic technique; not accidental, but wanted. The poem communicates its statement (for poetry perforce shares the (enslaved) instrument of prose, language); but in so doing it also, indirectly, communicates its value: the eternally lost but infinitely intense experience which now, being gone, echoes throughout the poem and imparts to its entirety (not just to the first strophe) its value. The poem seeks its own beauty, and is for that reason 'living-death', self-enclosure. Entry into the first strophe and into the poem as a whole are the same: an act of love.

Thus the value of the poem is not abstractable (the above hardly in social terms amounts to a value), but existential; the poem is sealed off from the world, and its value can only be sensed through entry into its purpose-free 'sphere'. Only the dead shell can be abstracted; it is coherent, but reft of its negative function has no value whatsoever.

In comparing 'Stutgard' with 'Der Gang aufs Land' in such terms as the 'genus sublime' and 'humile', I deliberately created an impression of a 'classical' poet which the following discussion should have destroyed. Hölderlin's poetry is not based on the kind of objective hierarchical values which, for example, Horace expounds in the Ars Poetica (73-98): 'singula quaeque locum teneant sortita decentem' (92). On the contrary, the value is the quality and intensity of individual poetic experience. Poetic form is not the product of a structured society, but the structure of the individual self.

The 'naming' of the Divine

The final couplet of the third strophe establishes the unity of the first three strophes. It summarises the old, valuable but now out-worn, nature of elegy, the celebration of 'Vergangenes' in loss and longing. The reference to the poet's own great griefs, 'des Vaters Grab' and 'Leiden der Liebe', is thus representative, and the transformation in his own elegiac poetry since 'Achill' and 'Elegie' is intended to be paradigmatic. With the final couplet, which looks to 'Künftiges' ('Enkel'), the poem consists of two halves (hemispheres). The first is the old world, the second, 'neue Welt' (cf. 4.141, 4). The first is also 'Ausflug' and the second 'Rückkehr zu sich selbst', for the poet's outward journey is now over, and with his friend he begins the return to Stuttgart and, beyond the town, to the ideal 'Vaterland'. This may serve as a precis of the poem's meaning.

The harmonious succession of couplets (ll.39-54) which brings the first hemisphere to its conclusion provides the rhythmic basis for the fresh start (act of liberation) of the fourth strophe, whose first couplet flows in this inherited regularity as far as 'leicht' but then, suddenly, all restriction falls away, and the 'aber'-clause lifts the rhythm over the couplet-division. Thus 'leicht' and 'Aether', by virtue of the pentameter-halves, contrast within the motif of light-ness. The mundane measure, the lightness of being 'thatlos', as the travellers walk along in their 'Schiksaal'-less state, is suddenly exposed

(Sprachgestus) to an aethereal lightness, a vista of infinite purity, and so transformed into a 'destiny' that lifts up the mortal tread of fenced-in experience and lends to hearts and feet mercurial wings. The dead harmony has become the steady paces of the poet and his companion, and so the basis for a fresh act of liberation.

The enjambement that introduces the pure vista of infinite aether (the strophic sphere is now open, a true image of the sky) is not permitted to rest, but itself picked up and carried over into the pentameter; 'ziehn freudig', concentrating two repetitions ('er-zogen' now suggests 'drawn'), is the climax of the two couplets. The rhythm is inseparable from the idea, for it is itself 'drawn' (graphic through the long monosyllable 'ziehn'; compare 1.17) out, in an arc that does not reach its apex till 'freudig' and the second half of the pentameter, where it falls back to rest. It is thus itself an ascent, an 'Hinaufziehen', and with the pause at 'hinauf' a vantage-point has been reached that overlooks a new realm. This opening of the rhythm gives to the opening words of the vista, 'Groß ist das Werden umher', deictic immediacy; they are at the same time an entry into a sphere, an opening of the eyes as a barrier to perception falls away. The autumnal wealth of Nature now lies spread out before the travellers; but also spreads about, envelops, the imagination of the poet.

There follows the 'Schau' (cf. 1.73). These four couplets are end-stopped, a single sequence in which the triadic division is submerged. Such a prevailing of sequence over

division (over form) is the rhythmic image of Nature's cornucopia: the 'epic' mode of enumeration, characterised by the parallelising opening conjunctions 'Aber', 'Und', the couplets 'falling like apples from the tree', expresses an homogeneous 'Werden' in which phenomena have value in themselves. The effect of this merging of formal outline is, however, to accentuate the next triadic division. With the 'Darum' of 1.67 the sequential form gives way to a mighty ('gewaltig') act of liberation; the word 'Fülle' graphically overflows into the pentameter, is reinforced by the enjambement of 'Reicher', so close in meaning, and thus initiates a rush of ideas which reaches its climax in the five substantives — 'Gärten', 'Wein', 'Gras', 'Korn', 'Bäume' — a 'plenitude' of substance whose every word suggests the warmth of autumn. Only then, in its last line, does the triad, and with it the strophe, fall back to rest.

At the same time, however, this onward rush is retarded by an ebbing undercurrent; for the strong sense of arrival in 1.68 ('hierher ... hier') means that so far as movement is concerned the climax is already achieved. Thus the subsequent rhythmic release is also a release from tension, and the whole movement from 1.68 to 1.72 a falling-back to rest.

The overall rhythm of the strophe is very similar to that of the first. Here too the opening triad brings an act of liberation; the central triad is an end-stopped harmony reflecting the transformation of the elegiac couplet from dead regularity into the harmony of the sphere; and in the final triad comes the intoxication that liberates from

all measure (compare the rhythmic function of 'Reicher', intensifying 'Fülle', with that of 'Voll-' in 1.15). But despite its merit this strophe is a mere shadow of the first in terms of art. The arc of liberation is weaker: both in the first triad, where it reaches no further than 'freudig' and then gives way to the effortless harmony of end-stopped couplets (so that the triadic division is almost lost); and in the strophe as a whole, where it reaches no further than 'hier' (1.68) and then, its virtue draining away, subsides.

It too, then, is a loss of self, a liberation of Nature that is more than mere description of a landscape. It is a vision of beauty; Nature in her paratactic growth and luxuriating autonomy is 'seen'. 'Schaun' in this absolute sense is more than just to use the eye (that would be another subordination of Nature); it is positively to renounce the intellect with its discriminating purpose and to become a pure receiving mirror, and so to regain the full humanity which is self-consciousness of the Divine (deus sive natura): the subjective instrument of the divine object ('weil/ Die Seeligsten nichts fühlen von selbst' ('Der Rhein', 11.109-10)). It is the pure poietic act: a surrender of selfhood that frees Nature from the bondage of utility and restores the autonomy which was hers in the perception and wonder of childhood, when things were 'seen' for their own sake.⁴

Thus Nature ceases to be smiling fields, an Enlightened and accommodating appendix to man, and becomes an alluring invitation to the companions (but really to the

poet, whose 'dream' all this is) to lose themselves in the warm and luxuriating plenty of autumn. Not just 'seen', she has power, reaching up 'almost' over their heads, and this loss of self is on each side an embracing, an act of love. Her 'might' (cf. ll.67, 73) is not so much quantitative, like Klopstock's bucket, as personal, her 'goods' no longer function-bound commodities, but purpose-free, alive. The epithets 'üppig' and 'glühend' join with the only other adjective in the triad, 'gewaltig', to yield an intense perception. And thus, as in the first strophe the mountains, so here the trees come alive, in the utmost — orphic — achievement of the strophe. 'Lining the way', they are the bystanders, silently standing, looking down upon the procession.

Thus the strophe ends in a paradox of movement and rest that echoes that of l.18: 'über den Wanderern stehn'; 'stehn' is the fulfilment of form, the sta-sis where the poem 'stands still'. The travellers with their never-ending impulse to wander are lost beneath (the 'über' of l.72 intensifies that of l.67) the trees; so too the poet's vision in the vitality of a self-governing Nature whose hypnotic growth 'almost' threatens to overwhelm in an endless 'Werden'.

But this loss of self is held by the transcending form; the first couplet of the fifth strophe is a recall to consciousness, its 'open' 'Aber' a 'Zurückschrecken' that opens the poem to reality: to the 'du' (renewed address), to time and place ('der Weg und der Tag'): 'ein Stillstand ... , bis ihn die dieser geistigen Wiederhohlung eigentümliche Vollkommenheit und Unvollkommenheit wieder ins wirkliche

Leben treibt'. The poetic experience is now sealed off 'as in a vessel', set apart, over, defined: a 'Schau', a wandering 'through' (and so, emerging out of) a 'mighty' experience.

Now this tendency in Nature to an overwhelming, liberated, 'poetic', existence is here admittedly no more than a suggestion in a celebration of the bounty of harvest-time. Similarly, the 'Zurückschrecken', although more overt, is also more superficial, and the reopening of the poem easier, less tense. The fourth strophe is absorbed into the accelerating movement towards the conclusion: the 'naming' of the Divine (l.91) and the coherent meaning of the poem. That is, its autonomy is, in comparison with the first strophe, diminished, since at this stage the end is much nearer, so that the strophe is no longer a world for itself, as was the initial entry into the poetic sphere, but fourth of six. Strophic autonomy, the spell that liberates Nature, contradicts the poem's progress to a coherent meaning. As the poem advances to its conclusion, the autonomy of the strophe becomes weaker, but that of the poem, stronger. The value of the fourth strophe, its sensuality and loss of self, depends upon the weakening autonomy of the strophic form. That the liberation of Nature here takes the form of a luxuriating autonomy is incidental in so far as, just as the strophe is one 'sphere' among a potential infinity, autumnal profusion is but one of her possible, potentially infinite, manifestations. In this light the 'epic', paratactic, principle of the succession of couplets applies ideally to the succession of strophes; but that is not the

case till 'Heimkunft'. Nevertheless, it is the inherent intensity of perception, self-exposure, which later loses all proportion in Hölderlin's schizophrenic imagination (see the variants, 2.587).

The town (1.75) is deliberately left unnamed until the second triad of the fifth strophe. It thus appears first as any town, and so in harmonious contrast with the country; it, the work of men, rises out of Nature's indiscriminate 'Fülle' as a thing of form and outline, singularity and purpose. It gives meaning to the land, binds earth to heaven as a priestess does men to gods; and as a priest is the key to the meaning of a people, like Empedokles its secret heart, so too the town is now revealed, as the meaning of all that has gone before (the 'Schau'). The ideal of Greece is in the background: 'es war ein göttlich Leben und der Mensch war da der Mittelpunkt der Natur' (Hyperion, I, 150/12f.).

The delaying of the town's name has another effect: the fifth strophe becomes a symmetrical mounting structure leading up to the 'naming' of the Divine in 1.91. The triadic divisions are like a ladder, or rather, great blocks of stone piled upon one another: in the first triad, 'Stadt'; in the second, its name, 'Stutgard'; in the third, 'ihr Größeren'; and finally, in the last strophe, their name: 'Engel des Vaterlands!'. Each stage removes a veil from the Divine, but also, since the Divine is not yet, not even and least of all in 1.91 (cf. 1.100), named, renews the veil. This ascent begins already in the first triad, for in relation to the country the town herself

points upwards ('Stab', 'hoch', 'empor').

This 'entscheidende Wendung zur geistigen Heimat' and irruption over the strophic division together constitute a break-through into a 'neue Welt', the new 'sphere' of 'Waterland' (l.91) — a paradigmatic revolutionary act. Bathed in the last rays of the setting sun ('be-sonnen' in this double sense) the poet stands before, awaits, night-fall and the coming of the Divine: God no longer 'über den Sternen' (cf. Hyperion, I, 15/18), but ('Mythologie der Vernunft') the very stars themselves.

The coherence of this conclusion must be distinguished from the aesthetic value of the poem. Whether the stars really are divine, and whether Hölderlin really thought they were, is no doubt interesting; but poetic value cannot separate form from content. The very relevance of such a theological question renders the poetry suspect. In practice the subordination of the triadic divisions to linear progress completes the regress in strophic autonomy; the fifth strophe exists solely for the sake of the poem, and it is the poem, not the strophe, that is now complete and self-sufficient. Yet the poem is no more than the echo of what was. What ought to be the decisive act of liberation is really merely the sixth strophe of a poem which has progressed to a dream (l.106); and if the poem is open to reality ('o kommt! o macht es wahr!'), it does no more than reproduce the first, and therewith also model, poetic world: the strophe.

Thus the second hemisphere proves to be but a memory of the first (the exclamations of the third strophe —

'o gutiges Licht!' in 1.43 and the 'naming' of the 'Landesheroën' in the third triad — formally intimate the concluding naming of the Divine, the apparent purpose and climax of the poem), and the arc that extends over the whole poem to the revolutionary cry 'Engel des Vaterlands!' is no more than a pale reproduction of that to 'Berge' in the first strophe. The poem returns to its beginning and so fulfils the eternal cosmos in its elegiac rhythm of rise and fall. Both major and minor arcs (to 1.91, to 1.18) are the extended form of the elegiac couplet in its hexametric 'Ausflug' and pentametric 'Rückkehr zu sich selbst'; by virtue of this rhythmic function the first and archetypal couplet becomes the microcosmic 'Grund' of the whole poem, and both arcs are echoes of one another and of the 'Grund'.

It is not the ideas, but the rhythm, that has performed a journey and now returns to itself. At the very moment of coherent meaning, the 'naming' of the Divine — that moment where poetry seems to have become a theological statement — all tension passes out of the poem; the bow slackens, or, in the terms of Hyperion's world, the cosmic Eros-Logos withdraws from its act of love, the entry into the finite world. Within the 'sphere' of the poem the intensity of poetic experience is now no more than a memory, and the poem as a whole is a 'dream', 'open' to reality. The 'naming' has proved an illusion (1.100), and the poet is left as he began, with 'Dürre': 'allein ja/ Bin ich' (105-06).

But this seeming negativity and self-reproach of the poetic situation is itself negated through being the condition of the divine intensity and beauty of poetic

experience. The rhythmic law of diminishing intensity does not make the first strophe, or the first hemisphere, beautiful, the rest not; it is the whole poem that is — defectively — beautiful. It holds the memory of experience; and memory is the necessary form of the Divine, which is thus present, realised in the poem. The poem's progress is an illusion ('Traum') because it has sought, not anything outside the poem, but the beauty of the already-experienced loss of self, the 'Aus-sich-herausgehen des Geistes'. The coherent meaning of the complete poem, losing its positive function, is rhythmically the overall 'Zurückschrecken' of and into self-consciousness, the search for a pure mirror which in turn creates, through progressive regress, the sphere of ideal (purified) relationship, intense as burning fire: of lost love. 'Das untergehende Vaterland ... ist in der freien Kunstnachahmung ein furchtbarer aber göttlicher Traum' (4.282, 2, 283, 25f.); ' ... ich soll wahrscheinlich nie lieben, als im Traume' (B99, 54f.).

In 'Elegie' what is lost (Diotima) is divine. Here, what is lost is divinity itself; the process of loss is the necessary nature of the Divine, and in striving towards loss the poem achieves the highest good. Beyond its immediate context, 'das möge genug seyn' (1.107) has formal function in expressing the poem's limitation: an acceptance of 'destiny', finite state, that corresponds to lost 'Seeligkeit', lost infinity. The entry by the Absolute (pure Spirit) into life finds its analogy in the 'Eigenmacht', preservation of infinite potential, of the individual 'spirit', whose limitation, defective (lost) infinity,

serves as the concrete realisation of the All. The poetic act therefore both serves the Divine and has metaphysical justification. But the entry into life remains unreal. Night falls; the poet's world closes about him with its imprisoning walls of form. A new act of liberation is due.

V. 'BROD UND WEIN': THE ANATOMY OF LONGING

The first strophe is of a unique perfection and beauty.

The clarity of the triadic structure unites in harmonious tension with its gliding transitions; each triad is a perfect and complete 'sphere', but for that very reason passes effortlessly into the greater whole.

The sphere of the first triad is sealed off and enclosed. It begins and ends with 'rest', so that 'ruht der geschäftige Markt' answers and affirms 'ruhet die Stadt', and so that rhythmically the opening unrest of the hexameter ends in the peace of the pentameter. Within this figure the central 'ruhen' (1.3) is a half-way stage: 'rest' has moved to the second, fulfilling, half of the hexameter, but awaits the pentameter.

Thus the triad is a search for and attaining of peace. And within this framework the elegiac rhythm creates an harmonious tension of movement and rest. Since each pentameter responds to its hexameter with a parallel 'Und'-clause, the pentameters form a pattern, a single complement to the unquiet searching of the hexameter. But against this runs an ascending movement carried upwards by the hexameters; the absolute regularity of the opening couplet (end-stopped parallelism of pentameter, strong third-foot caesura marked by semi-colon in hexameter) is breached by the second hexameter with its fourth-foot

caesura (unique in the strophe), and then, an utmost in striving, the third with its enjambement breaks over the couplet-division itself.

It is, however, a striving to rest, and the triad is the rhythmic embrace of this 'Streben'. This effect is heightened by the unnatural stresses laid by the metre on 'wird' and 'steht' (11.1, 5), which are thus rectified, reassured, by 'rauschen' and 'ruht' (11.2 and 6; the second figure is by sound the slightest echo of the first). The final words seal off the triad: it is the 'sphere' of 'der geschäftige Markt', of day (1.3) in the daily sense, the busy rush of life. But the rhythm rises and falls, breathing peace over the world, an opening and closing of the eye; it is the cosmic harmony that absorbs the world of men, a perspective which is sensual, a lullaby (so the pattern of 'ruhen') that sings the world to sleep.

This lullaby begins the enchantment that calls forth 'die Fremdlingin unter den Menschen', for she appears, and can only appear, when they have departed. She is literally beyond them. It is thus the initial sealing-off of the sphere of the poem, the creation of a magic space, a temenos within whose bounds alone the spell may be released. The opening couplet in its absolute regularity is (just as in 'Stutgard') the type of cosmic harmony, a microcosm. It is the mystical 'Grund', in its rise ('Streben') and fall the analogue of the eternal rhythm of the World-Spirit: the procreative act of love.

Beside the clear outline of the triadic structure the couplets of 'Elegie' now appear unformed: a formless loss and longing, in which the hexameter's striving ('Täglich

geh' ich heraus und such' ein Anderes immer ... / Ruh erbittend ... ') and the pentameter's resignative fall (' ... und sinnlos dünkt lange das Übrige mir' (1.54)) together constitute a 'living-death' in the absence of what lies outside the poem, the beloved. Here, in the strophe, the couplet recreates itself in the triad, thus recreating the world in its own image. The resignative pentameter has become the feminine principle which, reappearing as the triad of couplets, embraces the act; and the act is no longer devoted away from the poem, but liberates within, an immanent form- and life-giving principle. The step from 'Elegie' has been, not an overcoming of grief, but the creation of a world (cf. B182, 33) out of the elegiac situation. Thus the elegiac couplet is recreated as the threefold echo of itself: the thesis, the statement of harmony, the mystical 'Grund' of the cosmos, the elegiac couplet; the antithesis, the negative aspect of this harmony, its abstract lifelessness of metaphysical assertion, generating the need to go beyond, break open the form; the synthesis, that this seeming negation is the very means whereby poetic form is recreated, in the rhythm of the triad, which absorbs the antithetical striving and makes of it a 'purely' immanent principle: a 'spirit' ('der Geist, der in der Sphäre herrscht' (cf. 4.277, 26)). The act — the violence of the Fichtean 'That-handlung' (divisive consciousness) which tore open the 'engvereinte Knospe', the 'sichre Ein-falt' ('Mein Eigentum', 1.45) of the individual microcosm — has proved to be no act, but the means to cosmic harmony (the mathematical symmetry, the three

couplets, is of course no more than the in itself dead shell for this transformation of the world).

The central triad mediates between 'rest' among men and the 'coming' of Night. It is the spell itself, and thus begins with music ('Saitenspiel'). The transition (11.6/7) is of an infinite gentleness; the opening 'Aber' seems scarcely adversative, scarcely more than the advancing hour and a new perception. Now this gliding transition reflects the poet's agapē, love for the world of men that is blind both to Night and to (what lies beyond the poem) Day, knows only its 'Tag' (1.3), a chaotic 'Treiben'. Not just 'satt' and 'wohlzufrieden', all the words describing man's activity are here potentially pejorative: 'geschäftig', 'Werke der Hand', 'Gewinn und Verlust'. But no judgement is passed. The poet's task is no longer, as in Hyperion's Scheltrede, to oppose the 'Irrtum', but to absorb it into 'Wahrheit': 'Wo möglich, lehnt man [die Knechte und Barbaren] sanft auf die Seite' (Hyperion, I, 48/12).

It mediates between the antitheses, the world of men and the mystery of the Divine. 'Menschen' and 'Nacht' are directly opposed (it is no accident that the central statements of these triads, 'ruhen die Menschen' and 'die Nacht kommt', have the same metrical position). Rhythm is both orphic and revolutionary act, both soothing the titanic and shapeless chaos (cf. 'Empedokles' III, 423-37) and performing the 'Untergang oder Übergang des Vaterlandes' (4.282, 23). Through the strophic form destruction becomes transition, and violence love.

Through 'song' the world of men is the old world, 'aufgelöst' (cf. 4.282-85), a phase in the rhythm of the

cosmos. Lost in their world (the position of 'die Menschen' in the middle of the triad and parallel through 'ruhen' with 'die Stadt' and 'der Markt', the enclosing words, undermines their control over their sphere), they are absorbed and comprehended. And thus they become, for all that they think themselves and their affairs of great importance, like children to whom their games were everything and now, tucked up in bed, sleep soundly.

The conflict is 'drowned in sounds of peace'; through the gliding transition the juxtaposition in chiasmic antithesis ('ruht der geschäftige Markt' / 'das Saitenspiel tönt', verb + substantive / substantive + verb) is scarcely felt, and there is no pause at 'tönt'. But this act of reconciliation is ambivalent. It presupposes that the 'sphere' of men is the realm of 'day', normal perception, naive limitation, for this is the realm that the poet now leaves behind. Such an act presupposes dependence of poetic experience on the poet's otherness. It is, indeed, at once a priestly 'odi profanum vulgus et arceo' (Horace, Odes, III, 1, l.1) and a magic key to the door of perception; and so an act of self-exclusion. As 'der geschäftige Markt' closes about and absorbs 'die Menschen', so 'das Saitenspiel' opens a new realm, a second eye; the melody of the chiasmic antithesis brought about by the triadic structure effects the spell whereby the poet creates the autonomous space of the poem. His relationship to the world of men, their reconciliation to the cosmic rhythm of the World-Spirit, also casts off the shackles of human limitation, and serves to generate the intensity of poetic

experience.

The 'day' of men is clarity: intellect, Enlightened normality, in which what is is what it is, known, distinct, hard and fast. This hold on life (mastery over Nature) is now gradually to be relinquished. As befits the central sphere, perception is here half knowledge, half intuition, a dreamy speculation as to the nature and origin of things. The 'Saitenspiel' is 'fern', unidentifiable; its source, 'aus Gärten', more the quality of its sound, merging with the nocturnal scents, dew on grass, birds and insects. It is at first disembodied, pure sound, and the following 'vielleicht, daß' renounces knowledge, and governs a progressive loosening of the metre-syntax relation. This relaxation of form is a dissolving of the intellect with its demand for clarity and structure; to it corresponds the gradual elimination of human consciousness as controlling instance. For first 'die Menschen' have given way to 'ein Liebendes' (the neuter is a dreamy imprecision, softening the masculinity of purpose), but he, despite the beauty of his music, has an object in mind, his beloved; then, however, to the 'einsamer Mann', who contrasts gently but directly with 'die Menschen'. For his object is vague, lost in elegiac longing, merging (the repetition of 'fern', advanced to the emphatic point of enjambement, is incantatory) with the music he 'perhaps' produces; his thought a delicate thread so fine that it passes, with its unshed tears, away into the eternal purity of the fountains. This is wonderfully expressed by the slightest pause, the semi-colon; mortal thought itself ends here, and its end is just perceptible; in the flowing

'und's, the climax of the dissolving rhythm, the objects of his tears (his 'distant friends', his 'youth') dissolve into 'die Brunnen'.

Thus l.10, where the end-stopped pentameter ends the dissolution of form, gains finality; it concludes a purification. Mortal men are nearest such purity in sorrowing tears, for then their hold on life, will, is light and wavering. But the waters of Nature into which the streaming rhythm passes are unmarred, clear, 'immerquillend', and before them even the purest grief seems impure. The pentameter seems to demarcate the realm of thought itself; the poem, passing beyond, is initiated, open to the Divine.

The sixth couplet is isolated. Within the central triad, which itself mediates between 'day' and the Divine, it mediates between mortal thought and the coming of Night, as rhythmically between the dissolving of form complete with l.10 and the final triad. Thus isolated, it is a moment in time, the moment that precedes transformation. The world is as always, but under the sign of an impending coming, a higher meaning, so certain that the meaning of what is perceived ('Glocken', 'Wächter') is suspended, no longer valid. The bells ring, the watchman calls the hour, but there is no context for these events. For with the resolution of mortal consciousness the individuated structure of human life in which they have their place and serve (tell the time) has fallen away; isolated in their couplet, each purified from incidental significance, the bells through the tautology 'ertönen geläutet', the watchman through his intentness on the hours, each is a pure event and therefore, because the meaning is only

revealed with the fulfilment of form, of the pure sphere, a signal. Till now there has been no suggestion of nightfall, and the first ten lines could still be a celebration of evening stillness; but with this couplet all twelve lines become devoted to the one end. Thus 'Zahl' is the final word; their number is now, like the hours of day, twelve, filled up.

Yet the couplet arises organically out of the preceding lines. For the purity of the sounds is a restoration of true purpose dependent upon the dissolving of thought with its hold upon life. Such purpose is harmony with Nature, when the transitions in the lives of men are no longer a distracting multiplicity, but accord spontaneously with hers, the One purpose. The second transition (11.12/13) is the symbol of this accordance. The movement of day into night is one movement, experienced by all; the myriad concerns of men fall away¹ before this single, unified, purpose; but the bells mark it, the watchman is at its service. The perception of this purpose is pure, an 'intellektuale Anschauung'. For whereas Nature is One, man is chaotic singularity; every consciousness sees the world through its own eyes, and imposes upon it irredeemably mundane desire, not least in the fight of each individual for survival. The poetic act is to strip away all such accident and liberate Nature: that is, poetic perception is a surrender to Nature's purpose, and, equally, he who performs this act is by definition both poet and 'Priester der göttlichen Natur' (Hyperion, II, 104/11f.).

With the word 'Zahl' it is Nature who pauses, waiting; a power has been set free, is immanent, but not yet here.

Lines 13-15 are the advent. As the signal calls forth the 'Spirit of Nature',² so it comes first as a 'Wehn'. Thus the 'jezt auch', the gliding transition, is again the vehicle of a sharp antithesis. Both the first two triads ended in stasis: the resting market, the number of hours. Thus the second triad closes the world of order. The drawn-out onomatopoeic syllable 'Wehn' is a verbal substantive, the first: movement enters the poem, agency passes from the perceiver to the perceived.

The tension between the assured, ever-gliding rhythm and the daemonic coming now intensifies. I at least experience a frisson of fear as the breath touches 'die Gipfel des Hains', touches, then, the highest leaves, Earth's most sensitive part, nearest Heaven. For this is a supernatural communication, a glimpse into a closed and forbidden realm; the grove has been waiting for the Spirit as for a lover. The erotic undercurrent bespeaks a daemonic Nature whose apparent passivity was a veil. The final sphere has gone beyond surrender of will; to perceive the will of Nature is to lose one's own power, mastery over the world. Therewith the conditions of a dream prevail, where what comes comes, and there is no control. The poetic process has been a calculated, willed, surrender of will for the sake of this experience. The apparent control, the ease of the gliding rhythm, is now revealed as the very means to this loss of self; a serpentine enchantment.

Its ease, the flowing connections,³ enhanced by echoing figures ('ruhen', 'rauschen', 'fern', 'kommen'),

between and within the lines, avoiding emphases, subordinate clauses, exclamations and questions, and its calm regularity (four complementary 'Und'-clauses in the pentameter, all but one strong third-foot hexametric caesuras, each line with its one main verb, so that the strophe seems to unfold) have become ambivalent; no longer, as in the first twelve lines (which by themselves would have no intensity) the placid description of a scene, but the instrument of an irrevocable entry into the unknown.

Thus the onset of Night is uncontrolled yet formed, rushing yet unhurried. First and third triad are antitheses. As the world of men 'rests', so Night 'comes'; 'die Fremdlingin unter den Menschen' echoes 'zu ruhen die Menschen', and the triple 'kommen' is the dynamic response to the threefold 'ruhen': there, enclosing, here, open form, impelling forward; together, the rhythmic figures weave an incantation about the strophic sphere. In ll.13-15 the rhythm gradually accelerates, as though each phase were a lessened resistance to Night's coming — a diminishing structure (hexameter, pentameter, hexameter-half) achieved through incomplete sense (l.14) and metre (l.15) and culminating in the separated substantivised epithet 'die Schwärmerische', each member of this rhythmical unit impels forward to completion. So too 'kommen' gains in strength, moving, as the rhythm accelerates, first backwards to the emphatic position in enjambement, then forward to the final position, the languid e dropping away. This quickening pulse joins with an ever-intensifying

personification, so that with the sck of 'Schwärmerische' you can almost hear the swish of her dark cloak. The end is the briefest of statements: 'die Nacht kommt'.

The brevity of the three monosyllables, the unadorned simplicity of the statement, its position at the climax of the accelerating rhythm with the diminishing structure that finally strips away everything 'accidental', all attribute; the dynamic repetition of the verb of motion, breaking the long sequence of lines with their descriptive fullness of nouns and single recounting verb: these forces concentrate, isolate, and give great power to the words 'die Nacht'. She, this single substantive, becomes the noumenon, the will, behind a sequence of preceding phenomena whose vehicle is the sequence of flowing couplets (again the paratactic 'epic' form of pure perception). The endpoint and climax is thus that moment when darkness falls; the stark simplicity is the linguistic image of an unfathomable otherness and wordless mystery. The compression of the 'coming' into the same line as that of the moon, far from weakening, endows it, by virtue of the preceding regular flow, with daemonic vitality. The simplicity is the moment at which what has been conjured comes, what has been sought happens, so that the three words are the magical formula, word of power,⁴ of the priest, and not just a description but a command; it is also the irrevocability of the spell, the moment of no return. It is the absolute-ness, infinity, uniformity, of darkness.

But these words are also the climax of the strophe. The last three lines fall back to rest as Night's opaque presence fills the sphere, the word 'Voll' beginning this

fulfilment of form. The poiēsis is over. The return to rest is drawn out with perfect aesthetic judgement. The hexameter (l.15) with its climax leaves the whole strophe wide open. The following pentameter embraces it with its antithetical unity ('Voll ... ||| wenig ... '), and syntactically the strophe could end with 'um uns'. To this extent the pentameter hangs back with the body of the strophe, so that the final couplet becomes detached; this gives to 'Glänzt', its opening word, the deictic force of revelation. Night at last appears, is revealed. But this revelation is really fulfilment: as the final couplet stands apart from the strophe, so the strophe itself becomes darkness, and, inset like diamonds, the glittering, infinitely-distant stars, which themselves shed no light, complete the eternal mystery. Thus light fulfils the revelation of Night.

As she comes, however, the mood changes. The dynamic linear movement of the strophe ends with the words 'die Nacht kommt'; the goal is reached. Yet this change has already begun in l.15 itself, so that if the last four lines are read as a unit, a balanced, rocking rhythm emerges, a rallentando whose increasing weight first hems the impetus of the strophe, then bears down upon it like a shroud, and so brings it to an end. The final couplet, an isolated and self-sufficient main clause shut away in its separable components ('Glänzt ... herauf'), is spanned by a single verb; not till the dactyls of the pentameter's second half is its meaning released. It thus forms an arc rising to 'Gebirgeshöhn', at once its summit and that of the entire strophe, which now subsides to rest.⁵ Each half of

the pentameter divides into feet that match, the first by sound ('Über Ge|birge-'), the second by sound and sense ('traurig und |prächtig'). Thus the two halves balance and contrast with one another, an effect intensified by the long stressed syllables (Üb, birg, höhn, trau), and by the weight of the meaning of 'Gebirgeshöhn' as of sad grandeur.

Line 18 is thus a doubled intensification of the anti-thetical unity of l.16; l.16 thus begins a rhythmic ascent which ends with 'herauf', but which is also a gradual slowing of momentum, deepening of mood, weighing-down of the strophe. This ascent absorbs the hexameters (ll.15 and 17), with their open, searching energy, into itself, and it brings out their parallelism (the opening with delayed main verbs, the marked pause at the caesura, the feminine substantivised attributes of Night opening the second half in apposition). The false ending, l.16, is thus the pivot of the strophe.

The mood that enters the poem is sorrow, and it is this that absorbs the daemonic speed of onrushing Night. It is the elegiac form that is restored; the open couplet, whose utter regularity was an assertion of form, returns to itself in cosmic 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens', but in the process has gained infinitely in weight and pathos, has, indeed, become 'traurig und prächtig'. Like darkness it closes about the world of the poem, sealing it off; and the poem becomes a sphere, 'Welt in der Welt', held in the transcending form, the eternal rise and fall of the breath of life. The intensity of the poetic

experience snaps, and gives way to loss and longing.

The art of the strophe resides in this tension. The easeful rhythm, gliding in its flow and regularity, calls forth the Divine by releasing a daemonic intensity of experience. As the rise and fall of the couplet creates the sphere that draws the poet into itself, so the poiēsis is renunciation of purpose. The world of 'men', the 'lover', the 'solitary man', each is a weaker 'Bleibendes' (cf. 'Empedokles' II, 650-53), and thus, as it is left behind, a lessening 'Halt' (cf. 1.32), hold on life, a stage in surrender of self and an entry ever deeper into union with Nature. The purpose of the incantation was not just to summon Night, but to lull the will, the ordering self, and so to carry the self surely, inexorably, into the Other, the Unknown. In this sense the strophe is an existential sphere. The Object is darkness, mystery, absolute otherness. For it to come, as a divine spirit and numinous will, and therefore as a Subject, the Subject, man, must exchange roles with Nature and become passive, an object: open. This is the re-revolutionary act that turns round the conventional, Enlightened relationship of man to Nature.

This process is a spell through its irrevocability, and it is irrevocable because it is calculated. Relationship is recreated within the ideal world, the mythopoeic imagination, and is an act only within the rationally-formulated, and so controlled, structure of consciousness ('Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht'). No doubt the control serves to protect the poetic self in its sensitivity and vulnerability from the real world; nevertheless, the prime

purpose is to create a fitting relationship with the world, fitting in view of the divine nature of the individual. For the role played by the poetic self in this strophe is gigantic, and this titanism is mitigated only by the transcending form in which it is held and by virtue of which the experience is, even as it takes place, over, and so a lost 'Seeligkeit', beautiful, shrouded in longing.

Thus the sorrow of the final lines, implicit in 'wenig bekümmert' and 'Fremdlingin', explicit in 'traurig', and which absorbs the coming of Night in l.15, arises inevitably out of the poetic experience, since it fulfils poetic form, the sphere within which alone that experience can take place. Its intensity, the arc that in a single loss of self stretches from the first line to 'die Nacht kommt', must fall back in loss and longing, for the self-enclosed sphere is founded on the resignative elegiac situation. The necessity of poetic form is weighed down with elegiac sorrow in proportion as the poetic experience is intense. The couplet returns to itself, recreated by the strophe with its arc; Subject and Object fall apart, in acknowledgement of the infinite otherness of Night.⁶

The strophe was originally published separately, with the title 'Die Nacht'; in that form it is not a strophe but a poem. Thereby the transcending form is lost, and with it both the intensity and the inherent sorrow, which communicates itself back to the whole; the strophe becomes a calm, even beautiful, but not inspired, celebration of night. Did this not happen because it makes the poem easier? many would prefer it without depth or daemonic

feeling. But the poem is a single indivisible whole, the product of poetic technique.

By the same token, those who like to systematise Hölderlin's poetry — the meaning of 'night' then appearing within a coherent context (sum meaning of the poem) such as: understanding and overcoming the state of western man, achieving an acceptable and fruitful relationship between Germany and Greece ('die erhoffte Wanderung göttlicher Erfüllung von Osten nach Westen': Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 54) — must reckon with the regressive value of the transcending form.⁷ The poem does indeed seek for Day, but fails to find it, and this failure also belongs to poetic technique. Day lies outside poetry qua poetry, and the poem is the prestabilised (elegiac) discovery that longing and consolation are the values whereby poetry must orientate itself. It is this prestabilised harmony that transcends the experience of the first strophe, not the systematic relationship of Night to Day, Germany to Greece. On the contrary: foreknowledge of longing and consolation bestows upon the first strophe its autonomy; it is 'open' only within the closed sphere of darkness. Proof lies not in abstract considerations, but in aesthetic assessment of the poem, which is in practice a loss of beauty. My argument would not apply, were it of constant value. But aesthetic assessment, as opposed to intellectual systematisation, is an entry into the sphere of the poem, and yields an existential criterion.

'Wunderbar' ('wondrous', 'strange') summarises the

experience of the first strophe; the opening of the second is thus the abstraction of the first, and seals it off. The in-spiration of the first triad is thus less intense, a lighter mystery; the quivering supernatural communication of 1.13, the 'Wehn', has become a memory, 'er-innert', and breathed over the first four lines with their w-alliteration.⁸ Here is the setting-out in search of Day, of the counter-principle within a unified cosmos. It is the attempt to find a coherent and convincing understanding of and solution to the contemporary state of man. In the first triad this cosmic principle, 'der oberste Gott', absorbs darkness into his dualism. Already 'bewegt sie die Welt' is ambiguous, suggesting not only Night's emotive hold on 'the world', but the movement of that world through the phases of night and day. Then the 'Will' of 1.5 is an act of 'will', graphically breaking through the couplet-division as though through Night's hold on men, and putting an end to the w-alliteration. Her breath is breathed out, exhausted, her daemonic presence lies in the past.

The turn to the 'du' of the second strophe is thus an opening-up of the poem, the sphere of night, towards both day-light and the addressee, the other. It is of a wonderful intimacy and warmth: the summer night is the sphere within which the poetic 'I' speaks to the 'thou'. These words are probably a direct answer to Heinse — 'der Alte' (cf. 2.596, 17), 'der Weise' — who could see no good anywhere but in the dazzling sun and innocent vitality of Hellas and 'the blessed islands'. This 'wisdom' is now, in Hölderlin's reply, infinitely softened, its jagged,

intractable edges smoothed by love. Hence the soothing repetition of 'lieb-', lingering on, caressing, its long syllable, hence the soft d-alliteration, spinning threads about the 'du' that take their warmth (no longer the harsh heat of conflicting ideas) from 'be-sonnen'. The very ambivalence of this word is poetic mitigation of the simple directness of Heinse's view.

The triadic transition (ll.24/25) is thus an act of love; the threefold 'lieb-' is a bridge between both 'I' and 'thou' and Day and Night. 'Tag', which closes the first triad, is the boundary of the one-sided world of the 'du', or, in other words, the 'du' is drawn beyond its world and into that of the poet and of harmonious contrast; for the second triad is the sphere of night, and completes the cosmic dualism. Thus 'klares Auge' is to 'der besonnene Tag' as 'das Saitenspiel' to 'der geschäftige Markt'; it opens a new realm. That left behind is warm and passive, enclosed by the benevolent will of 'der oberste Gott'. Now the eye opens. Agency passes from the divine to the human sphere; the eye is clear, and, freed from the cloying warmth of 'der besonnene Tag', it sees, sees beyond the divine 'will'. But if human, the eye is also 'clear', free from the limitation of a human possessor; free of all qualification (even articles), it is not subjected to use, but itself the subject: pure seeing, transcendental, disembodied. This contrast with the passivity of the first triad is beautifully enhanced by the clear, liquid l-alliteration to which the warm and intimate d gives way, and by the round, open au-assonance marking and marked by the caesura, and

thus opening (Sprachgestus) the round eye.

Yet the emphasis falls not on 'Auge' but on 'klares', and thus 'klares Auge' is welded into one idea. It is the cool limpid pool, surrounded by warm dry land as the eye is a mystical spiritual circle in the warm physicality of the human face. Therefore, by a paradox of the kind Hölderlin loves (compare already 'stand der Strom' in 'Die Meinige'), the pool of the eye is an island.⁹ Since the circle of the eye contrasts with the whole 'sphere' of 'der besonnene Tag', the rhythm concentrates about and isolates 'klares Auge'. Night, the inscrutable mystery of the first strophe, and Day, the harsh and uncompromising, indeed, insensitive and self-indulgent, single-mindedness of Heinse's view, are mediated: hemispheres of warmth and shade, 'Wechsel der Töne' within the cosmic rhythm, the love, of the World-Spirit.

The warmth of day seeks the cool of night, and the 'du' is drawn beyond itself; the 'klares Auge' seeks 'shade' and 'sleep', and in so doing goes beyond the 'will' of the 'god', looks beyond day and into a new and, implicitly, secret realm. The 'Aber' is the opening of a door to the mysteries of the universe; by sound subtly resuming 'liebe-', which then re-emerges in 'liebt', itself echoed in 'Lust', it begins a liquid lullaby sung by the couplet, and initiates a relaxation of order; will, now associated with the sun, surrenders to inclination: 'zuweilen liebt', 'versucht zu Lust', 'eh' es die Noth ist', each clause loosens the firm, emphatic structure of 'Will' and 'Ist', and as 'liebt' passes to the human subject, to 'klares Auge', the

'du' is liberated from external necessity.

This liberating surrender to 'Liebe' and 'Lust', unfastening of the cosmic order, cool liquid lullaby expressed not just in the sounds, but in the rocking cradle of the couplet in its perfect rise and (complementary pentameter with alliterative parallelism: 'liebt' / 'Lust', 'Schatten' / 'Schlaf') fall, together with the opening and rounded au-asonance: these are the forces that change context and meaning of 'klares', so that the clarity is no longer that of the sun and of wisdom ('besonnen'), but the cool and limpid pool of the eye.

The world-order is briefly relaxed. But this briefly, this transgression symbolised in the triadic transition, is a poetic fiction. For 'der oberste Gott' is not really, like the Christian God, 'monarchisch im Himmel', a despotic dispenser of law and punisher of sin. He is a product of 'Mythologie der Vernunft', and therefore quite simply an affirmation of what is: 'Alles ist gut.' Thus the state of western man, divine absence, is Night, good, divine; but he who bends the 'will' of God equally performs his will, enacts the hen diapheron heautō, as long as he can feel the divinity of this act. The only criterion is the beauty of experience.

Thus the transgression is justified by the power of 'song', or rather, the aesthetic completely subordinating any religious moral criterion, is itself song. By becoming the triadic transition, the barrier to experience imposed upon men is transformed into the allure of a forbidden realm that now opens, and so is really a means to heightened

experience. The aesthetic criterion, the existential function of the sphere, of poetic form, overrides, yet at the same time exploits, traditional structures of religious belief in which human beings and divinity exist in unrelenting difference.

The song is a spell with the form of transgression, binding day to night ('wie die Rebe ... aus Licht und Nacht geboren': 'Empedokles' III, 371-74), soothing the 'du' into surrender of self. The second triad is both an incantation and a hymn to Night. It has a strange and unique rhythm. There are no end-stopped couplets, but instead a single onward flow marked only by a gentle pause recurring after each line. The rise and fall of the first couplet gives way, is absorbed into a uniformity of hexameter and pentameter; the unresting but smooth resumptions ('Und', 'Oder', 'Ja', 'Weil') yield a single inexorable beat that at last excludes all change. This uniformity of rhythm unites with a deepening darkness: 'Schatten' (the long shadows of evening), 'Schlaf', 'Nacht'; 'klares Auge', 'ein treuer Mann', 'Irrenden', 'Todten', each surrenders the vestige of light and life held by the last, moving from isolation (ein ... Mann') to the eerie hold on life of the 'Irrenden', and so to the 'dead', who have identity only in name. The climax, l.30, is sheer and utter darkness; eternal, unmoving attributes, all transitive (changing) forms (subject and object) gone.

Here, other than in the first strophe, night is not far from death. Like tolling bells or the death-watch insect, the single recurring pause is an image of eternal darkness,

and ticks on in the sheer being of Night: 'Selber aber besteht'; a rhythmic figure anticipated by and fulfilling the 'lieb-' ('Aber') sequence of 11.23-25. Rhythmically speaking, the 'Todten' wait on the brink of darkness as on the edge of Charon's river;¹⁰ and the elimination of all transitive potential from Night's absolute 'Bestehen' in the final pentameter is that of consciousness itself. Add the intensifying force of 'Oder', 'Ja', 'Weil', through which the individual line gains increasing independence (culminating in the absolute independence of 1.30), and the cool rise and fall of the opening couplet becomes absorbed into a dark and eternal Stygian flux; it is thus the Lethe that loosens a mind preoccupied with the easy, self-evident forms and shapes of the world of 'day', and opens, or rather surrenders, it to another and darker experience. It has something of a death-wish not so far from Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale' (written some twenty years later).

This interpretation will seem less extreme within the context of the strophe as a whole, for the sphere of eternal darkness is itself relativised; this was not the case in the first strophe, where Night's autonomy depended upon the absolute autonomy of the strophe within the transcending poem. Here she no longer fills, but appears within, the strophe, within the perspective of 'der oberste Gott'. In the final triad the rhythm becomes 'das strömende Wort', dissolving the eternal pulse of darkness in an ever-swifter stream of words which finally pours in disordered connection over the last hexameter before falling back to rest; and

this dissolution is prepared for by the 'Halt' of the cosmic perspective. The power of Night is accordingly diminished, her fascination a suggestion.

The final word is 'Nacht'. This seals off the strophe, which is therewith the sphere of darkness. But just as 'Wunderbar' was the abstraction, the memory, of her inspiration, so too 'Nacht' is the 'Er-innerung' of the first strophe. Time has moved on; the situation is no longer night-fall ('coming'), but the dead of night, and therefore so much the nearer daylight. She must now 'grant' 'einiges Haltbare', and this, paradoxically enough, is 'das strömende Wort'. For both the cosmic perspective (the dual hemispheres of the first two triads) and the dionysiac intoxication of the final triad are an insistence on human consciousness within, and so relativising, Night. The form-restoring function of the last line gives to 'Gedächtnis' a rhythmical meaning beyond the prospective systematic value (memory of Greece); both 'Gedächtnis' and 'wachend' suggest what has been achieved: 'Denken', consciousness, (partial) liberation from the immediacy and overwhelming presence of the first strophe. As 'Nacht' closes, envelops, the strophe, the existential sphere, so the poetic situation is existence, the shaft of light (consciousness) within her.

The act of liberation is therefore inverted, retrogressive. While the coherent search for day is advanced ('Gedächtnis' anticipating the journey to Greece), what matters aesthetically is the tension thereby created between first and second strophes. The 'einiges Haltbare'

of ll.31-35 reflects the gradual unprising of the 'hold' of Night upon the soul. It is the weakening of her spell, which was none other than the poet's own spell, consisting in surrender of self. In this the second strophe is a memory of the first: 'der besonnene Tag' remembers rhythmically 'der geschäftige Markt'; 'Aber ... klares Auge' remembers 'Aber das Saitenspiel'; and the entry into darkness is again a loss of self, passing from 'liebt' (cf. 'ein Liebendes'), through 'ein treuer Mann' ('ein einsamer Mann'), into the depths of night. But then follows the exhilarating act of liberation; her hold is broken, and the fulfilment of form is not 'Nacht', but 'wachend ... bei Nacht'.¹¹ It is the beginning of a long-drawn-out 'Zurückschrecken' from the Divine. The dionysiac inspiration now seems ambivalent; tantamount almost to the light of Reason.

The third strophe enacts the liberation foreshadowed in the second (compare and contrast the first three strophes of 'Der Wanderer'). The first two triads are entirely devoted to achieving the opening impact of the third: 'Drum an den Isthmos komm!'

Thus the first triad is filled with a restless discontent, an urge to be off. Poetic form, the couplet, now represents a no longer tolerable 'hold' upon the 'Muth' (Greek thumos; but perhaps also with something of the original force: 'mood', feeling, desire), a 'Hindernis' that now breaks down. 'Möcht' es hindern' sweeps over the couplet-division; 'Aufzubrechen' is a 'depart'-ing that 'breaks open' the form yet more radically. But the

liberating and liberated exclamation 'So komm!' is at once hemmed in again, the longer and indirect purpose-clauses holding down the 'open' and direct cry; 'daß wir das Offene schauen' is a mere wish that, enclosing the triad, reasserts form.¹²

The sphere of the triad is the shell of containment ('Hülse', 'Schaale'), and 'So komm!' the burgeoning seed of impulse, seeking the light of day (these images are not intended as stylistic embellishments; Hölderlin's conception of form is founded upon the organic source, Nature). The second triad redoubles the 'Streben' of the first; the triads have become imprisoning bars that now serve only to revitalise the determination to break through (the storming of the Bastille was a symbol of revolution for the incarcerated students at Tübingen). 'Fest bleibt Eins' is a pause acknowledging the experience of restraint (the position of 'Fest' hardens the function of the triadic division) in 11.41-42. But the words cannot be read slowly; the would-be spondaic and law-abiding rhythm is caught up by the minimal pause ('es sei') at the caesura, hurrying the reluctant spondees on to the dactylic release of the fifth foot ('oder es'); 'gehe' leaves the hexameter wide 'open' (it pauses as it 'goes', 'Bis in die' picks up the dactylic release, which accelerates through the pentameter's regular dactyls, and in 'Ällēn gēmēin, dōch jēglic'hēm āuch || Ist eignēs bē-' the 'Maas' integral to the pentameter, the stressed pause at caesura and line-ending ('-nacht', 'Maas'), falls away, and the downhill rhythm sweeps aside all obstruction. Nowhere is the by now instinctive sense of form

as imprisoning restraint, and so as self-generating revolutionary act, more apparent, for the rhythmic 'Fesseln' of 1.44 are the words 'Nacht' and 'Maas'. The poetic process has been both an unprising of Night's hold upon the soul, and the diminishing autonomy of the strophic form.

At the barrier of the caesura ('auch |||') the rush is checked, and 1.46 pauses for breath. But the break-through is achieved; the pause at 'kann', which is not triadic, leaves the strophe as open as was its first couplet. It has become the sphere of freedom. Thus the exclamation 'Drum!' echoes 'Komm!' in sense and sound, but moves back to the emphatic opening position: it proclaims the new realm. The last restraint, the justification ('und spotten ... ergreift') that follows with its triadic barrier, is the mere echo of the first triadic restraint ('daß ... so weit es auch ist'), and gives way as 'Drum!' and 'Komm!', their metrical positions retained, unite: 'Drum an den Isthmos komm!' With these words the shell cracks, the barriers dissolve.

But this break-through to a 'neue Welt' is also an act of naming. It is the word 'Isthmos' with which the exclamations unite, and the Greek proper noun expresses a sheer freedom which reverberates back through the strophe to 'verbergen das Herz'; through all three strophes as the divine reality they have sought: the revealed Nature of Greece. With this name the poet exposes his heart, his truest purpose.

'Isthmos' is the word of release. The hexameter proclaims an infinite expanse: 'dorthin, wo das offene Meer

rauscht'. Read thus by itself, it is the true 'epic hexameter':¹³

Schwindelnd trägt er dich fort auf rastlos strömenden
Hinter dir siehst du, du siehst vor dir nur ^{Wogen,} Himmel
und Meer.

Echoing 'das Offene' (l.41, in the same metrical position), it symbolises the joy of a freedom at long last attained: the first line of the vision of Greece is free from all qualification or limitation, and the vision itself is a liberation, an 'open'-ing of the poet's heart. As the names flood forth, the poet is carried away on an 'open sea'; stressed and unstressed syllables have become its swelling and sinking surface.

The image of liberation is the river (compare the second and fifth strophes of 'Der Rhein'); beginning as 'das strömende Wort' of the second strophe, it rears up once, twice, against the barriers of the triadic structure before crashing down in the open hexameter of l.49. The roar of the waters can be heard in 'Drum!', reinforced by 'Komm!'. But I think that the 'spirit' of the strophe is also a great wave, and 'Drum!' the roar as it crashes on the beach. For the sense of release is cathartic, purifying, the poet speaking his 'heart' with a slight suggestion (38-39, 47) of a possible enemy, whose constricting envy reappears in the very last line of the poem. Hölderlin had in 1801 never seen the sea, and for the land-locked Swabian with so strong a sense of imprisonment and 'living-death' it must have stirred the imagination as a

supreme symbol of freedom and purity.¹⁴

These images, so close in emotive power, merge without difficulty. The final triad is rhythmically a breaking wave, a surge carrying the poet into a visionary realm with names of intoxicating mystique. It is a dionysiac loss of self, a 'Rausch' (the meaning is undercurrent in the 'Rauschen' of ll.49, 53) whose wave carries hither and thither, unchecked. But the very liberation is a gradual slowing and loss of impetus, like the wave exhausting itself and surrendering its life. The infinite 'open' expanse of the hexameter becomes the mountains with their freedom of vision; then the verse passes 'Unter die Fichten', the dynamic 'dort' retreating with the eye lost under the dark ever-green, then falling away as the dark-purple sensuality of 'Trauben' halts the flow; then the direction changes ('von wo'),¹⁵ and in the penultimate line all sense of motion has gone, and the vision is 'drunten', lost in the magical 'Rauschen' of the names: 'Thebe', 'Ismenos', 'Kadmos'.

This stasis is reflected in the syntactical independence of the line. 'Rauschen' is not just the pleasant sound of water. The names, absorbing and overwhelming the will that released them, have acquired a seductive vitality, the dionysiac power of the vine, latent ('drunten'), sensed in dreams, not known by the waking mind. 'Rauschen' is the presence of the 'Spirit', breath, of Nature, the same whose 'Wehn' rushed up in 'die Schwärmerische'; the sound, whether of water or of wind ('Empedokles' I, 396), is the expression of a personal will, a 'rush'-ing

('hastening') yet inscrutable, (by our terms) purposeless purpose. The words 'im Lande des Kadmos' describe the circle, realm, of a dream, a surrender that calls forth living Nature. The syntactical autonomy of 1.53 is the final liberation of Nature from human will: here, the poet perceives, Nature is and acts.

The ending ' ... im Lande des Kadmos,/ Dorther kommt und zurück deutet der kommende Gott' is to be found only in the text of the Homburg folio. Entitled 'Brod und Wein', this is in most editions the authorised version, although it is uncertain when the fair copy was made. The first (extant) complete version appears in the same manuscript as and after a fair copy of 'Heimkunft', and has therefore been assigned to the summer of 1801.¹⁶ It is substantially the same as that of the later Folioheft, but shows evidence of three stages of work on crucial passages, including the ending to the third strophe. In the first complete version this ran: 'Thebe drunten und Ismenos rauscht und die Quelle der Dirce,/ Dort ist das Sehnen, o dort schauen zu Göttern wir auf' (FHA 6.214, 6-9). Then 'zu Göttern' is emended first to 'zum Lichte', then to 'zufrieden'.

Thus the reference to Christ at the parallel end of the sixth strophe predates this to Dionysus ('der kommende Gott'), whereas it is Dionysus, not Dionysus-Christ, whose descent into the underworld ends the first complete version: 'Aber indessen kommt, als Freudenbote, des Weines/ Göttlichgesandter Geist unter die Schatten herab' (FHA 6.221, 32, 34). Not, then, till the fair copy of the Folioheft does the familiar triadic structure emerge in which

the third strophe ends with Dionysus, the sixth with Christ, the ninth with Christ-Dionysus. This structure, besides providing a coherent framework of ideas, is of decisive importance for the formal principle of the poem. Each triad of strophes is now sealed off by the Divine. Here, 'Gott' is the final word of the realm of Night.

All that remains of Hölderlin's work on the poem before this first complete version is a rough outline (FHA 6. 204-08) reaching as far as 1.81 of the complete poem and probably written in the summer of 1800, so that a whole year's gestation may lie between. This outline has no definite goal nor conception of the Divine; it moves in the same mood as the other long poems of that period, 'Der Archipelagus' and 'Menons Klagen um Diotima'. 'Menons Klagen ... ', in which the strophic form is just evolving, is a second version of 'Elegie', the lament for Susette Gontard; the longest and most striking deviation is the vision of the resurrection of the dead, the Greeks, in the sixth strophe. That is also the goal in the first outline of 'Brod und Wein': 'Darum rief ich dich her, denn deine Todten, du edle[r] Alter! wie lange schon ruhn sie in göttlicher Nacht ... ' (FHA 6. 207, 9-16).

The poet descends into the Underworld and summons the shades of the dead. This act naturally implies the mystical power of poetic language: 'Darum rief ich dich her, denn ... deine Todten ... ruhn ... , bis ... das Wort und [die] That der Geist' (in 'Menons Klagen ... ' it requires 'eines Wunders Gewalt'). It recalls both Orpheus and Christ. Orpheus, whose lyre charmed Nature, lost

Eurydice, his beloved, and lamented for her in song (Virgil, Georgics, 4, 453-66); he too descended into the Underworld, where Cerberus, the Eumenides, and the other grisly inhabitants yielded, entranced by his music. Christ died and rose again, taking possession of the 'keys of hell and death' (Revelation 1. 18). The half-formulated question of the outline — 'ists noch immer die Zeit und die Stunde der Zeit nicht?' (FHA 6. 207, 36-38) — echoes several biblical passages (e.g. Mark 13. 32f.), but also belongs within the context of the orphic 'Erneuerung der Sprache', through which language regains its original, living relationship to Nature, and so its proper magical power. Hence the insistence on 'Maas' in the later versions (11.43-44): is the imaginative return to a dead Greece the right way for the poet to turn Germany into 'Vaterland'? might not the means supplant the end?

As in 'Menons Klagen ... ', the vision of the outline brings light into darkness: 'Thebe, drunten und Ismenos rauscht und die Quelle der Dirce/ Glänzt' (FHA 6. 207, 63-65); 'rauscht der lebendige Strom,/ Wenn es drunten ertönt, und ihre Schätze die Nacht zollt,/ Und aus Bächen herauf glänzt das begrabene Gold' ('Menons Klagen ... ', 11.80-82). And already here this passage represents the break-through to the Greek 'day', and is heralded by the 'rushing' of the sea. Here is the connection with 'Der Archipelagus', also an imaginative descent into the Underworld, an act of 'Erinnerung' to bring about 'Vaterland': 'Hin nach Hellas schaue das Volk, und weinend und dankend/ Sänftige sich in Erinnerungen der stolze Triumphtag!' For

beside the strophic form 'Der Archipelagus' is, like 'Elegie', formless, its endless hexameters express its 'spirit', namely, the 'Meergott', the cathartic and purifying answer to the narrow and limited not-yet-'Vaterland' 'Deutschland': the infinite expanse of the sea.

In so far as the theme of the outline is Greek light entering western darkness, Dionysus does not yet have a pre-eminent role; and since its heading 'Der Weingott' may have been added afterwards (cf. FHA 6.234), it is possible that the role grew with the poem. Lines 31-36 are not yet conceived, Dionysus enters the poem with the 'stream' of allusions (from Sophocles' Antigone and Euripides' Bacchae) beginning in l.51 with 'die Höhe Cithärons'.¹⁷ The inspiration of the vision of the Greece comes first, and then finds a natural concrete form by following the haunts of the god. If so, then the title 'Der Weingott' is added as a discovered formal principle; for the outline itself seems to disintegrate into the familiar problem, relationship of vision to reality, of means to end (the initiation of 'Vaterland'). Its last words are 'dann aber in Wahrheit' (FHA 6.208, 60f.). It is the same point of insubstantiality as that reached in 'Der Gang aufs Land'; for 'in reality' they do not 'come', only in the poem.

Western man 'wandelt in Nacht, wohnt wie im Orkus'. The poet descends into the Underworld. Yet he too dwells in 'das schaurige Reich' ('Elegie', l.20). The three motifs belong together:—

'Elegie' imposes control over formless grief through

the memory of Diotima (cf. already, in 'Götter wandelten einst ... ', 'es wandelt das Bild/ Meiner Heldin mit mir'); this is the light that enters the darkness of 'living-death': 'Tag der Liebe! scheineest du auch den Todten, du goldner!' (1.23). Memory is the equivalent to Orpheus' venture to rescue Eurydice, and poetry is the 'night' (11.15,24) of the soul, but can also achieve a redeeming vision: 'himmlischen Glücks' (1.27).

Unmistakably the changes in 'Menons Klagen ... ' point away from Diotima. That the poet 'dares to name' (2.561, 33) the beloved is really a sign of this, as is the prestabilised resolution (cf. Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 47); the replacement, diminishing the concreteness of memory, of 'Tag' by 'Licht' ('der Liebe'); the ideal of community; the 'so lange' restricting the emotional 'Bleibet' at the end. For such reasons the poem is less moving than 'Elegie', and is important above all as a transition. For the imposition of form, in its conscious artistry another sign of detachment, goes beyond control over grief; it reflects the initiation of a positive function for elegy.

Admittedly there is little sign of such potential in 'Menons Klagen ... ', only the vision of resurrection pointing forward. Nevertheless, the strophic form is evolving for the future. The poet no longer seeks his Eurydice (compare 'Elegie', 11.1-2, with 'Der Archipelagus', 11.200-05). The full but ambivalent significance of the analogous roles of Orpheus and Christ emerges: each is not just a figure of love, but of a love that conquered death.

The ordering of the formless elegiac couplet into the strophic microcosm reflects acceptance of the elegiac situation, of night, as the condition of the poetic experience. Darkness is lost love, but is also the state of western man, exemplified by the crime against the lovers committed in Frankfurt, a typical transgression against Nature, by the 'spirit of envy'. It is 'the unforgivable sin' (Das Unverzeihliche'), and forgiveness is a Christ-like act, but possible only within the self-enclosed sphere of the poem. Thus the strophic form is founded upon the absolute rejection of contemporary society as darkness and as bearing implicit guilt for the darkness of the poet's own soul.

The poem in the form of a succession of strophes undertakes, 'strives', to break down the self-enclosure of the poet's world. But it is a circular process, always presupposing and so creating in advance the negativity it negates. Such circularity shows an absence of real will to break down the self-enclosed sphere; the impossibility of liberation is implicit in the initial identification of poetry with captivity, and so precedes the search. The act of self-enclosure is ultimately voluntary; it serves the poet's will.

The poetic process always presupposes itself: the poem presupposes itself in miniature, in the microcosmic form of the strophe from which it seeks liberation. This 'Streben' is in the outline the visionary journey to Greece, bringing light into darkness; but it also undermines relationship to reality, since the elegiac situation is

(not overcome, but) accepted and recreated for the sake of the descent to the 'dead', the beauty of memory. It is a wish to cast off the shackles of reality itself, and unfetter the imagination. But the strophic form thus becoming the sense of enclosure and hold of reality upon the soul, poetic form as a whole is unstable; the concrete bounds of experience gradually disintegrate into the formlessness of the vision, and liberation itself, the 'open sea', is insubstantiality, its content the shadowy product of a descent to the shades.

This insubstantiality and formlessness must persist as long as the poem continues to struggle against its own premise, the elegiac situation; as long as its purpose is cast forward onto the vision of day, onto 'das Offene', the defect of the vision will remain to mar the harmony of the poetic microcosm. An autonomy of the poem to match that of the strophe is only possible if the search for liberation, the 'open' form, is itself enclosed, and thus reproduces the autonomy of the strophe. Then the poem will no longer fail, for to fail in what is no longer attempted is no failure.

Bread and wine are concrete, 'Bleibendes', 'Halt'. In the outline there is no bread. Dionysus, wine, is already present, but scarcely as a governing principle; in the flood of names, of inspiration, perhaps, and with the emerging rhythmic figure of the river (for the association of Dionysus with streaming flow, of wine, water and milk, cf. Euripides' Bacchae, 703-11), the god receives his special part. The concrete reality of wine now seals off

what is becoming the first strophic triad. But the end of the third strophe still flows unhindered into the fourth, since the merely external fact of strophic division is not yet poetic form. Thus the first version still runs in formless enumeration — 'Thebe drunten und Ismenos ... und die Quelle der Dirce' (FHA 6.214, 6) — and the next line, concluding the strophe ('Dort ist das Sehnen, o dort schauen zu Göttern wir auf'), suggests the Olympic pantheon as a vague whole not necessarily distinguished from 'der oberste Gott' (who can himself quite literally be 'Vater Aether'). That leaves the poem with the straggling linear form of a 'Streben' 'zu Göttern'; with the weight still upon the vision, the divine reality proves to be mere consolation, 'menschliche Freude' (cf. 1.133).

At a stroke, the minimal changes of the Homburg folio impose the triadic structure (Dionysus, Christ, Dionysus-Christ) upon the poem. The weight swings away from what was the goal — the 'coming' of light into darkness — and becomes distributed throughout the process, the means, the totality of the poem. As the bars of poetic form slide back into place, so the search for liberation is freed from purpose.

Thus the diminishing hold of reality, of the elegiac situation, upon the soul turns into a positive value: the regressive creation of the 'sphere' of memory. Poetic purpose ceases to be the deficient insubstantiality of a vision, and becomes the lost but real relationship experienced in the autonomous strophe; whereby liberation

becomes the process of loss. Within the totality of the poem, the sphere of Night is remembered, and thus gains the intensity of loss of self. The weltanschauung — light and darkness, Hellas and Hesperien, ideal and reality — which is too abstract to be sustained by poetry, now functions, albeit negatively, in living relationship with Nature; and the poem has form: a gradual 'Zurückschrecken' from the Absolute.

Night is the Absolute. In eternal darkness consciousness is overwhelmed and lost. Self-restoration gives form to Night, who becomes a living but unknown spirit, an object of longing. This regressive process is no longer light entering the poem, but darkness relinquishing her clinging embrace. Instead of the sequence of strophes striving 'heroically' towards the ideal (Greece), and therefore open in the same way as the Fichtean ideal is unrealisable (cf. B104, 10-16), there arises the closed autonomous poem in which each strophe has sought and lost the beauty of the last; each of the first six strophes of 'Brod und Wein' clings to the last in loss and longing, and the pathos of this experience gives the poem a tragic grandeur unmatched in the other elegies.

The changes in the ending of the strophe reinforce the finality of the overall trinitarian structure. Janus-like, 'der kommende Gott' faces both ways, not just forward to 'Seeliges Griechenland!'; 'Gott' as the final word concludes a gradual dying of momentum. The change of 'und die Quelle der Dirce' into 'im Lande des Kadmos' seals off the dionysiac realm, no longer open. Instead of three

springs whose 'Rauschen' is the pure clear sound of water, there are now three names — 'Thebe', 'Ismenos', 'Kadmos' — all associated with Dionysus; the slowing momentum joins with their mystique, and thus 'rauschen' gains the undercurrent 'Rausch', which also returns to 1.49. 'Dort-her kommt und zurück' is a metrically parallel echo of 'Dahin gehet und kommt' (the 'open' line in the middle of the strophe), and completes the reversal of direction from 'hin' to 'her', re-establishing distance between the Hesperian and Greek worlds. The line 'points' not just to the need to return ('zurück') in memory to Greece, but to the universal rhythm of the World-Spirit ('der kommende Gott'): the poet must return thence to Germania. Not, however, this coherent meaning, but its function in creating a transcending form to relativise the 'Streben', is decisive.

Thus the emphatic repetition of 'kommen' concludes and brings to rest the endless striving, the 'Kommen' (ll.41, 46, 49), of the third strophe. This sense of arrival, finality, contrasts strongly with the parallel line of the first version, which impelled further on the visionary journey: 'Dort ist das Sehnen, o dort schauen zu Göttern wir auf.' The sensual power of the third strophe depends upon this finality of form. With the strophic triad freed from its original purpose (liberation), the poetic experience becomes a climactic surrender to the dionysiac sensuality of the visionary landscape; the search for 'das Offene' becomes a dying momentum which in the penultimate line has become stasis: poetic will as pure

perception. The dynamic and cathartic liberation of the hexameter, the 'open sea', becomes in the following and fulfilling couplets a dying wave, surrendering its vitality to the dark and mysterious power of Nature.

As this passage surpasses the vision of 'Der Archipelagus' (11.9-18), so the elegiac goes beyond the epic form. There the unrelieved succession of hexameters is an image of the sea: stressed and unstressed syllables, unending undulation. Here the pentameter's embrace, the resignative ('ideal') recreation of the procreative breath of the Spirit — cosmic Eros — absorbs the formless vision and gives it form. The arc of loss of self that reached to 'die Nacht kommt', a daemonic coming, recreates itself, is remembered, in the breaking-open of the elegiac form.

Hubris and Nemesis

The imposition of form seals off the first three strophes as the old world of darkness, and the second three become the contrasting hemisphere, the 'neue Welt' of light. They are to be visionary 'Begeisterung', 'das Offene' of 'das strömende Wort', and also 'heilig Gedächtnis': as the central unit, they represent the light of memory within the darkness of the contemporary world.

This creation of contrasting worlds out of the originally sequential form is enhanced by the change of 'Freue dich, Griechenland!' (2.599, 9) into 'Seeliges Griechenland!'. Whereas 'Freue dich' personifies, the new

world now opens with pure exclamation, and this, together with the firm closing of the sphere of darkness, creating a sense of left-behind captivity, makes 'Seeliges Griechenland!' a powerfully vivid Sprachgestus: at once the opening of the poet's arrived eye and the coming of dawn, the sun's ray shafting over the horizon. Greece is no longer addressed, but seen; the concrete image of the journey that gives the strophic form its life gains immeasurably.

The exclamation is itself 'Begeisterung'; to cry out is to emerge from the prosaic contemporary world. It is the fitting response to a dazzling, glorious reality, a world of gods and demi-gods in which man is a worthy answer to Nature. Liberation from darkness is over, and in this sense 'Seeliges Griechenland!' is the climax of the whole poem. But as the vision unfolds, so too its insubstantiality, and the poet is drawn inexorably into loss; the vivid immediacy of the opening exclamation initiates a process of loss that extends over all three strophes of the second triad.

This entire process is thus anticipated in the first couplet. Here the function of the elegiac couplet is the reverse of that in the third strophe. There it had become a yielding 'hold' upon the soul, upon the exclamations 'So komm!' and 'Drum!', and had finally given way. Now it closes about the poet, imprisoning the immediacy, pure freedom and joy, of the exclamation. Its pentameter is finely poised between question and statement; the poem is driven on by dynamic 'Streben' to fulfil the vision, but an undertone of elegiac doubt now sounds at the very

outset, communicating itself to and slightly undermining the exclamation: is not 'Seeligkeit' a state so 'blessed' as to be beyond this world?

The second couplet maintains, or seeks to, the exhilaration of 'Seeliges Griechenland!', and insists on 'Wahr'-heit; the third couplet begins the inevitable lament. This crumbling of exclamation into question combines with the image enclosing the couplet — 'Festlicher Saal! ... gebaut' — which itself leads on to the merging images 'Gefäße' and 'Gesang': the foundation is unstable and hollow, and at the moment of liberated, titanic self-assertion returns to its 'Grund', the elegiac couplet, 'song' as the 'vessel' of lament. Lament 'fills' the couplet because of the structure of immediacy and joyous exclamation it has 'built'. Thus the images that make up the content of the vision merge effortlessly with the effect of poetic form; poetry appears as an inadequate reconstruction of the buildings that honoured the gods.

Lines 59-64 form a single ascending movement in which the triadic division plays a secondary role. In the first three strophes it was an integral part of the poetic experience; here, on the contrary, it is submerged. The lament begins with an expanding couplet: first the 'Thronen' are revealed as 'Tempel', spiritual thrones (cf. ll.97, 99), and then the 'Gefäße', which at first seem on the same level as the temples, prove to be something yet more spiritual, 'Gesang'.¹⁸ The rhythm too expands, the pentameter 'filling' the 'Gefäß' of the couplet as it itself is filled by the single idea 'Gesang' with its attributes.

With 'Wo, wo' the lament literally redoubles; there is no pause. In the first half of 1.63 this intensification becomes through the diminishing structure acceleration; 'Wo ist das schnelle?', by matching form (elliptical brevity) to sense, first suggests that the individual images are gaining the upper hand over the elegiac mood. With 'wo brichts', so vividly brief, the image has won, the elegiac rhythm has 'broken', and the rest of the couplet is only in form a question. Over the next three couplets the sense of ascent is maintained through the echoing figura etymologica ('Vater! heiter!'). Not just the exclamation of 11.65-66, the form of the whole couplet is 'echoed' in the penultimate couplet. The containing vessel has once again become positive, the echoing space of a second, mightier shout.

In the final couplet the sensus numinis is recaptured. These lines are of great power. The long ascent ends abruptly, so that the coming of the Divine seems set apart from, other than, the jubilant human anticipation. Exclamations give way to statement, suggesting irrevocable daemonic will higher than the vacillating emotional state of man. The form is thus oracular, the impassive utterance that hides awful significance. The powerful neologism 'tiefschütternd' and mysterious 'Aus den Schatten' intensify the sense of divine presence; the latter expression softens the systematic context of the variants — 'denn so/ Kehren die Himmlischen ein, und wo die heilige Anmuth' (2.599, 35-600, 1); 'so steigt in Nächten/ Vorbereitet herab', 'so steigt den Nächten/ Abgerungen herab' (2.600, 21-23)

— into the source of divine will.

The delayed position of 'Tag' (strictly the last word should be 'herab') vividly matches form to sense; 'day' emerges 'out of the shadows' not just of the last pentameter but, through its thematic power, of the strophe as a whole: a divine 'coming' to echo 'Nacht' (1.36) and 'Gott' (1.54). The strophe gains autonomy; 'Tag' answers and fulfils 'Seeliges Griechenland!', the ray of morning become full day, the coming of 'die Himmlischen' now 'wahr' (compare the first strophe of 'Der Gang aufs Land').

Rhythmical continuity between the third and fourth strophes derives from the pattern of exclamations (a cohesion heightened by the flowing elegiac rhythm of the surrounding four strophes); this is because they centre around the point of liberation, the hinge of the two hemispheres. But these exclamations vary in function:—

As soon as the exclamation 'Seeliges Griechenland!' is spoken, the moment of liberated immediacy is over. The entire structure breaks down and returns to its 'Grund', the elegiac couplet, and the elegiac situation begins to reassert itself. The exclamations that ring on in ll.57-58 prove to be a structure without foundation. Thereafter the purpose of the strophe is to recreate immediacy out of loss, the present out of the ideal past. The triadic transitions are no more than scarcely-felt pauses reinforcing the growing strength of the couplet (the first intensifies the lament, the second supports the transition from past to present). The present tenses of the final triad re-

main, despite the exclamations, aoristic, and so belong to the ascent, so that the penultimate couplet, which bears no relation to the triadic divisions, has become the echoing space of a mighty shout, and stands at the threshold of renewed experience of the Divine. Not till the final couplet, the present power of which resides in its very apartness, does poetic form once again hold the reality of 'Begeisterung'.

That is, the primacy of liberation over containment is reversed. The exclamations are contained by the past, and are themselves less immediate, a sign of growing reflectiveness; they are the last in the hemisphere. This reversal in mood will culminate in the sheer absence of 11.99-106 and the dark, mysterious figure of the night-bringing 'Consoler'; it derives from the transcending form. The first three strophes were a process of liberation from darkness. This was achieved through their triadic structure; the elegiac couplet, rise and fall, had by and in the third strophe been transformed into the shell containing the seed of impulse, the barrier against which the river rears up. At both transitions the third couplet of the triad briefly held back the impulsive exclamations. This was the positive role of a 'Triebkraft der Negativität': 'Des Herzens Wooge schäumte nicht so schön empor, und würde Geist, wenn nicht der alte stumme Fels, das Schiksaal, ihr entgegenstände' (Hyperion, I, 71/10-12). Finally all restraint dissolved in the 'open sea', and 'Seeliges Griechenland!' is formally 'das Offene', the point of liberation, pure exclamation, vision, unlimited 'Begeisterung'.

Yet this climax by its very nature results in a breakdown of the tension upon which the aesthetic process depends, and precludes a firm, stable relationship between art and life. This is one and the same failure. The poem's microcosmic harmony is a weltanschauung based upon a radical dualism: the world as hemispheres of darkness and light (the contemporary world and Greece). The transition represented by the strophic hemispheres is an act that bridges divided halves. It thus presupposes the poet's absolute otherness; it is a reconciling love implying a Christ-like condescension to the world, a sense of mission so exalted as to preclude any real reconciliation.

Similarly, the elegiac couplet once lamented the loss of Diotima; now it is the 'Grund' of the 'open' form that liberates from the elegiac situation. Yet the elegiac situation was itself the poet's otherness: the conflict between life as love and life as conflict, the legacy of Frankfurt. Now the poem is the harmony that absorbs the contradiction. The elegiac couplet is no longer 'open' (formless, a succession) as in 'Elegie', which was devoted to the beloved object and so away from itself; it recreates itself in the strophic form. Therewith the poet's night merges with contemporary darkness, and the elegiac situation is universalised. The process of liberation culminating in utmost open-ness is the cosmic hexameter; and when the poem 'closes' (l.108) it is the cosmic pentameter that falls back to rest in loss and longing. An eye has opened and closed. Thus 'Seeliges Griechenland!' is the memory of Menon's 'Licht der Liebe!': 'seelig', free now

from all incidental, finite association, it confirms the self-enclosure of the elegiac realm (compare 'Seeliges Thal des Rheins!' in 'Der Wanderer'; thus a single thread runs from 'Tag der Liebe!').

'Seeliges Griechenland!', in terms of content (meaning) alone the climax of the first six strophes, is thus in aesthetic practice the reduction of poetic experience to the moment of intense perception that dies, withers, even as it is spoken; it thus becomes their hinge, the 'Re-flexion'. What was a 'Streben' towards the unattainable ideal, Greece, world of gods and heroes, here becomes the beginning of a return to the elegiac situation of darkness; the imposition of form upon the first six strophes frees the conflict between freedom and form from purpose, thus reflecting ultimate acceptance that ideal and reality can never meet. The fourth strophe no longer strives, as did the outline, towards the present reality of the Divine, but through the memory of beauty, the strophic form, seeks the intensity it has lost, and therefore, equally, loses the intensity it seeks.

Thus the poet's world becomes the existential sphere of diminishing intensity, but therefore also of pure poetic purpose, in which each strophe mourns and clings to the lost immediacy of the last (the very category 'immediacy' implies a mediating context). The autonomy of the fourth strophe is bound up with the process of loss; being achieved only through the memory of the strophic form, it both intensifies the sense of lost beauty and, being itself unstable, drives the poem on to its elegiac 'Schluß'.

It is a diminished existential sphere, for the loss of self, 'Begeisterung', is less intense. Here one must distinguish categorically between the intellectual values of theology and philosophy, and aesthetic value. In terms of the former this strophe, being concerned with the 'Einkehr' of 'die Himmlischen', has progressed to a higher level; but aesthetically 'die ungetheilte Begeisterung' is itself a divine non plus ultra (Hyperion, I, 20/7). These are not separate but conflicting values; by rendering the meaning of the poem the state of lost beauty (love), the poetic process undermines transcendent in favour of immanent value.

A potentially rational and coherent view of life is per se lost oneness with Nature. The conceptual division of God from the All, such as characterises religion, is also the type of division. The object of longing is lost beauty; but lost beauty is the Divine. The poem's task is to re-experience this truth; accordingly, in proportion as (strophe by strophe) the poem seeks its own experience the objective value, the coherence of its thought, becomes negative.

The fifth strophe is concerned with the 'coming' (11.73, 74, 82), 'naming' (76, 84, 89-90), 'reality' ('truth') (81), 'revelation' (83), of the 'gods'; in it the historical Greece gives way to a universal 'Werden der Kultur'.¹⁹ Structurally it is founded upon three hexameters in which main clauses extend to a fourth-foot caesura (11.73, 77, 81); together they express the three-

fold 'coming' of the Divine. Each hexameter is thus the meeting-space of gods and men: its first half, the irruption into man's domain by a love that transcends all 'measure' (cf. 'groß', l.77), its second half, man's diminishing resistance: 'es streben entgegen' gives way to 'es füllen das Herz ihm' (the syntactical parallelism heightens the contrast: as the gods become the subject, so man's heart is opening), and finally to 'dann aber in Wahrheit/ Kommen sie selbst', in which the gods literally 'fill' the meeting-space (man is not mentioned in the hexameter) and, with 'Kommen', spill over into the pentameter. Delayed till the emphatic opening position, 'Kommen' is thus the mathematical centre of the whole poem.

The first triadic division (ll.78/79) supports this structure, providing a brake to suggest man's persisting limitation. But this pause is very slight, the weakest (a comma) so far in the poem, and man's profligate spiritual generosity lifts the rhythm over the division, so that it becomes a final barrier dissolving before the approaching union of gods and men.²⁰ And the second transition is no longer felt at all, for the 'true' coming of the Divine releases all tension, and the strophe flows away quite unhindered to its end.

This resolution of tension is the 'full' reality of the Divine; filling and dissolving the strophic form, it washes away all obstacles and doubts. The search for day, light, liberation, is over: 'gewohnt werden die Menschen des Glücks/ Und des Tags und zu schaun die Offenbaren ... ' (82-83). The visionary anthropology follows

the same course as Hegel's in the chapter 'Die Religion' of the Phänomenologie des Geistes: from 'die Nacht seines [des Menschen] Wesens' to 'das reine, alles enthaltende und erfüllende Lichtwesen', thence to 'die Pflanze und das Tier' and various 'Ungeheuer an Gestalt, Rede und Tat', and finally to 'die Kunstreligion' of the Greek pantheon.

The strangeness of the gods and initial fear of men are, in Idealistic terms, the last 'Entgegensezung' before absolute 'Vereinigung'. The motif did not, however, originally belong to the outline (cf. FHA 6.208, 45-50), which Hölderlin at first sought to end with the uncomplicatedly 'joyful' response of the 'Halbgott'. With its anti-rhythmical irruption by the gods the fifth strophe breaks down the already weakening strophic form, so that the reason for introducing the motif is clearly to draw out and heighten the denouement. 'Naming', full consciousness (cf. 1.88), thus becomes a more real reality, or, again in terms of Hölderlin's philosophy, a more infinite infinity (cf. e.g. 4.153, 16f.; 'Über Religion', passim).

At the moment, however, at which the triadic division finally falls away, and in long flowing clauses the divine abundance 'fills' each line (11.85-86), there is an unmistakable change in mood; the last two couplets have an elegiac undertone the more moving because of the ease and clarity of the surface, and which in 'Nun, nun müssen ... Worte ... entstehn' becomes pregnant with a sorrow veiled only by the overall systematic context. At the same time strophic autonomy is here finally resolved; there is no tension left, and the 'Und' with which the sixth strophe

opens carries the thought effortlessly over the division. This is aesthetic failure, since thereby the strophe is reduced to marking stages in a thought-process.

For the sixth strophe continues and completes the vision begun by the fifth, and so too the dissolution of form. Here is the definitive statement ('Wirklich und wahrhaft') of the reality, the presence, of the Divine. Taking the first triad as a separate unit (imagining a full stop at 'auf'), its three couplets are three mighty, confident, oracular pronouncements, each confirming the last, self-contained as the pentameter gives inverted response to the epic 'Würde' of the hexameter. All is unbroken certainty, and it is this mood and vision that 'builds up' a towering structure which now really does 'go upwards', surpassing the triadic division, reaching for infinity.²¹ The succession of couplets is the image of an endless 'striving' in which all 'Maas' is discarded, and simultaneously the acme of the poet's dream-world. The eye is lost in the vision of 'schönen Tempel und Städte'.

In l.98 (that is, quite irrespective of the strophic form), this 'Streben' — ends. Like the Greek cities and temples, the entire structure of power and beauty, the dream with its assertive blocks of couplets mounting up towards the heavens ('Vor den Aether'), collapses, and the poet gives way to lamentation. The second triadic division merely serves to intensify this, and if for a moment one forgets the final couplet the lament is, just like the 'beautiful' buildings, 'open' to infinity; there is no reason why the questions and their images should

not flow on unchecked for ever.

Thus the sixth strophe consists of two formless parts: hubris and nemesis. The first four couplets are the rhythmical equivalent of the Titans' piling of Pelion upon Ossa, or indeed, since the structure arises out of the fifth strophe with its 'naming' of the Divine, of the Tower of Babel. Yet it is not men, but the poet, who has committed the act of hubris; the formless lament is rhythmical disintegration, the ruins of his assertions. But therewith not just the reaching-up towards the Divine of these four couplets; the entire 'Streben' of the whole poem, of which this visionary peak is merely the culmination, has been an hubristic search punished now by the Nemesis of aesthetic failure, the diminishing intensity of the poetic experience. The transformation of the elegiac couplet, resignative symbol of eternal beauty in its rise and fall, into the 'Grund' of a poetic process whose conclusion is the proud perfection and regularity of the four couplets has been an act that courted failure. Not so much, as in a classical system of genres, that the elegiac form has been burdened with a weight it is by nature unable to carry; but that the poet has recreated the elegiac situation, loss of immediacy and so of beauty, as the 'true' and proper relationship between himself and the Divine. Aesthetic failure is, in this wayward sense, poetic technique.

In 'Wie wenn am Feiertage ... ', the only experiment with a rigid Pindaric kind of strophic correspondence, written at the end of 1799 and so earlier than the strophic elegies, a mood of confidence also breaks down

and the 'firm' (1.66) construction built by the strophic form gives way.

Und sag ich gleich,

Ich sei genaht, die Himmlischen zu schauen,
Sie selbst, sie werfen mich tief unter die Lebenden
Den falschen Priester, ins Dunkel, daß ich
Das warnende Lied den Gelehrigen singe.
(11.69-73)

The creation — 'Hälfte des Lebens' — out of this disintegration has been attractively interpreted as the experience of personal suffering that disables from pure (supra-personal) service of 'the gods'. 'Wer das Hymnische betritt, ohne das Elegische ganz abgestreift zu haben, erscheint Hölderlin als 'falscher Priester'; 'Hälfte des Lebens' is 'zugleich Erkenntnis und Läuterung', enabling the poet to put behind him the loss of Diotima.²²

In 'Brod und Wein' the object of the poet's striving, the vision of Greece, is in its otherworldly insubstantiality ('das Offene') a metaphor for infinity ('Aether', 'Geist' (1.134)), and thus such that loss, failure, is prestabilised. In extending the original conception with the 'Werden der Kultur', that philosophical anthropology which so lends itself to systematising paraphrase, Hölderlin is really protracting and so completing a process of loss, and expressing, indirectly and, no doubt, unconsciously, the conviction that rational thinking cannot 'approach' the Divine. Rhythmically the fifth strophe is the diminished spell and lessened intensity, in a word, memory, of the fourth; so too the sixth strophe of the fifth,

so that the elegiac undertone of the last two couplets of the fifth strophe does not simply continue but is, rather, echoed in the sixth, where the formless hubris and nemesis reproduce and expand (weaken) the resolution of tension (through the 'coming' of the gods) in lines 73, 77, and 81. In breaking down the strophic form, the poet destroys the 'Maas' upon which 'Begeisterung' is dependent (4.233, 14-17) and by which it is generated.

Thus the poet 'approaches' 'to behold' 'die Himm-lischen', and is 'cast down' 'into darkness'; with the coming of Christ, night falls. But the poem is not abandoned; it is formed, an aesthetic failure. Through the negative function that reduces the coherent and communicating poetic language to mere external appearance, Hölderlin expresses that 'Streben' is (Fichteian) titanism, the Promethean attempt to snatch immortality.

This 'striving' is not, however, rejected, as though in a rational argument. The rational answer would be materialistic: that divinity is outside human experience. But the poem reaches up for infinity in proportion as it loses 'Maas'; it recreates divinity as that which is lost, indeed, by self-incurred fault destroyed. Therewith it is the failure to attain that, in and through the process of failure, not only does justice to the truth of unattainability (4.213), but recreates the timeless Ideal.

The poetic process seeks the beauty it has lost, loses the beauty it seeks. This progressive failure is simultaneous regressive aesthetic success; for it creates, indirectly, the existential sphere of the autonomous

strophe as the island of what was. The Divine is not the object of Fichte's 'Streben': of Reason. This is Hölderlin's existential 'warning' to contemporary philosophy, to 'die Gelehrigen' Schelling and Hegel, soon to collaborate in Jena on a philosophical answer to Fichte. The new Volks-religion, the 'Kingdom of God' (B84, 5) on earth, is certainly knowledge ('Erkenntnis', in the sense of Kant's epistemology; cf. 4.257, 12-16), but knowledge of the Ideal is the beauty of longing.

The form of the Divine on earth (cf. 4.213, 8-10) is the eternally imperfect sphere of memory. One cannot, however, sink back into the comfortable but 'irrational' Christian dualism Heaven/earth. The sphere is imperfect only because it is lost. Divinity remains absolutely subject-centred; the world of consciousness is structured by the island of childhood innocence.

The poet 'preserves', 'wie in einem Gefäße', life — and that is, love — not just, in the conventional sense, from being forgotten, but from the impurity of the Fall, of finite consciousness. The strophic form yields the bounds of pure relationship, of loss of self, love that is surrender, 'Seeligkeit', infinity, death; it is not purification from, but of, physical love.

For poetic technique must here be understood in a thoroughly Romantic sense; it is the tacit granting of permission by the conscious mind to the subconscious and, indeed, the unconscious (darkness, Night) to hold sway in the individual's world, and to invest it with fascination and intensity not offered by reality. The conscious

artistry that deals in formal symmetry, rules of expression, themes, content — above all, the assumption of intent to communicate — is here appearance only, and, undirected by will, has become the means of experiencing a truth which renders society irrelevant, and knowledge of which precedes the poem's purpose, its 'Streben'.²³

'Mythologie der Vernunft'

The height of the vision is the 'naming' of the 'gods', their 'Gegenwart', living presence. The Greek pantheon — 'Zeus', 'Athene', 'Dionysus', 'Apollo' — has become a universal paradigm. Such naming is not — in theory, not yet — possible for the poet, and consequently his gods are unnamed: 'der kommende Gott', 'er kam auch selbst', 'indessen kommt als Fackelschwinger des Höchsten/ Sohn, der Syrier'. The form of the poem is based upon this trinity; poetry is therewith not names, but allusions. As to who is alluded to: 'Weder Dionysus noch Christus allein kommen in unserer nächtlichen Zwischenzeit herab: sie kommen beide herab, und mittelbar, im Wein' (Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 58). This is undoubtedly the correct conclusion to the controversy over the meaning of the poem's mythology.

'Götter wandelten einst', in dazzling sunlight; poetry is 'Er-innerung' that invokes the future ('der kommende Gott'), when a united community will name its gods. This is part of the theory of religious poetry. Yet it seems incompatible with Hölderlin's own beliefs:—

'Wir müssen eine neue Mythologie haben, diese Mythologie aber muß im Dienste der Ideen stehen, sie muß eine Mythologie der Vernunft werden' (4.299, 1-3). The 'rational mythology' became a prime aim of Hölderlin's mature poetry.²⁴ All the elegies are turned towards 'du mit deinen Göttern, Natur' (Hyperion, II, 122/19), and especially to 'Vater Aether'. In 'Stuttgart' the stars oust the irrational Christian 'angels', and so do the 'gods of house and year' in 'Heimkunft'. Apollo's service for Admetus, Zeus' visitation of Semele ('Wie wenn am Feiertage ... '), are rationalised, and then there are the river-gods. 'Germanien' says: 'nenne, was vor Augen dir ist' (83); what is 'before the eyes' is no longer 'above the stars', 'wo ihr nichts mehr seht' (Hyperion, I, 80/12).

The 'rational' basis of the 'mythology' is Kant's epistemology: the abstract constants of human experience (time, place, causality, etc.) are conditions of knowledge, which is therefore inseparable from sensual perception. In the first place this gave the Tübingen students a negative 'critique' of metaphysical concepts such as 'God' and 'immortality'. Turned into a positive philosophy, the 'transcendental Subject' signified the essential identity of human experience; the 'Geist, der allem gemein und jedem eigen ist' (cf. Hyperion, II, 103/3f.) is in this sense a concentrated personification of the ideals of the French Revolution: freedom, equality, and brotherhood (cf. 4.299, 10-17).

Thus in the search to create a Volksreligion after the model of Greece the critique of dogmatism becomes

the foundation of a religion in which, in Kant's terms, subject and object are united: 'So — wenn die Philosophie die Ideen, die Erfahrung die Data angibt, können wir endlich die Physik im Großen bekommen ... ' (4.297, 15f.). The return to Greek mythology is a return from abstraction to Nature. Yet the very foundation of the new religion — the potential unity of all consciousness in the transcendental structure 'subject-object' — renders Greek mythology irrational. Anthropomorphic gods are not very much better than Egyptian 'monstrosities'; their divinity is bound to their individuality, and they are divine because they are different, and above all more powerful, than ordinary human beings. And therefore they have names, names to distinguish them both from other gods and from ordinary human beings.

Hölderlin, who intends his poetry both as paradigm for and invocation of the new communal religion, cannot do otherwise than rationalise these deities. Christ and Dionysus lose their names ('Verläugnung alles Accidentellen') and henceforth stand 'im Dienste der Ideen': inspiration, incarnation, future community. They are no longer subjects, living beings, but objects, personifications of ideas originally associated with them; and being ideas, they are rational, falling within the potential experience and understanding of anyone rather than being the property of an historical people. The unified context of the poem within which they have their meaning is the poet's potentially universal object-world.

The 'naming' of the gods is the climax of the vision,

the moment of highest awareness and therefore greatest reality, presence ('nun ... / Nun, nun ... / ... nun' (ll.89-91) of the Divine. Yet it is also the precise point at which the vision becomes incompatible with the poet's own work which, confronted with the glittering world of gods and demi-gods, stands under a negative sign. The climax is thus the completed feeling of what the poem cannot achieve; and the poem becomes 'Kunst' as opposed to 'Natur', speaking 'Worte', but not 'wie Blumen'. The naming of 'naming' is the height of 'Kunst', poetic self-consciousness, and so a dead, powerless abstraction.

Thus the simple optimism of the 'Systemprogramm' has found subtler expression in Hölderlin's 'Mythologie der Vernunft'. Unlike philosophy, poetry is not a satisfactory and stable solution to the world; on the contrary, it is 'Kunst' mourning for lost 'Natur'. It has the elegiac structure of consciousness, lost innocence. The religion of Nature, the 'positive' (in the negative sense of 'abstract', 'unfelt') 'naming' of the 'Götter der Natur' — 'Vater Aether', Mutter Erde', and the others — with which the poet can and does replace 'heilige Sage' and 'der alten Götter Nahmen' ('Empedokles' I, 231, 1539) such as 'Dionysus' and 'Christ', becomes itself through the antithetical ideal a negative act. The poetry of Nature is lost Nature.

Zwar damals rieß ich noch nicht
Euch mit Nahmen, auch ihr
Nanntet mich nie, wie die Menschen sich nennen,
Als kennten sie sich.
('Da ich ein Knabe war ... ', ll.20-23)

Consciousness turns Nature into a set of abstractions, subjects her to man's mastery, 'wounds' the unity of 'Being'; this was Empedokles' hubris.

The elegies so far considered have revealed this structure; they are the 'sphere' of 'Kunst', lost immediacy. The 'Wendung von der irdischen zur geistigen Heimat' is culmination of search in the 'naming' of the Divine, above all of 'Vater Aether'; but if the climax is an act of naming, the poem is the progressive creation of distance between the poet and Nature. It is therewith also the regressive creation of union, the poietic act of 'seelige Selbstvergessenheit'; the sphere of lost oneness exists within the temporal extension of consciousness as the island of memory. Hence the aesthetic failure of the climax, which is based upon Nature as mythical duality; but the distinction between 'Vater Aether' and 'Mutter Erde', spiritual and earthly, and with it the 'striving' towards a higher principle, is itself 'Kunst', an artificial division of 'Mutter Natur' — for is not the sky too part of the 'Εν κελί Παν' (3.236, 17)?²⁵ And the 'Εν', the unifying principle, is it not ultimately — 'rationally' — the poet himself, who stands before the All as transcendental Subject, consciousness-imparting spirit? There is no place for a 'father', a masculine principle, in the 'Mythologie der Vernunft'.

In 'Der Archipelagus' the Greeks were 'Kinder des Glücks' (1.200). But here the Greek past gives way to the potentially universal transition from half-perception of the Divine to full and differentiating awareness of the

gods. Such consciousness is daylight; the poem has moved full cycle from the Night in which all forms are one. The elegiac undertone enters the poem in l.86, with its unlooked-for implication that 'happiness' and 'knowledge' are, perhaps, irreconcilable. It is the universal myth, clothed in the 'Werden der Kultur', of loss of childhood innocence.

Thus the vision which begins in the fourth strophe is so constituted as progressively to reduce reality to an abstraction. As the pastness of Greece becomes the universal 'Tag' (l.72), the vivid perception of the first ray of sunlight is absorbed into the flatter and vaguer broad daylight; and since this process is tied to the rhythmical recreation of immediacy, what in the fifth strophe is termed 'becoming accustomed' is already at work in the fourth. As Day is in the fifth strophe drawn out into the two modes of experience, 'naive' and conscious, so men 'become accustomed to day'; it becomes the 'Wahrheit' of 'die Himmlischen'. As 'Wahrheit' breaks through to become 'Nennen', all concrete reference is eliminated, for within the context of a rational mythology the pantheon is obsolete; there can be no object of 'naming', and 'naming' can only be an 'Idee'. In the assertion 'Wirklich und wahrhaft' is the final hubris that courts Nemesis. The rhythm has altogether lost its root in Nature, its sensual power, and has become form, an artificial division of content.

Since there therefore is, and can be, no object to the search of the second hemisphere the hinge, the opening

exclamation, is decisive through its lack of decision, and the beginning in practice begins the pentametric return to the elegiac situation. The entry into the 'neue Welt' is the search for the old, and since there is no counter-principle, the sequence of strophes is Night, Nature, darkness, relinquishing her embrace. Not the systematic meaning of the poem, but the negative function of that meaning, the generation of loss and longing by the progress to a conceptually 'higher level', raises 'Brod und Wein' to tragic greatness.²⁶

Reflecting on the relationship between Hölderlin's triadic structure and the 'Triplizitätsstruktur' of Tübingen Idealism,²⁷ one finds here too the adaptation of Fichte's 'Wechselwirkung' (cf. B94, 65-67) between 'Ich' and 'Nicht-ich' from 'Streben' into love; the World-Spirit no longer seeking to cut the tie with finitude, but constructing its own infinity even as it binds together all finite forms. But here the world is no dialectic of abstract and concrete; it is the reality of the past, of relationship, existing in purified form in the abstract and abstracted state of the present. Nevertheless, the divine potential of the individual self, the fundamental claim of the transcendental philosophy, is realised in this very form of the 'Idee der Schönheit': 'Denn im Anfang war der Mensch und seine Götter Eins, da, sich selber unbekannt, die ewige Schönheit war' (Hyperion, I, 141/20-142/2).

'Des Menschen Gestalt'

The final couplet, in which an unnamed god, who yet

bears the unmistakable traits of Christ, 'comes' and 'closes' the 'heavenly feast', is of great power and beauty.

Through its form is both restored, and imposed upon formless grief; the Divine in 'des Menschen Gestalt' lends 'Gestalt' to, and thus seals off, all six strophes with their gradual dissolution of form. This is achieved through the utter contrast between it and the preceding four couplets, which, indeed, become felt as formless sequence (in which the triadic division had no power to hold) by virtue only of this contrast.²⁸

It is that between Christ's life and death and the light, sound, colour, drama, of Greece. The statement ends the endless unanswerableness of the questions; it is — hence its opening 'Oder' — the alternative. The extreme simplicity of 'Oder er kam auch selbst' is prose that answers the poetry of Greece: the dazzlingly variegated substantives and epithets yield to the single anonymous pronoun, the manifold activities to the stark 'kam'; and 'selbst' suggests a concrete reality beside which the enumerated phenomena are, perhaps, insubstantial phantoms.

The simplicity of style is further marked in the brevity of the 'und'-clauses, so that an 'Oder ... und .../ Und ... und' sequence replaces the unrelieved coincidence of main clause and single line in ll.102-06. It is Hölderlin's recreation of the simplicity of the Gospel narrative, and above all the dignified sorrow of the Passion (for example: 'Und Joseph nahm den Leib und wickelte ihn in eine reine Leinwand/ Und legte ihn in sein

eigenes neues Grab ... und wälzte einen großen Stein vor die Tür ... und ging davon' (Matthew 27. 59-60)). Moreover, this pattern of narrative conjunctions forms a diminishing sequence: the brevity of the trisyllable 'vollendet' prepares for the briefest possible clause, 'und schloß', as though a door had been left slightly ajar and now, in the finality of the monosyllable, 'closes'.

It expresses the manner of Christ's life, that he came not as heroic 'Mann' (l.105) but as human 'Mensch', Everyman, the Son of Man, living in humility among harlots and sinners; but also of his humiliating death, and beyond this the very fact of his death, the Christian contradiction of the superhuman immortality of the Olympian pantheon. Thus the life merges with the idea, the god who died (and so, for Hölderlin, failed). The diminishing sequence is the rhythmical image of nativity ('kam'), life, passion, and death ('schloß'); and it is death that confers the form-giving finality.

The simplicity to which heroic colour gives way and the finality of death are the return of darkness. Darkness is 'consolation' because it casts a cool shadow over the pitiless light of Greece (here already Christ, 'er' among the names, is, like Patmos, an island of shade), brings rest to ceaseless elegiac lament: 'Kommet her zu mir alle, die ihr mühselig und beladen seid, ich will euch erquicken./ Nehmet auf euch mein Joch und lernet von mir; denn ich bin sanftmütig und von Herzen demütig; so werdet ihr Ruhe finden für eure Seelen;/ Denn mein Joch ist

sanft und meine Last ist leicht' (Matthew 11. 28-30). This 'Sanftmut' is expressed in the soothing music of the couplet: the round, closed O-sound of 'Oder' with which the figure of Christ is introduced is itself the image of maternal darkness, whose soft depths the hexameter's m-alliteration bespeaks ('Nacht' is feminine, 'Tag' masculine); and the 'und's weave a spell.

The succession of questioning couplets is thus the rhythmical image of a desolate aridity which is none other than the insubstantiality, illusoriness, of the Greek Göttertag. There is in it no hold for the poet. So the poem betrays its secret desire; the hubris is really not just the splendour of the vision, but the wish to possess what its divine inhabitants possessed: immortality. That is why the poem disintegrated into formless sequence; both parts of the sixth strophe, hubris and nemesis, are images of infinity, the object of Fichte's 'striving'. Hence the dazzling but inhuman quality of this Greece. Christ brings rest through his reality, presence, humanity; he gives the poet back to Earth. 'Oder er kam auch selbst' answers 'dann aber in Wahrheit/ Kommen sie selbst', so that the entire 'striving' subsides in resignative acceptance of failure. Therewith a circle of darkness, the night of the soul, encloses all six strophes with their arc. But this forming function imparts to the 'coming' of Christ, in and through absolute contrast with the insubstantial and abstract 'Wahrheit' of 'die Himmlischen', a daemonic intensity which is none other than that of 'die Nacht kommt'; at the very moment of failure and loss, the spirit of Night

returns. The binding 'und's are control that speaks of deepest grief. But in this way the Divine is restored; for it is, itself, longing and lost beauty.

In the renunciation of 'naming' the elegiac situation is restored. The hubristic failure of the vision, and with it the entire process of liberation, the 'Streben' away from the elegiac situation, ends by recreating the 'closed' form of the elegiac couplet, whose pentametric return to itself which began with the fourth strophe is now complete.

Is it, then, Christ, also, like Dionysus, a god of 'coming' (especially the Second Coming; e.g. Revelation 22. 20), who is alluded to in 'verhüllter Hinweis' (Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 56)? The renunciation of naming is a return to 'rational mythology'; Christ comes unnamed. Within the unified context of the vision he is the last stage of divine epiphany, so that his anonymity has special significance: he has become an ex-expression of the wandering ('coming') 'Spirit'. Religious value no longer attaches to the historical figure, but to the timeless and universal Being of which he was the realisation. But that is, the Divine is present, immanent, within and mediated by the poetic experience, which is therewith self-sufficient; it comes at the very moment of failure to achieve its immediate presence, as the object of longing. Longing is immediate experience. What seemed a striving towards revelation of the gods was really the search through failure for longing, a failure achieved through the incompatibility of the object of search, the gods of a pantheon, with the poet's own beliefs; he does not, and cannot, even want them. One

therefore cannot speak of a 'veiled allusion' to Christ; the poet's purpose is precisely to destroy the external (revealed) point of reference, and the critic who 'alludes' to Christ undoes that purpose. Nor does he come 'mittelbar'; it is the 'Spirit' who comes 'unmittelbar', an object of longing. The fiction of possible but denied immediacy serves only to confirm the secret knowledge that this is the only possible 'form' of the Divine.²⁹

One must distinguish between conscious artistry, which serves the intellect, and aesthetic value. The symmetrical-mathematical centre of the poem is 'dann aber in Wahrheit/ Kommen sie selbst'; but the greatness of 'Brod und Wein' lies in its failure to achieve a coherent solution, a symmetrical cosmos. The poem arises out of emotional needs inseparable from the artistry. One may think of the final couplet as belonging to the latest stages of composition, as arising out of the failure of the vision. The prestabilised harmony of poetic form is thus not a 'kalkulables Gesez', but the sphere of a venture into the Unknown.

Thus the moment of failure is aesthetic success. The recreation of the Divine in longing, in the beauty of lost beauty, drives the poem forward, and so constitutes its formal principle. With the 'figure' of Christ, the god who died and therefore failed, the poem too subsides and dies. This finality of darkness — 'there was a darkness over all the earth' (Luke 23. 44) — is paradoxically the condition of continuation. Nowhere is the cleft between religious and poetic value wider. The poem

continues because it has experienced beauty, to seek the beauty it has experienced; in so doing it guarantees failure to achieve a rational solution such as to transcend individual (poetic) experience, and binds value to the single existential phenomenon, the poem. As instrument of consciousness, language is per se negative; thus poetic form, which expresses not an abstract but an aesthetic value, is fulfilled.

It has been observed that, just as the 'coming in truth' of the gods is the centre of the poem, each of the last three strophes relates back thematically to the formally corresponding strophe of the first third of the poem. Thus the centre exists within an overall harmony of question and answer. Within this context the seventh strophe returns to and finally resolves the problem of Greece in the third (compare especially ll. 109, 114, 117-18, and the final couplet).³⁰

The seventh strophe opens with 'Aber'. But logically one would expect 'Also', a simple confirmation of the insight arrived at in the sixth strophe, that the world of the vision is no more. By comparing the possible effects, one senses the dynamic force of the 'Aber': it means not that the poet accepts absence (that would be 'Also'), but that he corrects the illusion of divine presence; it expresses not simple continuity, but the tension between poetic and future fulfilment. It is, then, a self-correction that 'opens' the poetic experience to potential community; with the turn to the 'Freund' (the first direct address

since 1.49), fulfilment lies beyond the poem. But this means that the apparent failure, the return to absence in the final couplet of the sixth strophe, was really immediacy, divine presence, aesthetic success and fulfilment. Otherwise there would be nothing to contradict.

The opening hexameter thus expresses a renewed impulse (rhythmically through the fourth-foot caesura) which is, however, absorbed into the elegiac rise and fall even as it is felt. The pentameter shuts off the world of the poem with end-stopped finality and with its great weight: the repetition of 'Aber' contradicts and slows the fresh start, the virtually synonymous metaphors of absence ('über dem Haupt', 'droben', 'in anderer Welt') are heaped on top of one another, and the stressed syllables are long and heavily assonant ('Aber', 'über', 'Haupt', 'droben'). The other world of the gods seems to weigh down upon ours, 'eine beugende Last'; a rhythmical image of alienation. Thus the new impetus carried by the fourth-foot caesura, but already belied by the sense, becomes the concession ('Zwar') of an all too regular hexameter, a vision, in the night whose image is the potentially 'endless' succession of regularly alternating hexameter and pentameter in the end-stopped couplet. For the couplet becomes the 'Gefäß' that holds the lines that fill it, and as such a 'schwaches Gefäß', incapable of holding 'Begeisterung'. The function of the triadic structure can be sensed by reading the six lines 109-14 as a separate unit. The three-fold form of the 'Grund' — the end-stopped couplet — is the 'vessel' that absorbs the free impulse (the inherited sense

of the Divine in the opening hexameter) into the sphere of arid captivity. If this triad were not clearly demarcated, so that the sequence simply continued unpausing, this effect would be lost. As the triad, as form, it functions within the strophe, and the second triad brings liberation. But it is this positive outcome that first gives to the threefold form of ll. 109-14 its sense of a potentially infinite captivity and intensifies it beyond mere lament; as light contrasts with darkness, inspiration with despair, so this triad with the next. Whereas an epic and (in the conventional sense) open form would permit compromise, the triadic structure eliminates all but extreme possibilities.

The extreme irreconcilability of the spheres ultimately reflects their mutual dependence. For the elegiac situation to function within this cosmic dualism, it must itself be infinitely intensified. The poetic world is thereby reduced to the alternating but never conclusive possibilities of enclosure and liberation, and this is only achieved through the implicit acceptance of darkness as a necessary pole of poetic experience. This acceptance is itself the act of self-enclosure.

The elegiac situation is intensified for the sake of the poetic experience; in the existential sphere more is possible than what reality can offer ('Freuden des Tags'). Reading the first lines again, but this time as far as the pause at 'das Leben', one senses that the third couplet has become part of a diminishing structure — hexameter, pentameter, hexameter-half, and then, by virtue of

the anti-metrical break, 'das Leben' in isolation — which is the rhythmic image of dying hope; with the full stop, 'life' ends. But with the 'Aber' this death gains positive meaning, becomes the transition to a dream, and 'Traum' now opens a new sphere.

This process betrays the source of the poetry's potency here. Far from being what ordinary morality demands, a fight against the negative forces within oneself, the diminishing structure is a willed surrender, an entry into darkness, the sphere within which the intensity of 'Begeisterung' is possible; the opiate that lends hypnotic power to the rhythm is death. This irrational element disqualifies the meaning abstractable from the poem.

Hence the incantatory power of the rest of this couplet. 'Aber' does not contradict, but subliminally unites with, 'Traum', drawing it into the 'dream'; the liquid l-sounds flow through the images 'Irrsaal' and 'Schlummer', so that the hexameter 'strays' (enjambement) into the pentameter, breaking the hexametric sequence of marked syntactical pauses. The rhythm impels forward, dislocating the hitherto ordered relationship of metre and ideas; the powerful 'stark', intruding into the first half, forbids pause, and when the climax is reached in the doublet 'die Noth und die Nacht' there has taken place in the briefest space an entire rhythmic ascent of intense power. Notwithstanding the systematic dualistic context, this intensity has been not won in despite of, but drawn out of, darkness. Darkness, death and dream unite with a subliminal dissolution of form which really began with 'Denn' (1.113)

and of which the dislocation of metre and syntax is but the climax that, enhanced by the liquid flow, wells up to 'Nacht'. All these forces combine to undo the grip of Enlightened reason; the vision is a Lethe from which the poet drinks 'die Vergessenheit des Daseyns' (Hyperion, I, 104/17).

The price paid for the intensity of experience (for the primacy of aesthetic value) is its insubstantiality; it reaches only as far as ('Biß') the end of the pentameter, and thereafter the end-stopped form reasserts itself with the regularity of syntactical parallelism; once more life is lived 'in der ehernen Wiege', and 'die Begeisterung ist hin'. Hölderlin was dissatisfied with this couplet (cf. 2.604, 19f.), but could find nothing better; the second triad is also missing a couplet whose absence he at first failed to notice and then had to count the lines to find (he then counted the same line twice, so that the omission went unrectified; cf. 2.604, 24-30). These facts suggest that the dream had already exhausted itself; form is felt, not added up. Indeed, the fifth couplet passes as easily into the (actual) sixth as did the third into the fourth.

Thus the opening of the third triad is of great pathos. Just as the rhythm of desolation slid over the transition, which thus became the threshold of a dream, so the 'heroic' assertion is drawn irresistibly into the sphere of elegiac lament. Through its relationship to this triadic transition, the categorical brevity of 'Donnernd kommen sie drauf' belies the words far more effectively than could a

qualified statement; they thus form the up-beat to a long drawn-out and intense lament. This, carried upwards over the couplet-division by the anaphoric 'So'-clause, intensifies through the ever-barer dependent infinitives, the controlling verb ('dücket'), and with it the distance from grief, diminishing into virtual direct speech; with 'zu sagen' the verb has been stripped bare, there is nothing 'to say'. The changed construction impels forward to the main verb and the pentameter, but the line-division separates it from its dependent infinitives. Thus 'Weiß ich nicht' becomes an isolated climax, a point of abandonment next to wordlessness. Only in the 'wozu'-clause does the mind regain control and once more formulate its grief, as the lament falls back with the pentameter to rest.

In the final couplet a wonderful peace spreads over the strophe. Opening with soothing s-alliteration, continuing with a liquid l, the couplet expresses calm and order, the pentameter's clause answering the hexameter in complete contrast to the preceding sharp ascent. But this order is also movement, the sure but mysterious rhythm of a journeying in which travelling and arrival are one; need, anxiety, and striving are suspended in the incantatory repetitions ('heilig', 'Land') and the soothing synthesis of wine and darkness. The unpretentious little word 'du' gains a beautiful softness, warmth and intimacy. Here is an 'Erneuerung der Sprache' to which only the term 'magical' can do justice; what is renewed is the ancient distinction between familiar address and that to strangers — the pronoun's 'ideal' significance — and here again, I think, Hölderlin is

indebted to, but also strives consciously to emulate and secularise, the idyllic 'naivety' of the Bible. Even Christ's address to his Father in Gethsemane, for example, is of just such simple and direct intimacy, again through a sealed-off unity of place: 'doch nicht, was ich will, sondern was du willst.'

For this ideal relationship depends on two vital aspects of form. Once again the final word is 'Nacht'; a circle is drawn from the opening 'Freund!' to the closing 'du', and ending in night creates the warmth and intimacy, the closed space of darkness in which a 'du' can speak to an 'ich'. But the course of this circle is the self-incurred isolation of the 'ich'. The whole strophe is a departure not with but from the 'friend', in so far as he is at first a mere and almost incidental companion in a renewed search for the Divine. The 'wir' of the first line persists only as far as the second pentameter, and with the 'Denn' that begins the descent Lethe-wards is forgotten. When the poet emerges into the cold light of day 'wir' has become 'mir'. Indeed, the lament is above all an increasingly devastating sense of isolation, passing through 'ohne Genossen' to the isolated climax, the utterly forlorn 'Weiß ich nicht'. Here the word 'ich' appears for the first time in the poem. And it is this degree of separation that makes possible the ideal juxtaposition 'ich'/'du': the pronouns meet, unalloyed by name, qualification (such as 'Freund' would be); the 'du' is no longer an-other, but the other. He has gained the power of consolation; the 'ich' surrenders its unappeasable yearning to the opaque but certain

dionysiac principle that guides the 'priests'. It becomes like a child, receiving; for wonder and certainty are the inseparable qualities of stories told to children; they reassure because their mysterious authority is beyond questioning. So here the agonisingly protracted question is not so much answered as surrendered.

Thus the seventh strophe, for all its systematic significance as solution (final couplet) to the problem of Greece, is a return to Night. Admittedly the 'coming' is less daemonic. But in essence it is the same power that has 'come': in the mysterious rhythm, the 'Ziehen', journeying without a goal, of the priests (who are filled with the inspiration of the 'Weingott'), in the soft darkness of consolation, and in the 'ideal' simplicity, anonymity and power of the 'du'. Like the 'Oder' of l.107, 'Aber' sets apart the couplet — the vessel of (wine, of) the Divine — from the rest of the strophe; the stark simplicity of the conjunctions is unmediated otherness, a purity.

The poet's journey within this strophe carries him away from reality, from his friend, and into the hubris and nemesis of a dream. The return to reality is 'Mythologie der Vernunft': deification of what is (Nature) (rather than what might be), rationalisation of what was (historical religion: Dionysus and Christ). The 'du' too participates, in the widest sense, in this 'rational mythology'; like Christ, it is concrete, tangible reality, and brings the divine mystery of consolation. Thus the aesthetic unity of the first six strophes is created; that is, only by virtue of the process begun by the seventh strophe.

Their experience was hubris and nemesis, diminishing intensity that led to lost immediacy (divinity, 'Seeligkeit') and so to longing. Here, elegiac lament is the climax ('Weiß ich nicht') of the strophe; the arc (journey away) from the 'Freund' and in search of the Divine has led to the summit of isolation. But therewith the first six strophes reappear, in remembered form, as an existential sphere. Their basis ('Grund'), the loss of self in Night of the first strophe, is recreated as a loss of self to elegiac grief within which the 'dream' of entry into and emergence out of Night is remembered. Thus the first strophe, the first six strophes, and the seventh strophe become (successive) mirrors of one another and of the cosmic harmony they reflect in microcosmic form. Mirrored in the seventh strophe, the process of loss and failure becomes self-sufficient: the deficient but necessary form of the Divine.

The consolation by the 'du' vindicates the unity of the World-Spirit because it returns in rhythm — not in thought — to the god of the sixth strophe; 'du' and 'er' (1.107) are ultimately of one nature. This unity of the Divine is obscured when critics apply traditional religious conceptions, as though 'gods' had hard and fast identities (names and characters); nor is there any need to force it upon the poem, as though 'er' must cease to be a god, or the 'du' become one. Any division between religion and the totality of experience is false. The unity of the Spirit is not a fact that can be assumed, but is dependent upon the poetic experience, the moment of perception, 'intellektuale Anschauung', which dissolves the static

('positive'; external and therefore unfelt) apartness of particular phenomena into unnamed Being, 'der heilige Lebensgeist' (cf. 'Empedokles' III, 391); and where a phenomenon happens, like Christ, to be an historical god, where, then divinity has been attached to anything in particular and so allotted unequally, there it must be stripped of historicity and name.

Indeed this divine unity is not conceptual, but rhythmical: the act of love. Thereby the unity of subjective experience, which is the homogeneous totality of its divine object, is guaranteed. The sole and self-sufficient criterion of the Divine is beauty; and poetic technique consists in the elimination of any other criterion. Thus rhythm and thought are in conflict; the linear thought-process with its problems and solutions is constantly undermined by a rhythm which always returns to itself and has no other will: the elegiac form, image of eternity. For this the symmetrical correspondence by theme is merely the empty shell. What is communicated, is abstractable from the poem, is what fails to express the Divine (since the Divine is feeling). The underlying logic of the first six strophes, the attempt to express God in language (to 'name'), is wanted failure, will (intellect) without will, for such an attempt can only yield an empty abstraction.

Aesthetically the virtue and defect of this strophe are the same. The lability of the triadic transitions reflects the instability of the poetic process. Entry into Night ('Traum') and return to the elegiac situation are,

because they have already taken place, easier, but for the same reason weaker; the dream cannot be sustained. Yet this sacrifice is necessary for the sake of rhythmical (psychic) continuity. The renewed search which begins with the resumptive 'Aber' (l.109) can only be for what the poem has already experienced; otherwise an opposed, non-aesthetic value would enter the poem; equally, because beauty is the sole value the Divine is always lost beauty, the mirrored experience of self-consciousness. Conversely, only the regressive function of this strophe can yield the existential sphere of pure relationship between poetic self (transcendental Subject) and Nature. This may seem irrelevant to a strophe apparently too abstract to be concerned with Nature; but Nature must not be conceived of narrowly (as, for example, landscape); she is, in the widest ('purest') sense, the 'object' of loss of self, of pure poetic purpose. She (the world, everything) comes alive in the absence of extraneous purpose; and only through the form of memory can the renewed search achieve such freedom from purpose.

The structure of the eighth strophe is more immediately apparent; its climax is its 'highest' point: 'höchsten'.

The first triad is also clearly marked, by its unified sequence of 'Als'-clauses. These recapitulate and so presuppose what has been experienced; whereas the first six strophes and in diminished degree the seventh had sought divine presence and suffered the discovery of its loss, here absence is an accepted fact, and, equally, these three

couplets serve to eliminate all hope there may have been of divine presence. The pathos, the illusion and pain, of 'Donnernd kommen sie drauf' has become knowledge. The impression is, since acceptance of reality is clearly the rational prerequisite to a solution of the problem 'Hesperien', one of progress to a 'higher level' of consciousness.

Of this self-denial of hope the elegiac couplet is the rhythmic sign. The parallelism created by the 'Als'-clauses reduces it to its basic form, the self-enclosed unit of rise and fall, so that the pentameter shuts off the prospect, the potential of hope, offered by the hexameter (this rhythmical image supports, but obviously need not coincide with, the ideas). The three-fold pattern is essentially the same as in the first triad of the preceding strophe, creating the sphere of Night. The poet's world is that of Hesperien — regularity and order, law, 'Nüchternheit' — and performs the same gloomy function, the stifling of 'Begeisterung'.

But this exclusion of divine presence is absolute (Night) only by virtue of the triadic structure, so that its very completeness is simultaneously its relativisation. Absence is held within the strophic whole as darkness within the cosmos. Thus the progressive elimination of hope is also the cosmic and so harmonious necessity of Night, and the first triad provides the condition for recreation of the familiar opposites, captivity and liberation.

The juxtaposition of 'schwand' and 'Ließ' makes of the triadic transition a vivid Sprachgestus reminiscent

of 11.78/79 ('Schafft'): 'Ließ' is release. In and by virtue of conceding her absolute validity the poet is released from Night as from an old world (sealed off by 'schwand': life and light have 'vanished') to state the — mediated, yet real — presence of the Divine, in the mode of 'Zeichen'; and the veil of darkness is lifted, the harmony of life reasserted. But rhythmically this harmony is, even as it is spoken, mere assertion, words, an abstract formula which, succeeding rationally, fails aesthetically. Far from becoming the vessel of inspiration, the fourth couplet is in form (slight enjambement, in effect emphasising the control of the self-contained unit with its monotonous pause) directly parallel to the third, and thus falls into line with the very world from which it was to liberate; in practice the resulting sequence, four measured and orderly couplets, opens the prospect of an assertion of harmony ad infinitum, self-perpetuating, void of any reality because unfelt. Once again the 'titanic' aspiration towards the Divine, albeit in diminished form, has reared up against the self-imposed barriers, and now sinks back. The progress in wisdom has proved an illusion, and the intellectual structure (paraphrased: in the absence of the gods man can experience their mediated presence through signs) disintegrates, having failed the sole criterion of truth: the beauty of poetic inspiration.

Thus the orderly structure of harmony, the measured pause at the couplet-division, gives way, and the couplet falls open (11.134/35). Thereby the fifth hexameter becomes the beginning of the disintegration, so that the rhythm

and tone anticipate the thought (this is characteristic; thus tone and form belied content in the fourth couplet and in 'Donnernd kommen sie drauf'); this rhythmic unity is hardened by the opening 'menschlich', which reappears in 'Unter den Menschen', now, however, caught up and swept away in the poet's grief (rhythmically in the unpausing flow from the end of the pentameter to the hexameter's 'und'): simple 'Menschlichkeit' has become the insufficient hold to which the poet clung. In the pathos-laden 'noch, noch' (in utter contrast with the preceding orderly arrangement of words) the rhythm continues to mount, so that the ideas 'stark' and 'höchst', although describing what is 'missing', are so positioned as to form the emotional climax, for the measure of what is lost is the measure of the poet's grief; the superlative 'höchst' is yet higher than 'stark' is strong.

Thus it is the failure, the lack of inspiration, that, paradoxically, inspires, transforming the elegiac form, which now, in the sixth pentameter, falls back to rest. The triadic structure becomes emphatically marked; the first two triads are not the harmonious dualism of negative and positive they should have been, but a single arc, a loss of self to elegiac grief. The tension is accordingly not that between negative and positive, but between assertion and reality, reason and feeling.

'Freuden' is of the utmost pathos. Stripped through enjambement of syntactical context, it is isolated, forlorn, out of time and place. Here too the rhythm has anticipated the thought to create a moving conflict between appearance,

word, and reality, tone; for whereas logically resignation begins with 'aber', rhythmically it is the whole pentameter that subsides (here the subjectivity of such judgments is more than usually dictatorial, but I feel it would do violence to the verse to have the voice carry on upwards to the comma, which would then have to bear an extreme gap in pitch between two unstressed syllables. 'Freuden' conveys the contradiction between ideal and reality; the word which ought to be 'highest' initiates 'Hesperian' resignation).

The second triad is thus the barrier, the limitation upon human aspiration, at which the poet returns to the elegiac situation. The opening hexameter of the third triad is of exquisite beauty. But this beauty is not due solely to itself, and if this line were set after l.132 (without, that is, the preceding lament) one would sense how utterly dependent it is upon the process of loss and failure. This fact implies its nature. Here, and not in the fourth couplet, is the true release from tension; and the true tension was not that between 'harmoniously-opposed' light and darkness, but between the apparent and real object of poetic purpose. The former is the object of 'Streben' — 'der himmlische Chor', 'Vaterland', social and moral ideal — and lies in an avowedly unattainable future. The latter is the 'ideal' object of resignative longing, and lies in a lost past. At the same time, the very nature of this tension indicates that the 'Streben' has no more than the appearance of purpose and will; it is, indeed, so constituted as to fail, and so to generate longing. In comparison, then, the

initial release ('Ließ') becomes purely external and artificial. With 'Dank' not only the point (ended triad) of limitation, but also that of true purpose, is reached, so that the third triad at least begins literally as 'thanks-giving': the poet's mouth can at last open. This sense of immediacy, in which content is absolutely inseparable from form, is the very essence of the aesthetic criterion.

For here again is the 'divine moment', the 'coming' of the Spirit. The hexameter, in which this poetic experience is almost entirely concentrated, is in its two halves the image of the union of Earth and Light. Opening with the long closed syllable 'Brod' (compare 'Oder' in 1.107), moving to the second stressed syllable, long, reinforced by assonance ('[der] Erd-'), and having in all three stressed to three unstressed syllables, the slow weight of this first half unites with the sense of 'earth', soft, dark, cool, and sensually full; the feeling of 'Mutter Erde', though unspoken, is implicit in 'Frucht'. The caesura with its up-beat ('doch') immediately lightens the rhythm, and is followed by the short i, the first stressed syllable of the second half, the insubstantial verb 'ist' likewise relieving the heavy substantives. Thus an incipient trochaic rhythm leads to the second stressed syllable, again the short i, so that 'Licht' seems to lift the line upwards. (The visual contrast between light and darkness translates effortlessly into the rhythmic variables of quality and quantity, a process no doubt facilitated by the phonetically close 'licht' and

'leicht'. For although 'Licht' is primarily sun-light, it is also the spiritual counterpart to Earth, and thus scarcely distinguishable from 'Aether', the finest (most spiritual) region of the sky.) After this, the dactyl trips away on lightest-possible feet (short e).

Yet the two halves are not simply contrasted. As the line opens with a dactyl, so the voice lingers over 'seeg-': refinements beyond an ordinary poet, but which also reflect the single mystery of Earth and Light. For Earth is not united with, but lightly touched by, one who can never be hers; she is, in Hyperion's elegiac thought, 'die immer treuer liebende Hälfte des Sonnengotts, ursprünglich vielleicht inniger mit ihm vereint, dann aber durch ein allwaltend Schiksaal geschieden von ihm, damit sie ihn suche ...' (I, 96/10-13). This is not a solution that can be possessed, but a truth born of loss and separation, a sorrow that lies 'too deep for tears'. It is the sense of what can never be possessed, but only intimated; the mystery of Earth's nature and suffering both consoles and fills with longing. Such sensual immediacy is itself relationship with Nature, the highest good. If the line came after 1.132, the 'ist' would be assertion, on the same uninspired level as the fourth couplet. As it is, it meets, not a chain of reasoning missing a link, but an emotional need, and draws from this its beauty.

Thus the very moment of failure is once again intuition of the Divine. With the word 'Brod' the poet returns to reality, Nature, and names the Divine only within the elegiac context of a 'rational mythology' (as in 11.107-08,

this is a rationalisation, given the connotations, of Christian 'mythology' into potentially universal 'empiricism'). He returns to Earth as to Night, and she too consoles with soft darkness: 'Dich lieb' ich, Erde! trauerst du doch mit mir!' ('Dem Sonnengott'; in 'Der Mutter Erde' she is 'allversöhnende, allesduldende' (2.683, 13)). I hope it is not fanciful to suggest that she is both warm and cool (remembering that these ideas form a single temperate harmony, as in 'Hälfte des Lebens', in contrast to the extremes, fire and ice, as in 'Der Wanderer'). The return to reality, to earth, is, just as in 1.107, the shade cast across the heat of the poet's vision, here, since the extreme is really that of grief, over his intense 'striving'. But the whole line, being, according to my reading, of the nature of Earth, consoles with maternal darkness. And the unity of the divine Spirit in the moments of 'coming', of inspiration, is created anew.

The poetic process, or technique, that creates it is the single constant, the ever-recurring rhythm. The release from tension, 'Ließ', has already taken place in the seventh strophe, itself with its ease of transition a remembered form. The arc that stretches open the elegiac form, the loss of self in what is essentially a lament for lost inspiration, accordingly moves back in relation to the seventh strophe (from 'Weiß ich nicht' to 'höchst-'), and is diminished; and the moment of divine immediacy and presence is concentrated in the single line. Thus, as in the second strophe, the first two triads relate to the

strophe as do the two hemispheres (Night and Day) to the whole poem. Rhythmically the structure is the same: the hubris, breaking the barrier between man and the Divine (understood, in strictly metaphysical terms, as infinity); and the nemesis, restoring the limitation which 'preserves God' 'rein und mit Unterscheidung' (2.252, 12).

That is the defect, but also the virtue, for only thus can the unity of the divine Spirit, Hölderlin's profoundest belief, be vindicated. The 'spirit' of the first, the 'coming' of the sixth, the consolation of the seventh, and now the mystery of the eighth, All are clearly One — 'Einer ist immer für alle' ('Versöhnender der du nimmergeglaubt ... ', first version, 1.86) — and that through the very insubstantiality of these 'gods', who are therefore better called 'spirits' (compare 'An die Hoffnung', 1.19; 'Blödigkeit', 11.22-23). Their sole foundation is poetic inspiration, and because this is so they are 'ghost'-ly, lay no claim to exclusiveness, and are unified.

Such insubstantiality may seem to contradict my insistence on sensual immediacy and presence. But the aesthetic element, sensuality, is inseparable from the eternally-recurring poetic rhythm; and this depends upon the pre-stabilised vacuity and abstraction of the poem's rational premises.

'Der Weingott'

After this the tone of the third triad changes with astonishing rapidity, moving from elegiac consolation to

hymnic affirmation within the space of five lines. Here the function of the strophic form is particularly transparent. Whereas 'Dank' ends the second triad, so that the third is liberated 'thanks'-giving, the whole strophe ends with 'Lob', so that the final strophe becomes liberated 'praise'. In each case, inasmuch as the form symbolises a surmounting of the elegiac situation, the sphere that follows gains ideal significance — the progressive transition from old to 'new world' — but founded upon the physical immediacy, the Sprachgestus, of its opening: a mouth that has been not merely silent, but repressed, can now open:

Echo des Himmels! heiliges Herz! warum,
Warum verstummst du unter den Lebenden,
Schläfst, freies! von den Götterlosen
Ewig hinab in die Nacht verwiesen?
('Ermunterung', ll.1-4)

This identification of the elegiac form with the elegiac situation (compare the essential expression, 'Elegie', ll. 97-98) yields a qualitative distinction between ordinary speech, no better than silence or blindness ('Der blinde Sänger'), and true, liberated speech; a distinction which now separates the ninth strophe not just from the eighth but from the entire poem so far, which now stands open in anticipation.

It is instructive, however, to see how easily these lines can be converted back into the elegiac tone: by doing little more than forgetting the ninth strophe and imagining that the poem ends with 'Lob'. At once the

resignative sorrow of their first hexameter pervades the whole triad and wins the last word; for the tone depends entirely on whether the 'Darum'-clauses look forward or back.

This inherent tendency in the ideas to comply with the rhythm is related to the shifting vagueness of Hölderlin's 'gods'. Given the hymnic ascent to the ninth strophe, the change in tone has already begun in the first pentameter, a decisive emphasis falling upon the now onomatopoeic 'donnernd-'; thus the elegiac fondness for an uncommitted swaying between alternatives — Greece-inspired pantheon/'Mythologie der Vernunft' — is resolved, and in favour of the latter: the 'thundering god' is personified thunder. So too in the next hexameter the consolatory mood would make 'die Himmlischen' the lost, and so presumably anthropomorphic, gods of Greece; the hymnic mode transforms them into a substantivised epithet without concrete reference and of purely emotional value: hymnic immediacy and, again, 'rational mythology' (personified idea). There is nothing else in the couplet itself to form the basis for hymnic affirmation; indeed, read in isolation it becomes, with its idea of eternal cycle, truly elegiac, 'denken' making a natural etymological return to 'Dank'.³¹

So too the final couplet, if it concluded the poem, would exist in the innate democracy, forbidding climactic priority, of elegiac sequence. Here this is admittedly harder to imagine because 'nicht eitel erdacht' and 'tönet' do give strong support to 'Lob' and drive the poem over the transition. But no real basis is provided by the 'god'

himself; he could as well waver between rational mythology and lost anthropomorphic religion as become what he in fact is, a decisive break-through out of the last clinging vestiges of elegiac tone and into the physical reality of a 'richtige Zeit', no longer past, in which the 'Götter' that 'once walked among men' are present as they were to the Greeks. Now the 'Weingott' becomes the key word of the strophe (but not, I think, aesthetically); nevertheless, this apparently decisive moment leaves him still unnamed; unlike in the chorus of Sophocles' Antigone from which Hölderlin drew so much for this poem, there is no 'Dionysus' or 'Bacchus', so that on reflection it remains difficult to say whether the conception is anthropomorphic. This would not matter (why bind poetry to theological exactitude?) had not Hölderlin made 'naming' the quintessential sign of divine reality; as it is, the final strophe must succeed where the whole poem has failed. But that is why it is the 'new world'.

The ninth strophe has, then, to 'reconcile' 'Night with Day', to solve (so its systematic significance) the problem of the first, Night. It opens with the characteristic exclamation (compare the final strophes of 'Stuttgart', 'Heimkunft'), the moment of 'Begeisterung', qualitatively real speech. 'Ja!' is immediacy, antithesis to reflection, 'Natur' to Hesperian 'Kunst'. It opens the sphere of a new 'spirit', a figure who emerges out of the old elegiac world (the identification of release with tangible reality has an effect similar to l.107: here at last is what elegy can hold on to). The conception under-

lying the strophic form makes the entire course of the poem hitherto into enclosure, and endows 'him' with liberating and liberated energy. And the shape he takes is that of the rhythm.

He is a god of restless elemental energy, a son of Nature with the inexorable, green and sinewy, strength of ivy, twining about and informing the elegiac couplet, the image of the cosmos in its still and pure eternity, with dionysiac vitality, surging through and over all three couplets, binding them to a whole. Each is syntactically self-contained and to this extent does not differ from typical elegiac sequence; but within this form or vessel (the triad) the metre-syntax relation is continually dislocated, yielding a disordered order which comes to form a pattern. It is the elemental relationship between the god and his mother, Nature. As the released energy concentrates about the reality, presence, of this spirit, 'he' shakes off the clinging attributes of the elegiac realm ('Weingott', 'Alter') and becomes pronominal, pure. In the first pentameter even this pronominal subject falls away, so that 'Führe' becomes pure verbal energy, activity, and also, resolving the question-and-answer sequence (pentametric 'und'-clause) of the sphere of 'Dank', drives the rhythm on; and it does not return until the second pentameter, but then emphatically, in three clauses of swift succession. Hence the dynamic linear force running through the ordered form. It is the rhythmical symbol of the son's return to the source, where he may replenish his vitality; submerging (cf. 1.52) and re-emerging, he

can neither be identified with nor separated from his signs, and his nature is as fluid as ivy. Similarly, the parallel minor attributive clauses with which the third, fourth and fifth lines open both provide continuity and dislocate the orderly metre-syntax relation, each creating a slight obstacle that, briefly damming, impels forward; thus the climax is reached in 'bleibet', with sense and rhythm in full tension.

So this spirit contrasts utterly with that of the ending sixth strophe. There had come a sublimely comforting figure, of a wisdom and peace born of suffering; here is a god who reckes nothing of suffering, 'allzeit froh', his permanence, immortality (which is greatly stressed: 'ewig', 'allzeit', 'immer-', 'bleibet'), absolutely drawn from Nature. And Nature is here an eternal life-force, binding Day with Night, Heaven with Earth (the image of the first pentameter, though taken from Sophocles' Antigone, where Dionysus leads the dance of the stars, has been wedded to that of Jacob's ladder: 'Und ihm träumte; und siehe, eine Leiter stand auf der Erde, die rührte mit der Spitze an den Himmel, und siehe, die Engel Gottes stiegen daran auf und nieder;/ Und der Herr stand oben darauf ... '); rationalised: the stars go up and down, 'Vater Aether' 'wohnt' 'noch höher hinauf' ('Heimkunft', 1.21)). Here, then, is 'Freude mit Geist', and in the triumph the despair of 1.134 is forgotten.

In the third pentameter this dynamic energy at last subsides. The sphere of the 'reconciling' spirit is clearly demarcated by the triadic form, and the poet moves on to

make the definitive statement which there is now nothing to hold back: 'Siehe! wir sind es, wir'. It is 'we' who are 'children of God', and no longer through the grace of an alien instance ('Sehet, Welch eine Liebe hat uns der Vater erzeugt, daß wir Gottes Kinder sollen heißen!': I John 3. 1), but simply as human beings. But the affirmations that follow one after another are suddenly cut off, and at the most critical juncture: 'Glaube ... !' Exclamations disintegrate, reflection begins; and 'Vater Aether', now associated with community, returns to his position 'über dem Haupt'. The poet gives himself up to despair; the 'Aber' of l.152 is a luciferian fall from grace back into the underworld, 'Schatten'.

The familiar rhythmical pattern, hubris and nemesis, re-emerges. The 'Aber' of l.155 is definitive limitation: restoration of form as of proper relationship to the Divine, immovable barrier between the poet and his heart's desire. Yet this moment of failure has crucial regressive effect on the immediately preceding lines, for at this point the overall form of the poem, its harmony, is felt, and absorbs the ninth strophe too into itself. The final triad is both in form and content decisively set apart; it fulfils the triadic structure, for in the moment of 'coming' the two comings that ended the hemispheres are remembered and unite. But the sense of immutable enclosure is not accounted for by mere mathematical correspondence and symmetry; its utter reality and truth depend on the 'open' form, the feeling of hardly won and ultimate freedom, the tremendous release and access of energy, titanic

aspiration, with which the ninth strophe strove to claim qualitative difference.

The bars of poetic form slide back into place. Within the strophe the sense of limitation creates a division so strong that aesthetically the other, first, triadic division is undermined; the first twelve lines become a single movement, an inspiration that died becomes dying inspiration. One feels this by imagining the first triad as the conclusion; then 'selbst' becomes unquestioned divine presence whose triumphant descent there is no power to resist. Now, instead, a growing unreality which becomes acute with 'Glaube' works its way back into and up through the whole of the first triad. The outcome gives regressive power to the ideas of absence in its final couplet, and as these gain, so the power of the spirit is diminished. The sequence 'er ... die Spur der entflohenen Götter/ Götterlosen' ceases to be a 'hymnic' statement of unwavering conviction governed by the god ('er'), and becomes a progressive entry into his realm by ideas against which he will not be able to 'last'. Therewith 'selbst' ceases to refer exclusively to 'him', and vacillates in elegiac fashion between all three possibilities.³²

By undermining the independence of his sphere, drawing it into the subsequent assertion and lament, the diminished strength of the first triadic division costs the god his individuality; for this presupposed irreducibly self-sufficient being, and therefore independence from the poet's subjective impulses, inspiration, wishes and needs. Since the god's ability to reconcile light with darkness

depended upon a suggestion of anthropomorphic personality to make him more than the mere object of the poetic subject's wish to deify his experiential field — only thus can he be the basis for a real Volksreligion after the model of Greece — the first triad becomes the failure of this 'Gestalt' to hold 'lasting' reality, and thus the gradual exhaustion of the poet's inspiration. The 'Ja!', the moment of immediacy, becomes the recurrence in rhythmical periodicity of 'Seeliges Griechenland!', and the process of loss of immediacy begins with 'er', as soon, that is, as the 'Ja!' seeks to find concrete form. The accelerating intensity turns into ever more desperate attempts to maintain the initial moment of inspiration, which by their nature achieve the opposite and drain it of strength; 'weil er bleibet' becomes the last point of presence, now swallowed up in the inevitability of rhythm. These are aesthetic judgements; it is aesthetic experience that undercuts the systematic value.

The transition from eighth to ninth strophe had to differ qualitatively from all the others; it now differs only in degree, as the supreme act of hubris of the last three strophes absorbing, but also anticipated by, those within the first six, seventh, and eighth strophes. The surmounting not just of the internal strophic form, but of the very strophic division itself, through its failure in practice identifies major and minor poetic forms as bound by the same inescapable law of rhythm; and a single rhythm is created, an image of eternity within whose thrall an individual movement must always be an 'exzentrische Bahn'.

The illusion that the ninth strophe really could have differed from the rest is not only dispelled; it has proved to be the height of an error, of an errant 'Streben' whose secret — that is, perhaps, unconscious — purpose is to confirm the true nature of poetic form:—

As a clearly-marked unit within the poem, the strophe is part of an autonomous structure, just as with Pindar strophe, antistrophe and epode belong to a single intention and work of art. With Hölderlin, however, the strophic form has become, as has been seen, the basis for and means to liberation, so that in theory (a theory attractive to modern social idealism) he has evolved a form capable of overcoming the division between art and life, artist and society; that such a form should be poetic (rather than, for example, plastic or musical) follows naturally from poetry's proximity through its means of expression, language, to daily life, and equally, the means of bridging the gap therewith becomes (with, again, much appeal to the twentieth century) communication. The circular aspect of this theory, namely, that it always presupposes and so re-enacts a heightened sense of poetry's apartness, I have already discussed.

Thus the (assumed) negativity of art is made to function positively; the strophic form is a 'Triebkraft der Negativität'. Now, that the poem as a whole can only reproduce the negativity of the strophe does not in itself disqualify this theory of religious poetry, but it does show that nothing has (in this most abstract respect) been

gained. Through the reproduction of formal autonomy within the poem communication and communality have admittedly become thematic, but only as a problem as yet without solution. All now devolves on poetic practice. Nevertheless, the strophic form now presents a danger: the poet cannot allow himself to think that heightened awareness of artistic autonomy has done anything more than create a problem, for then the awareness will replace a solution, become self-sufficient, and so eventually cease to be awareness. Purity of motive will cover the obligation to communicate, and the problem will have recreated itself in intensified form. For the poet will no longer need to speak to others; he will be covered by the automatic acknowledgement that the poem should have done so.

The strophic form, paradoxically enough but in empirically demonstrable manner, provides the means to liberation within the poem, and this 'Streben' is the poetic experience. Simultaneously, the contemporary world, which is the potential addressee, is darkness, an Underworld whose inhabitants are 'Schatten', living-dead in contrast to the spiritually living but physically dead Greeks (implicitly Heinse, like Bellarmin, is the select exception to whom the poet can speak 'in dürftiger Zeit'). In this way personal and universal darkness become, as effect and cause, a single problem; and liberation takes place purely on the assumption that poetry must for the present be self-enclosure: imprisonment of the artist.

That is, the poet seeks to resolve the autonomy of his poem in the foreknowledge that it cannot be done; does not

seek to resolve it, but to experience its absolute necessity. In so doing he reaffirms the purity of his poetic purpose in its frustrated desire to be communal. But thereby poetry is freed from a limitation; it is no longer merely what it factually is, communication, but becomes self-liberation in order to communicate. Thus stripped of immediate social reference and purpose, language becomes reduced to a pure act: 'Sprache', 'Äußerung' of the 'pure poetic Spirit'.³³ In short, artistic autonomy is only in question if one assumes that the artist and his work are, in terms of relationship to the world, identical.

So autonomy is a present virtue and necessity. But its thematicisation in the process of liberation makes of the irreconcilability of the artist and his society no longer merely an assumed fact; it is turned into an experience and thus justified existentially. It is not just an abstract theme, but takes place in time, as an original assumption to which the poet in the end (the present) returns. Through the contrast between present and past, the poetic experience becomes hardened self-confirmation of a logical futility, a 'Hätt' ich nie gehandelt!' (cf. Hyperion, I, 8/15). As the past, the mere assumption, becomes truth, the poetic process — the succession of strophes — becomes progressive loss of perfection. For the poem is not autonomous; it perforce communicates, presupposes external reality, and therefore exists 'in dürftiger Zeit', within the world of darkness. Not so the strophe, which exists 'purely' within the world of the poem. The 'open'-ness of the autonomous poem is its imperfection if it is measured

by the perfect enclosure of the past. And the past, the lost autonomy of the strophe, is the Ideal and the end of the poet's present striving: an island, sphere of perfect beauty, 'Welt in der Welt'.

This is no attempt at stoic self-sufficiency, but the search for perfect freedom from reality; the product of a contemplative ideal precluding not just action, but change itself. As soon, however, as time itself becomes the measure whereby reality is found wanting, the strophic form symbolises (no doubt unconsciously) entry into consciousness, which is destruction of childhood innocence. And if poetic autonomy has the heightened meaning of self-enclosure, consciousness must be understood as relativisation by others.

Through a 'Streben' of preordained futility the poet expresses the secret conviction that there can be no reconciliation, and recreates the injury done by the world. The supreme example had been the theft of Diotima; and therewith the autonomous 'sphere' is an 'island of love' ('Thränen', l.14) and beauty. It is itself a 'tear', and its source is a 'clear eye'; the still and protected circle of water over which the pure-white swans move in calm serenity ('Elegie', ll.41-45). Yet Diotima herself had represented the island of timelessness:

So bedürfnislos, so göttlichgenügsam hab' ich nichts gekannt.

Wie die Wooge des Oceans das Gestade seeliger Inseln,
so umfluthete mein ruheloses Herz den Frieden des himmlischen Mädchens.

(Hyperion, I, 103/9-12)

Thus physical love and physical beauty are themselves accommodated to the ultimate and archetypal injury, the 'Schiksaal' of entry into consciousness. The model for divine perfection is memory; remembered, love need no longer be surrender to physicality and so to time, but is purified.

Poetic form belies the moral purpose implied by 'dürftige Zeit' and by the poem's thought-process; the unbridged cleft between the living and the dead, 'Germanien' and 'Griechenland', makes possible the same shift in meaning as in Hyperion's reply to Diotima's 'Kannst du so dich in die alte Zeit versetzen': 'Mahne mich nicht an die Zeit! ... es war ein göttlich Leben' (I, 150/11-13).³⁴

'Der Titan'

With the words 'Vater Aether erkennt jeden und allen gehört', not just the strophe but the whole poem is 'open' in completeness of loss and divine absence; for this pentameter, prominent as the end of the poem's entire search, expresses the sum of the Ideal — 'der Geist, der allem gemein und jedem eigen ist' — and thus, separated from qualification by the line-division, gains an oracular power. Here is absolute and definitive statement of what is not, and as such it calls forth the final moment of longing; the final triad is the sphere of divine beauty, and also the complete restoration of form and fulfilment of harmony.

Its aesthetic quality depends utterly on the sense of

ending, on the fact that 'schläft' really does close the poem in darkness. Only thus does the opening 'Aber' gain such power that by itself and before any development it can set aside a sphere which truly differs qualitatively from the rest. For here the sense of divine 'coming' is self-sufficient, and so fills the final triad: the Divine has become an object of longing, not of striving, and therewith the poem is autonomous and complete.

But, remarkably, if one read the first couplet by itself it would become dull and flat, because the synthesis of Christ and Dionysus in 'Fakelschwinger des Höchsten/Sohn, der Syrier' would immediately demand intellectual attention. Indeed, in this couplet the divine coming is merely awaited, and has not yet really begun. Within the triad as a whole Christ and Dionysus merge effortlessly, as only those characteristics are felt which initiate the movement towards sleep, peace, the end. For Christ these are as at the end of the sixth strophe. The 'figure' of consolation and rest softens 'der kommende Gott' of the third strophe, that 'Fakelschwinger' Dionysus; he is no longer an orgiastic reveller or elemental son of Nature, but the pure 'spirit' of wine, and as his torch is no longer a fiery brand, but a soft glow in the darkness, so too the quality of his wine is not such as to flow through the veins with arousing fire, but to achieve the end, the sleeping of 'Cerberus'. In this way the soft s- and sh-sounds (with the Swabian s) — ' ... indessen ... Fakelschwinger des Höchsten Sohn, der Syrier, unter die Schatten ... ' — become a soothing prelude to a

song of sleep, and 'Syrier' is not so much an allusion to as a change in Christ; as he comes to meet Dionysus (himself a god of the Orient), the long lingering syllable 'Sy-' and slight suggestion of a mysterious and exotic East soften his claim (like that of Israel) to be 'der Einzige'. The synthesis is inseparable from the rhythm, content from form: the poet does not 'forget the old gods' names' so that the critic can remember and replace them.

So the synthesis is a mere pause upon the path towards sleep; as the first couplet closes, so the Divine passes 'into the shadows', which close about the world of the poem. In 'Seelige Weise sehns' the soothing s becomes concentrated, while the long syllable 'See-' echoes in 'sehns', slowing the rhythm, an effect complete with 'Seele' in the next line. But in the single monosyllable 'sehns' 'seeing' and object of seeing are one; the divine synthesis, already a single 'spirit', is now defined 'purely' by the subject 'Seelige Weise', and is of their nature, object of a wisdom that sees, an 'intellektuale Anschauung'. Their naive and 'blessed' state is a renunciation of intellectual wisdom, and so a voluntary surrender of self; by itself the phrase would be almost polemical ('Sokrates und Alcibiades': only those are wise who see), but within the growing sense of peace it becomes the softest paradox. Wisdom and perception, intellect and senses, unite precisely because, neither having an object, and therefore no longer used, they are no longer in life, and so cease to conflict. This freedom from need and want, hope and fear, gives to 'Seelig' far profounder significance than merely 'blissful':

the root 'Seele', which emerges fully in the next line, be-
speaks freedom from matter, time, change.

Thus the function, the true value, of the divine syn-
thesis becomes clear: to free the mind from conflict,
indeed, from memory itself and its cares, as all search
and striving fall to sleep; the 'gods' are anonymous so
as to become 'es', or, truly, a mere s, a whispering part
of 'sehn', of rhythm. For rhythm is the World-Spirit.

This second couplet is bound together by subtle but
concentrated interplay of ideas and sounds; despite this,
it divides clearly into three parts marked by the two
caesuras. The first, hexametric, caesura coincides with
the sense, so that the first part is of concentrated s
alliteration: the soothing descent Lethe-wards, following
naturally from the preceding couplet. The second part is
unified by a liquid l suggesting Virgil's 'Lethaeum ... ,
domos placidas qui praenatat, amnem' (Aeneid, 6, 705),
and together with the subliminal (because unstressed)
repetition of 'Seelig-' (rendering hexameter and penta-
meter musically parallel) is of incantatory effect. It
is also decisively separate: within it, metre and syntax
conflict, first through the enjambement, then through the
anti-metrical syntactical pause; the rhythm accelerates,
seeking rest; a sequence of diminishing phases is created,
bound together by powerful alliteration: 'ein Lächeln aus
der gefangnen', 'Seele leuchtet', 'dem Licht'. The mind
too is 'gefangen', 'held captive' by this tension of which
'Licht' forms the climax: by sound, then, 'Licht' emerges
out of 'Lächeln' and 'Leuchtet' in pure form. The second

half of the pentameter, closing the couplet, releases the tension; the eye opens, and this image gains sensual immediacy through the round, open, au-*assonance* which unifies this third part.

In this way, since each emerges liberated from restricting rhythmical forces, the relationship between 'Licht' and 'Auge' amounts to a juxtaposition. They meet; not as subject and object, but, free now from the obscuring incidentalities of human life, as living and equal parts of Nature (as in 1.13). Such liberation is purity fresh as 'dew', whose drops are also tears, yet purer than those of grief; the purest light comes in the archetypal dawn, perceived only by flowers and the soul.

'Auge', then, is disembodied, transcendental, a 'Seelenorgan'.³⁵ Both 'Seele' and 'Auge' are singular, a fact and form silhouetted by the line-division, through which 'Seele' is pure and unqualified, so that the two subjects naturally join; therewith the sense of ownership (they belong to the 'Weise') wavers, and the three subjects become equal. Yet this liberation from possession (from potential use) follows naturally from the nature of the 'wise' perception with which the couplet opened; the 'soul' and the 'eye' are akin because they are trapped in the physical body as in the material world, and in this sense they are one, islands of spirituality.

Here is the finest technique. Had Hölderlin written 'thauen die Augen jetzt auf' the commentator would be justified in speaking of a 'Vision lichter, erfüllter Zukunft' (Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 52). But the threefold

sequence 'Lächeln ... leuchtet ... Licht' is the rhythmic image not so much of 'hymnic' light breaking through the darkness as of a vision only granted, possible, at the moment of death. The inspiration, conscious or not, is the Song of Simeon (Luke 2. 29-32): 'Herr, nun lässest du deinen Diener im Frieden fahren, wie du gesagt hast;/ Denn meine Augen haben deinen Heiland gesehen ... Ein Licht, zu erleuchten die Heiden'

The Lucan passage is certainly (cf. 3.567, 3f.) the inspiration for four lines of 'Friedensfeier':

Und wenige scheinen zu sterben
Es hält ein Ahnen die Seele,
Vom goldnen Lichte gesendet,
Hält ein Versprechen die Ältesten auf.
(11.126-29)

The meeting between 'the soul' and 'the light', threaded with l-alliteration suggestive of limpid purity; that there the soul is 'held', here 'captive'; that there too the poem awaits sleep (ll.33, 113; cf. the fifth strophe of 'Blödigkeit'); these things underline the common inspiration. Here, the 'noch' combines with the release of anticipation as the pentameter falls back to rest, so that the diminishing rhythm (ein Lächeln ... Licht') has higher significance: it is a dying sequence. For sleep is, in the words of another poet, 'certissima mortis imago'.³⁶

A sense of wonder, sorrow and infinite longing spreads over the poem. With the unspoken thought that release of the soul is also death, it is 'Seele' that sets the tone of the couplet, and 'Seelig' gains elegiac ambivalence:

the 'blessed' state may be that of 'die Entschlafenen'. The enclosed couplet becomes the realm of Elysium, and so, one sees, a descent deeper into the Underworld. Here is the Platonic conception of the soul which found lasting expression for the western tradition in the Orphic Elysium of Virgil's Underworld (Aeneid, Book 6); here it is said that the 'spiritus intus', the 'mens' — indeed, the 'Geist' or 'Seele' (anima) 'der Welt' — permeates all things, which are therefore of divine origin; but that this 'igneus ... vigor et caelestis origo' (1.730) is obscured, so as to be perceived only in so far as 'harmful bodies do not clog, nor earthly limbs and mortal frames dull. Hence fears and desires, griefs and joys; nor discern they the light, pent up in the gloom of their dark dungeon'.³⁷ So too Hyperion:

Freilich ist das Leben arm und einsam ... Wir fragen umsonst, wie wir herabgekommen, um wieder den Weg hinauf zu finden.

Wir sind, wie Feuer, das im dürren Aste oder im Kiesel schläft ... (I, 92/10-93/3; cf. I, 55/5f.)

For Virgil these 'souls', although for a while inhabitants of the Blessed Fields and breathing 'largior aether', must go on up again to the world, thence to return and undergo renewed purification. This purification is the draught of oblivion, Lethe. The overriding conception is one of eternal cycle in which the soul will always be held captive, 'inclusa': 'gefangne Seele'.

The 'Kerker' is finitude itself, but here, mediated by the intense concentration upon the individual of Romanticism,

the purity of the soul has become the mirror of the self, its 'Reflexion'. Thus the soul is 'enclosed' in a different sense: within the autonomous world of the poem whose microcosmic image the couplet is, and these conflicting senses give to the ideas of captivity and liberation an ambivalence whose only solution is absence of solution: longing, the object of which has become the 'Seeligkeit' of death, a 'Sehnen' that not in sound alone runs beneath the 'Sehn' of the 'Weise' and the lingering see-sound.

The 'Sanfter' with which the third couplet opens is musically perfect beyond its immediate sense; through the parallelism of the three couplets each is felt as a further stage towards peace and sleep, but as this movement only really begins to be felt in the second couplet, the comparative becomes almost a sign marking a distinct musical phase, the pianissimo to the foregoing piano, 'softly' but precisely demarcating the world of the end. The spell becomes hypnotic. For with this third couplet the triad is now filled by the rhythm of the first strophe, of Night. That was the threefold pentametric form, created by the regular strong caesura in the hexameter's third foot, and within this enclosed and enclosing, embracing, vessel came the second half of the hexameter, striving, searching, 'open' through its unstressed syllables at beginning and end, but only to heighten the ineluctable finality of form. Here, however, each couplet is end-stopped, so that the lesser space (the triad) is the more concentrated. This is only possible at the end. With the first 'schläft' the pentametric pattern is complete,

yielding a sequence of parallel verbs of increasing weight and length: 'kommt', 'sehns', 'schläft'; the voice, already drawn out over 'sehns', is now forced down deep by 'schläft', long, heavy with consonants, rich in established alliteration. And as the light dactylic syllable of the preceding verbs ('leuchtet', 'thauet', 'träumet') falls away, movement ends; for while the softest of dreams is still a part of life, sleep partakes of death. Thus 'schläft', despite appearances, is rhythmically of the same quality as 'kommt' in l.15: the daemonic coming of a spirit, a falling-away of protective phenomena, unveiling the noumenon. Again the key is a sudden 'rush' as the main idea is brought forward, disrupting a calm and orderly flow (for logically 'schläft' should wait till the final line); thereby that idea gains pre-eminent power as moving, living force, and the sense of order becomes at its service, a surrender of rational order, and so a spell.

Thus a powerful anticipation of the final word is created, and 'sleep' closes about the world of this last couplet: the Underworld. There now, in the hexameter's second half, follows a very slight acceleration, an upbeat followed by two dactyls, but in which four of the dactylic syllables, including the two stressed, form a long and heavy assonance: 'Armen der Erde der'. It is the dark and sorrowful nature of Earth, who takes all her children, even the doers of evil, back into herself: the first stressed syllable, long and open, is the opening (Sprachgestus) of her arms; the two dactyls are the cradle that rocks her son to sleep. The slight movement

is thus a wonderful piece of art, infinitely deepening the sense of rest; it is a movement within and so further into sleep, the image of an eternal noumenous pulse deep below the earth, the elegiac measure of all transient things, both good and evil. 'So hast du manches gebaut,/ Und manches begraben' ('Friedensfeier', ll.149-50). 'Titan', delayed till the end, is in sleep.

The pentameter brings the triad, and with it the whole poem, to rest; the last word, end, is 'sleep'. Thus the 'Selbst' with which it opens has the force of a musical superlative to the comparative 'Sanfter': the sign ppp. Only at the point where the rhythm of elegiac embrace, the sense of enclosure, has gained its utmost power and is on the very threshold of fulfilment does the figure of discord enter the poem, and by degrees. The soft 'selbst' (Swabian s) draws out and delays the name, pausing first syntactically, at the separated epithet, then metrically at the caesura, so that the sense of extremity in 'selbst' itself gains utmost emphasis. As the harsh c-sound and the growling syllables 'Cerber-' are absorbed, 'drowned in sounds of peace', the fact of the name within the context — which therewith stretches over the entire poem — of a search for gods with names gains highest thematic significance and rhythmical power. Admittedly Cerberus too, 'der moralische Boreas, der Geist des Neides' (cf. B229, 58), has been rationalised; nevertheless, the presence of the mythological name at the very climax of the poem remembers and unifies the whole as an heroic search for the Divine whose presence, indeed reality, is epitomised in

the living names of a Volksreligion. But it ends in the naming of the evil spirit. So too the emphatic 'selbst' cannot but call to mind those moments of divine 'coming' which in structural terms should have brought fulfilment ('dann aber in Wahrheit/ Kommen sie selbst' and 'Weil er bleibet und selbst') but where the gods remained, as at the end of the sixth strophe, anonymous. In this way 'Cerberus' is raised to become the antagonistic principle itself.

The three self-enclosed couplets are thus the three-fold form of a single image: three vessels of the draught of Lethe, successive cups of oblivion, (as in 'Andenken') 'Des dunkeln Lichtes voll'. As 'trinket und schläft' echoes 'träumet und schläft', not just the third but all three couplets become self-enclosed; they become varying forms of one another as of a single whole. The microcosmic 'Grund', created by the strophic form as instrument of liberation, has recreated itself in its truer form of harmonious beauty. The poem, accepting its limitation, is not merely an autonomous work of art, but a sealed-off realm of darkness. The entire striving and search of the poem, its apparent dynamic and motivating force, is now felt as a single component of rhythm, a stretching-open of the elegiac form, which now returns to itself. This means that the content of the search, the specific ideas to which it was attached at various points in the poem (notably Greece and Dionysus), is now subsumed and subordinated; conversely, the poem's aesthetic unity depends upon the pervading insubstantiality of the Ideal, the

object of striving. The totality of the first six strophes, themselves through the unattainability of their object an 'Ausflug und Rückkehr zu sich selbst', has not progressed to a solution, nor has it sought to, but is contained within itself in new form, namely, within the eight strophes which here stand open in anticipation of fulfilment, of 'naming'. The various arcs, in themselves linear, of search now exist within the overall harmony of a single search which ultimately cannot be attached to single ideas (even such of utopian vagueness), because the divine object is divine absence: longing. Thus the single self-enclosed couplet, the vessel of divine coming, which ended the sixth strophe now reappears in threefold form; it has intensified in elegiac beauty in proportion as the objectivity and intellectual will of the poem has been extended and so undermined.

So the poem embraces its intellectual and philosophical element in consoling and resignative darkness, and that element becomes Reason: an undifferentiating conception of the intellect as heroic 'Streben', necessary ('Schicksaal') because of consciousness, but by virtue of this same, most abstract, perspective necessarily negative. This unity of rhythm is guaranteed by the self-defeating vagueness of the ideas, permitting contradictory thoughts to slide into one another:—

In the eighth strophe the missing ideal is 'Freude mit Geist'. What is 'Geist'? In context the contrast is with 'menschliche Freude', bread and wine, the rationalised

communion now to be understood as food and drink: 'Geist', then, is spiritual communion with Nature through material things, as opposed to material pleasure. Thus the beauty of the resignative moment (l.137) was again a return to 'rational mythology': for the present the poet's role is rationalisation of past religion rather than joyful participation in Volksreligion. His work, then, has been 'vergeistigende Kunst' (4.261, 31f.), but why should this be resignative, negative? for that it lacks communal fulfilment is hardly the poet's fault, nor a defect in the ideal.

It is negative because as soon as the ideal is spoken it falls within the context of 'naming'. Immediately the meaning of 'Geist' slides away and becomes 'Natur', what the Greeks possessed but 'Hesperien' lacks: 'spirit' in the sense of 'vitality', so that 'Geist' is in practice reducible to its antithesis, 'Leben'. This sense, intimated in the mention of 'die Starcken' ('naming' is an 'heroic' act) is confirmed by the 'spirit' of the ninth strophe, himself intended as a reconciling climax; for 'Geist' (now with onomatopoeic force: sparkling, foaming like wine) is indeed 'der Weingott', an elemental spirit of Nature. But as this reconciliation fails to 'last' the ideal becomes 'Vater Aether', reverts, then, to an anti-materialistic 'spirit'-uality ('Aether' as opposed to 'Mutter Erde'): Hesperien has 'Natur' (bread and wine), but not 'Geist'.

The effect of this ambivalence is to transfer negativity from the contemporary world to the poet's own activity; in this it relates directly to the blurring identification of the poet's own situation with that of 'Hesperien' as

darkness. For thus reality and ideal exist alike as mutually-condemning negative poles. This is the intractable problem of 'rational mythology' and its key concept, 'naming'. When the poet rationalises past religion he is 'spiritualising' his contemporaries' attitude to Nature, and names 'was vor Augen dir ist', for example bread and wine; the negative aspect ought then not to be a deficiency in the poet's ideal, but only that it is not yet shared. Yet because the antithesis is not a future and rational culture, but the 'irrational' past, Greece, the negative perspective automatically reasserts itself. The end result is to give 'naming' such comprehensive vagueness that it becomes identical with poetic activity as such, and so, secretly, with language itself.

A perpetual alternation is achieved, ultimately reducible to the polarity 'Geist'/'Leben'; whichever is present, the other will be absent. (The implicit pole 'Leben' alternates correspondingly, between the negative meaning of (dead) matter (as opposed to life- (sc. consciousness-)giving spirit), and the positive meaning of vitality (what the abstract 'Geist' ('leere Unendlichkeit') lacks).) This subordination of ideas to an all-embracing and veiling rhythm is designed to express irremediable and unconditional absence; and this structure is assured by the merging of the historical with the typological conception of Greece (as childhood of mankind).

For the poet who creates a 'Mythologie der Vernunft', the 'Priester der göttlichen Natur', all historical religions, including the Greek and Christian, are in

principle no more than models for communal religious feeling (the 'Spirit'), and his task is to transfer that feeling to Nature, to the constants of human experience which transcend any given historical situation (one has only to look up to see 'Vater Aether', or down to see Earth). Here the poet's work is 'Kunst', 'die Blüthe, die Vollendung der Natur' (4.152, 13), and 'der poëtische Geist' is the spiritual antithesis to contemporary society with its enlightened, prosaic attitude (mastery) to Nature, its rationalism.

But if the corrective paradigm is the Greek culture, epitomised in the gods and their living 'names', the religion of Nature becomes bound to the historical past. To say that Greece is a particular example of 'ein höherer mehr als mechanischer Zusammenhang ... ein höheres Geschik zwischen den Menschen und ihrer Welt' (4.275, 6-8) merely restates the problem, for in a rational religion the historical element would be incidental; 'Vater Aether' is divine precisely because he transcends history. So the poet negates Greece by rationalising the Greek gods, so that they become 'Götter der Natur'; negates this rationalisation by confronting it with the historical reality of the Greek gods.

This elegiac co-existence and, through the absence of mediating factors, antithetical parity of contradictory ideals (transcendental religion of Nature/historical Greece)³⁸ blurs their outlines. The vagueness is responsible for the contradiction; the rationalisation of Greece merges rather than conflicts with the assumption that

Greece alone was unity with Nature and therefore irrevocably lost childhood of mankind. The 'rational mythology' becomes a process of loss which reaches its height in the abstraction, the naming, of 'naming'. Therewith the poet's own activity becomes 'Kunst im weitesten Sinne',³⁹ indistinguishable from the Enlightened intellect with its mastery over Nature.

And thus the poet reproduces the very structure of consciousness itself; for by rationalising Greece he 'names' Nature. Greece, the past reality, plays the part of childhood, and the 'rational mythology' that of lost innocence. The subordination of ideas to rhythm has not been intellectual weakness. The enlightened intellect is clarity, distinction, the principle of Light; for Hölderlin per se 'Ur-theil', 'Trennung', 'Unterscheidung', futile save in longing to return to the origin; hard and fast concepts are a tyrannical imposition of law upon Nature.

Darkness is therefore ultimately not something that even requires a solution; it is itself the answer to the Enlightenment: the sphere of 'kühneres Leben'. The supposedly theological synthesis of Greek religion and Christianity is the moment when the intellect softens in longing; here the poet is not satisfying but abandoning his striving, which is therewith unconcluded, 'open' to the Infinite. 'Vater Aether' ('der Geist') is not only the end, but also (cf. 4.241, 3-4) the beginning. The recreation of cosmic harmony provides the context of an absolute failure to find light, a solution; within this context,

however, the intellect has been object-less. The climax has been the spiritual Olympus the poet has failed to scale, and it is 'der poëtische Geist', the orphic spirit, that, descending into the Underworld, condescends to finitude, 'cast' 'tief unter die Lebenden', like Hyperion 'herabgekommen zur Erde', 'wie der Lichtstral' luciferian. Both 'aber's (ll.152 and 155) were falls from grace.

What is absent is therefore not an object of will (what might be), but that which is lost (cannot be). The intellect has no object, is purpose-less, because it is, and in order that it may be, a search for the Infinite, 'das Offene' against which all purpose becomes a nothing. In that this search fails, the Divine is not to be grasped by such means; the intellect becomes per se abstract and negative, reason as opposed to feeling, which is longing.

Yet the poem's sub specie aeternitatis remains the unquestioned assumption, the 'Grund'. The search is nefas, hubris, not because the self cannot partake of divinity, but because it has done so; therefore infinity remains the ultimate object of the poem's thought. If childhood 'Seeligkeit' is oneness with the object, Nature, then adult life is consciousness, a search without an object.

In that Cerberus, the evil name, is the antagonistic principle, the final pentameter is the moment of highest, divine synthesis, the 'Nichts ist, das Böse' ('An die Madonna', l.84) which 'des Höchsten/ Sohn' merely subserves. Cerberus is 'der friedlose Nachtgeist' (Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 58); but through the merging of personal

and contemporary darkness he is also the single, concentrated, memory of the poem's entire striving up towards the heavens. So this moment is remembered divinity, and, since what is lost is beautiful, divine beauty, needing no future.⁴⁰

This self-sufficiency, the totality of infinity mediated through time (the course of the poem), of a reflected eternity before which all problems, distinctions, merge into One and fade, is only achieved in the last stages of composition. The first version has: 'Aber indessen kommt, als Freudenbote, des Weines/ Göttlichgesandter Geist unter die Schatten herab' (FHA 6.221, 32, 34). This 'Freudenbote' is much closer to the 'Weingott', 'allzeit froh', with whom the ninth strophe opened; the tone too is very different, not least in that 'Seelige Weise' referred back strongly to 1.22 and in general to the second strophe. In short, at that stage the poem still spoke to Heinse.

With the introduction of Christ into the final triad, not only does the quality of the divine coming change completely, but now, and only now, does the climax, the 'Ja!', fail to 'last'. The concentration throughout the poem on Greece wavers; and this undermining of the journey, of will and direction, is indispensable for the poem's formal unity, which itself depends on the figure of Christ.

He, the figure of sorrow and death, brings consolation only within the context of divine absence. The exclusiveness of the claim personally to have 'swallowed death up in victory' (I Corinthians 15. 54) has been rationalised, here as in 'Friedensfeier':

of god and man. But since the very process of rationalisation remains implicitly lost naivety, this pantheistic conception is able to retain vivid pantheistic associations. Nevertheless, the effect is to undermine the special significance of 'der Weingott', and also his particular associations with Nature. Through the synthesis with Christ, he comes to represent the Greek pantheon in a metaphysical duality which is, like Empedokles, 'aus Licht und Nacht geboren' (III, 374). Longing for Greece, still the original lament for oneness with Nature, has taken the form of the immortal gods. But thus it is bound to infinity, to nothing (the 'Idee' of immortality). Implicit in the 'dark shade' of Christ, his human reality, is the search for 'Halt', 'Bleiben', in the face of divine fire, the intangible element of the Hymns (so that the late variants become a natural consequence; cf. especially FHA 6.233, 35f.). Although the poetic psychology is here beginning to pass beyond understanding, one senses that the essence of the change introduced by Christ is a transfer of power from ideas to images; 'Licht' and 'Nacht' are no longer more or less metaphors for spirit and matter (as in the 'Empedokles' passage), but images which while retaining the original metaphysical structure exist in their own right.

Always the poem returns to the mysterious sorrow of longing, to darkness, indeed, to the shadow of death, as proper relationship to the Divine. Whether the Divine is the 'Götter der Natur', the gods of Greece, or the Infinite itself, that too is a matter for rhythm, not reason.

The inherent possibility, even now, that the poem might continue,⁴¹ resume its striving, attaches, paradoxically, far greater significance to the end than is usual in poetry, for it is not dictated by the overall context and ideas, but is, rather, a free decision that itself vindicates the ultimate supremacy of rhythm. Thus the end, like that of the first 'Friedensfeier', has the power of a Sprachgestus: 'Und mögen bleiben wir nun.'

The Wine-god has no 'Bleiben'. In essence masculine, a life-force like the serpent or stem of a tree, he is a glorification of the male ego. The 'lasting' quality of Christ turns away from the vitalistic conception of a Greece of innocent sensuality, and thus the original addressee has faded from 'Seelige Weise'. But it is not that Hölderlin has discovered an innate superiority, spirituality, in Christianity.⁴² Rather, the 'heroic' mode, the masculine side of contemporary thought with its will to change and revolution, is alien to him. 'Der Rhein' is the poem thought of by critics as Hölderlin's most 'perfect' work; yet this judgement is based on external symmetry of form and transparent consistency of thought-structure. There the 'Gott der Mythe' with his 'Jauchzen', his tearing of bonds (cf. Euripides, Bacchae, 642f.), his fascination for feminine Nature, is this same vitalistic spirit. It is no coincidence that 'Der Rhein' too was dedicated to Heinse (and then to 'heroic' Sinclair). There is a facility, an absence of conflict, which contrasts with 'Brod und Wein', in its final form among the very greatest poems, and leading naturally to the beautiful early outlines of 'Friedensfeier'. It is

the mystical and contemplative Pietistic strand that 'lasts', 'Seele' rather than 'Geist', feminine divided from, at war with, masculine character; and even had Heinse lived the ways would have parted.⁴³

Nowhere is Hölderlin's nature better described than by himself, in Hyperion:

Komm! rief ich ... , komm, wer **hält** es länger aus' im
Kerker, der uns umnachtet?
Wohin, mein Schwärmer ... (I, 55/5-7)

VI. 'HEIMKUNFT': HYMNIC ELEGY

The opening words, 'Drinn in den Alpen', proclaim the sphere both of the strophe and the poem as a whole. The intimation of an enclosed poetic realm then finds immediate realisation in the first twelve lines, which form a single whole depicting the 'liebender Streit' between order and chaos. Here the strophic form plays the part of the 'ewige Schranken'. The restless energy of the Alpine dawn bursts over the first triadic transition, and the second, clearly-marked division gains the heightened meaning of restored order. The position of 'Tag' at the end of the second triad thus signifies an end to conflict, emerging certainty, clarity, and this feeling unites with the image. We can see the eagle, outlined, in sheer poise, 'hoch in der Luft'; his very cry is silhouetted against the preceding confusion and, subtly personified by 'merket die Zeit', it becomes, in its thematic brevity and simplicity ('rufet den Tag') piercing through the extended descriptive passage, an irresistible command.

All twelve lines work towards this end. The first couplet, self-enclosed, calmly descriptive, provides the type of order. The second seems restless within this restraint; while the rhymed pentameter endings reinforce

the sense of enclosure, 'Dahin, dorthin' forces 'toset und stürzt' together, thus breaking over into the fourth-foot caesura, so that the pentameter seems to be holding the hexameter back; these dynamic forces make 'Stral' a piercing signal. Thus the third couplet is impelled over the triadic division, and when the fourth returns to end-stopped form the triadic structure has been broken open, and seems to abandon itself to a formless will, an endless striving graphically expressed in the opening of the fifth couplet, in which 'Denn' resumes the 'Denn' in the preceding pentameter, so that one line follows another in sheer succession and 'unendlicher' reaches over the normal caesura. So the closing words, 'kühner geordnet, gemischt', coincide with an utterly open form. Hence the forming power of the antithesis: the sixth couplet with its 'Dennoch'.

These two triads display Hölderlin's complete mastery of the elegiac form he himself has created. The triadic divisions are no longer stages towards and enabling the perfect strophe; the conflict between freedom and formal necessity with its harmonious resolution has already taken place within the strophe, and the final triad need do nothing more than fill up these now absolute bounds. The autonomy of the strophe is no longer even in question; it is, through the advancing of the barrier of poetic form into the strophe, actually anticipated. The striving for liberation has become an immanent antagonistic principle, while the complete release of tension leaves the remaining space as that of pure poetic purpose.

Thus the temporal course of the strophe has become a spatial image: the enclosed sphere has the heightened meaning of safety, a magic circle. This enhances the idyllic element, 'das Dörflein', whose clear demarcation gives spatial dimension to the first two triads as well; they become the sphere of a conflict fought out not just before dawn, but above the tiny village. Forces of which it is all unwitting (it sleeps) have been at work on its behalf, and the final triad is the safety in which it can now 'awake' and 'look up', for all is now growth, good and fruitful energy. The release of tension is commensurate with the intensified sense of ultimate form; the rhythm rushes downwards with the springs to rest, successive sets of diminishing syntactical units — 'denn schon ... Wasserquellen' 'der Grund ... dampft' 'Echo ... umher'; 'und die ... Werkstatt' 'Reget ... Nacht' 'Gaaben versendend' 'den Arm' — washing over the metrical divisions in foreknowledge of certain destination.

If in 'Brod und Wein' the first strophe was the sphere of longing, and so separated from its object, insufficient, here the poetic experience has been in principle completely expressed by the first strophe.

The second strophe too begins with a self-contained and calmly descriptive couplet, a formal norm in which the syntactically complete hexameter is answered by the parallel pentameter (the same motif appearing in reverse order in the second half), and the tone is set by the opening words 'Ruhig' and 'Voll'. And here too the second

couplet abides by this restraint, yet holds the seeds of liberation; a slight suggestion of movement ('hinauf') uniting with the 'higher' object (the 'god'), it seems to ascend towards the Divine, so that the two couplets in their equality of form are the image of mounting steps.¹ The tension created by this sense of purpose spans the whole hexameter; the resuming 'Und' joins with the comparative 'höher' to suggest increase rather than mere succession, and 'höher' is itself echoed and surpassed by the metrically stressed 'über', whereupon the long syllables of the first half, culminating in the unstressed 'wohnt', dissolve into short dactylic vowels as though passing upwards into a lighter, less dense air; 'über' is thus a vivid Sprachgestus, and through the contrast with the first couplet the enjambement, the 'open' hexameter, gains liberating power. Thus the third hexameter conveys a sense of arrival, of completed ascent, and the transcendental purity of the new 'aethereal' sphere speaks through the limpid l-alliteration.

Once again the first two couplets have prepared for the dissolving of their triad, and the 'higher sphere' is one in which division, boundary and limitation exist only to be transcended; 'geneigt' is thus perfectly positioned, the god pausing, doubtful, at the meeting-point of gods and men, before releasing his self-revelation. The division is absorbed into flowing continuity (on each side, parallel clauses); but 'Freude zu schaffen' far exceeds 'Leben zu geben', and makes clear not only the higher quality of this new sphere, but also the nature of the

transcending movement. It is an act of love.

Such love is the renunciation of a divine nature which man could not sustain. The 'measure' of divine caution and self-restraint is expressed through the powerful delaying effect of the fourth couplet, in which the same subordinated idea occurs four times; yet the effect is to heighten anticipation, and the god's deliberation and caution serve to elevate the natural phenomena. As the tension is released, the rhythm overflows its banks in a stream of 'und's, pouring down blessings in the form of rain, but still retaining an ebbing undercurrent to balance the flow and to convey 'wohlgediegen', 'mild', 'sanft', 'traut', for each fresh idea, gift, can refer both forward and back syntactically. This, again, is 'Maß', and implies contrast with overwhelming presence; in the personifying address ('euch') a climax of giving is reached, and the third pentameter seems to fall back in rest, its restoration of balance anticipating the final pentameter.

It proves, however, to be the up-beat to a second movement, for here too the barrier is there only to be transcended. As 'the god' 'renews' 'the times', so too (Sprachgestus) the rhythm of ascent lifts the poem up to an aethereal 'noch höher'. The higher and purer quality of this 'new' sphere is the thematic transition, prepared for in 1.30, from rebirth in Nature to a spiritual spring that permeates and opens men's hearts. Thus the culmination of the climb is 'öffnet und aufhellt', absolute and indefinable open-ness, expressing the very nature of the

god himself; rhythmically this point of thematic, summarising concentration is similar to 'rufet den Tag' in the first strophe, the point of return in the 'Wechsel des Entfaltens und Verschließens'. It is the summit, and 'Wie ers liebet' is the 'Atem-holen'² before the descent.

The tension achieved through the denial of the natural points of rest (the opening of the strophic form) is thus released in the moment when idea and rhythm become one. The coincidence of the 'beginning' human response with the pentameter's second, fulfilling half ('und jezt wieder ein Leben beginnt') brings out the pentameter's inherent function as answer to the hexameter's question, so that the final restoration of form is heightened and the last three lines as a whole are felt to be the response, the opening heart which also, being the effect, closes the drama.

One sees that there is here no progressive loss, but no regressive gain either, in intensity. The rhythmic arc is of the same quality as in the first strophe. This aesthetic judgement is directly related to the nature of the Divine in 'Heimkunft':—

The whole strophe expresses an aethereal love which transcends, loosens and dissolves all boundaries and divisions, all limitations. I have considered this primarily in respect of the triadic structure, but it is reflected altogether in the style: in the fluidity of syntax (from 1.23 to 1.36 is a single flow of connecting 'und's, with neither full stops nor adversative conjunctions),

and of language, notably in the dissociation of epithets as substantives and in the similar, lighter, device briefly suspending an adjective at the end of a metrical unit (ll. 21, 27, 31). All this works, directly or indirectly, towards dissolving the theological solidity of the term 'God'. Within this unifying factor, the rhythm that expands like a blossoming flower, the dissolving of the Divine into qualities joins with the image of spring. The effect is a self-revelation of the 'god' as self-less being. 'God' is no longer a name identifying a personal will, but the divinity of experience itself. Accordingly, his worship is not attached to specific external forms, but consists 'purely' in the response of man described in the last lines, itself an indefinably 'open' joy.

Such a theology is a 'rationalisation' of the Christian god, to whom this god is the implicit antithesis. The God of orthodoxy is a transcendent personal will identified by man through historical interventions and revelations (above all that of Christ) not necessarily within the natural and immediate experience of anyone, and he therefore transcends ideas founded upon human experience (for a Christian, 'God is love' does not mean 'Love is God'). His will commands belief, faith, 'durch das schrökende Gebot, zu glauben ... Glaube kann nie geboten werden, so wenig als Liebe' (B173, 72f.). Here the poetic process deliberately strips it of historical association and dissolves analogy to the human personality, and above all to the Father, paternal authority, masculine will, the indispensable aspect of Judaeen tradition. God is softened into

passive compliance with the poet's own will, and ceases to be substantival; command, the intersubjective gap of revelation, is replaced (cf. B171, 58-61) by love. In this sense the dissolving barriers are those between man and God. The Divine is thus literally self-less. The elimination of the 'irrational' 'mythological' element leaves the Christian God with nothing but the mere claim to be the One God. That is an 'egotistical' 'dogmatic' postulate and a pure idea ('der reine Geist'): the abstraction 'Absolute I'.

The attack on despotism in B171, 50-63, is a striking example of how Hölderlin 'talks to himself' (B183, 82-84) in certain letters: 'Es ist auch gut, und sogar die erste Bedingung alles Lebens und aller Organisation, daß keine Kraft monarchisch ist im Himmel und auf Erden. Die absolute Monarchie hebt sich überall selbst auf, denn sie ist objectlos; es hat auch im strengen Sinne niemals eine gegeben' (B171, 50-54). At first sight he is speaking to the republican Sinclair. Through the merging of 'heavenly' and 'earthly' monarchy he is also speaking as one revolutionary heretic to another: the Christian god is a despot. But he is also talking to Sinclair the 'Fichteaneer'; and in rejecting Fichte's 'Ich' he is rejecting an idiosyncratic conception which takes no account of the 'Idee des Strebens' (cf. B94, 66f.).

Thus, through the elimination from each of (admittedly very different) will, Hölderlin is able to regard the Christian God and Fichte's 'Absolute I' as structurally one and the same; the epistemological foundation is the

unity (freedom and equality) of all 'spirits'. Yet, far from leading to a rationalistic rejection of romantic aspiration, this elimination from the philosophy of religion of an intersubjective perspective elevates the status and significance of individual consciousness; undifferentiated, it exists in immediate relationship to an all-embracing object. The universe is reduced to a dualism: finite Subject/infinite Object. Since what is rejected is never the concept 'infinity', but always the exclusive right of an 'Ich', a single 'spirit', to possess infinity, the limitation upon the 'pure poetic spirit' is never its relativity, always its failure to be absolute, to realise its divine potential. For Hölderlin, then, the sole contradiction of individual infinity is not a subject, but the Object; and that is why the distinction between gods and men must constantly be reaffirmed (cf. B231, 27f.; 2.645, 10; 'Der Rhein', ll.103-04, 119-20).

In 'Brod und Wein' the 'titanic' attempt to seize infinity and its failure yielded, as I interpreted it, the structure of longing for the lost unity of childhood, and therewith the autonomous strophe, the lost world with the 'Seeligkeit' of 'Hingabe' governed by 'Eigenmacht'. Now this world persists in 'Heimkunft', but with a decisive change the key to which is provided by a passage in a letter from Hauptwil, the last before the 'home-coming'. Hölderlin writes to his brother: 'Wie wir sonst zusammen dachten, denke ich noch, nur angewandter! Alles unendliche Einigkeit, aber in diesem Allem ein vorzüglich Einiges und Einigendes, das, an sich, kein Ich ist, und dieses sei

unter uns Gott!' (B231, 40-43).

Again one has the impression that Hölderlin is 'talking to himself' (for the stress on 'kein Ich' is not demanded by the context); and indeed the homogeneity of the 'Spirit' enables here too a simultaneous rejection of the Christian God and individual aspiration to divinity. What is new is the means whereby the 'difference' between 'gods and men' is achieved. It is no longer Greek, but Christian, 'mythology' that is 'rationalised'; such a conception of the hen kai pan is 'angewandter' because, through adoption of the attributes of the transcendent and personal God, the concentration is now on the One rather than the All, and yet the One is 'kein Ich' because, 'rationalised', the Christian God is the abstract idea 'Ich' — and the 'Ich' is a finite Subject, as opposed to the infinite hen kai pan.

Thus the 'Idee' of the Christian God (personal divinity) is not rejected, but personified. The Infinite ('das Offene') sets aside self-hood of its own free will: through an act of love. But the poem now represents the finite world as such; finitude and poetic consciousness are identified. Nature is both 'an sich', an object 'needing' (personified: 'demanding'; cf. 'Der Rhein', ll.109-14) human consciousness to 'feel', and yet the subjective will of the Infinite, relating to the world through 'Entäußerung'. This is Christian tradition — the Word made flesh — in metaphysical interpretation. Nature acts; and yet is an object (of perception). In the light of this resolution of the contradiction between panentheism and Christian

theology, the dissolving of the boundaries of poetic form also symbolises an act of love on the poet's part: the transcending of merely rational divisions and distinctions. This surrender of the mind should not be confused with intellectual weakness; it reflects, rather, the desire to drain the draught of experience to the very depths of intensity, a desire which, again, can only be called titanic, and which now (cf. B236, 75-77) nears its fulfilment.

But this Hölderlin will have seen differently. Personal divinity is no longer the lost possession of a 'pure poetic spirit' that reconstitutes itself through poetry; it has become a cosmic myth, and Hölderlin is able definitively to detach himself from the hubristic wish to be divine, and to reject a path now identified with the Greeks or the (French) revolutionaries: 'Dann haben ... die Trozigen ... den Göttern gleich zu werden getrachtet' ('Der Rhein', ll.99-104).

This self-detachment he will have regarded as an act of self-purification. For longing, however 'pure' its object, nevertheless still involves the personality with its needs and desires, hopes and fears; indeed, the divine object can still be seen as a sublimated projection of selfish interest, born of a highly ambivalent search for purity from life for the sake of the immortal soul. The further step is then the elimination of any and all such psychological motivation; the complete objectivisation of the divine object of poetic devotion.

The dissolution into qualities of substantial divinity reproduces the metaphysical selflessness of the

Divine, the hen kai pan. Yet this self-lessness is simultaneously a real phenomenon; 'das Offene' is the infinite purity of the Alpine sky, and 'der reine/ Seelige Gott', a title which need only be read out of context to revert to 'der reine Geist', merges with 'der ätherische [Gott]'. This unity of concrete perception and abstract idea is achieved through the rhythmical structure of 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht'; the metaphysical self-lessness of the Divine appears as concrete self-expression, a blossoming self-revelation, an abdication of infinity, an erotic entry into the finite world. The Absolute appears, through the mythopoeic act, as potential formlessness within poetic form; personified, then, as He who in the selflessness of agapē (cf. I John 4. 9) abdicates actual and accepts potential infinity.

Despite the strict parallelism (anaphoric 'Vieles') of its opening triad, the rhythm of the third strophe is essentially the same as in the first two; the internal barrier of the strophic form dissolves, but in so doing presupposes and so heightens the restoration of form.

Again form and content unite to give the first couplet a strong sense of enclosed autonomy. The opening words, 'Vieles sprach ich zu ihm', have the same effect, proclaiming the poetic sphere in its seclusion, as 'Drinn in den Alpen'. Thus the new opening already contains and anticipates its closing in the finality of form; it proclaims the consecrated precinct, the temenos, within which a priest (or poet) may commune with the Divine. This image

is confirmed by the couplet's self-contained unity; the coincidence of the 'denn'-clause with the second half of the end-stopped pentameter and its parallelism, through separation from the governing 'denn', in form and sense to the main clause override its syntactical subordination, and it becomes restatement of statement. And as both clauses end with 'ihm', the Divine, the god is felt as beginning and end. This variation upon the basic closed form of the couplet, question and answer, is drawn out and so heightened by the relative clause, which thus itself yields an antiphonal inset, the ornamental doublet 'sinnen/ Oder singen' (the words come, naturally in the context, from Pindar). Thus the enjambement, typically, through the illusion of openness actually strengthens the couplet as a unit; and the couplet presents the perfect type of Hölderlin's elegiac thought, conceived in direct reaction against prosaic, linear, rational, thinking. For the hexameter seems to be preparing for an extended reflection (seems to be 'open'), but with the pentameter falls back, returns to itself, and creates (cf. 'Götter wandelten einst ... ', l.12) a 'geheimere Welt'.

Once again, then, the first couplet is rhythmically normative, creating the formal barriers which must now dissolve. Once again its style is that of calm statement, here, however, not descriptive, but expressing a truth beyond question, namely, the relationship of the poet to the Divine. The genus sublime is achieved through 'epic' simplicity of narrative ('Vieles sprach ich'), oracular impersonality ('es gilt'), a moderation that implies

insistence is unnecessary ('meistens'). Thus the introduction of the lyric I at this point in the poem assimilates and subordinates it to the already established rhythm and its association with the aethereal 'spirit' of the Alps; the 'I', this suggests, is no more than a vessel of the Divine, its selfhood, individuality, no longer important. This fiction endows the lyric voice of the whole poem, which after all remains the poet's creation, with otherworldly apartness and priestly purity, with an insight both gentle and piercing: prophetic. But since the poem is addressed 'an die Verwandten', and so at least superficially concerned with familiar human relationships, the third strophe, which brings the 'Ich' home (the last word is 'verwandt', and the fourth strophe opens with 'Heimath'), has a quality of its own.

In the second couplet the anaphoric 'Vieles', the expanding sentence-structure (the subordinate clause ('damit ... ')) is pushed forward (compare 'denn ... ')) and the remembered rhythmic pattern create a sense of anticipation; here too the barrier of the end-stopped couplet is about to give way. It also re-introduces the 'Spirit' as potentially destructive numen, so that the surrendering strophic form is again associated with divine agency. The third pentameter is thus not so much an answer to the hexameter's question as, through the longer relative clause, the rhythmical continuation of 'die im Vaterlande besorgt sind', creating an expanding movement which lifts the strophic form over itself and into a new realm.

In the fair copy of the Homburg Folioheft this

transition is effected by the exclamation 'Landesleute!', but this is one of the very few changes Hölderlin made to his first complete version. Originally he wrote 'Theure Verwandte', followed by a comma (see FHA 6.297, 18f., 305, 19). Both the unity of the strophe and the nature of the transition emerge more clearly if the earlier reading is retained: not only is 'Verwandte' fulfilled by the final 'verwandt', but the affective warmth of 'Theure' is directly parallel to 'Warm', the opening word of the third triad, so that man and Nature seem to merge in the all-embracing warmth of family which conveys itself both to 'Alles' (1.53; not just people) and 'scheint', expressing the permeating love of the Sun. Formal unity thus expresses the unity of all life in spring; this is lost with 'Landesleute!'. For if the word with which the triadic barrier dissolves is the affective 'Theure', then that barrier has, like ice, melted in the warmth of love; and whereas the exclamation demands a halt, the softer comma unites perfectly with the description of the lake that follows, becoming the merest pause, ripple, on the waters, no sooner appearing than disappearing, lost, in the dreamlike flowing movement of the elegiac rhythm created by the calm, self-contained 'Und'-clause of the pentameter in the fourth couplet.

The function of the end-stopped 'Und'-clause, always the type of perfect response to the open hexameter, is here brought out yet more strongly by its closing the entire expanding movement, all seven lines, of which, by virtue of the dissolved triad, the hexameter (1.43) was

merely the open culmination. This movement thus becomes concentrated in the hexameter, so that it is balanced, embraced, 'rocked', by the pentameter, an effect enhanced by the subtle balancing of internal sound — 'Ruderer' and 'ruhig', 'Saß' and 'Fahrt' — within syntactically balanced clauses. One sees that, despite the content, rhythmically the strophe corresponds very closely to the first. Here too the strophic form has fallen open to leave a sense of potential formlessness, which found expression there in 'infinite' growth (1.9), here in the seemingly endlessly-rippling expanse, 'Ebene', of the lake: 'Ein freudiges Wallen'. Here as there the end-stopped fourth pentameter restores form at the technically wrong place, and so bequeathes a potentially endless succession of couplets, an image of the Infinite; and just as there the fifth couplet expressed this feeling by the paradoxical comparative 'unendlicher', so here its opening word is 'Weit'. And here too the open form demands restoration of limitation by the second triadic division. This then is beautifully achieved in the picture of the ship returning to rest: the return home (for that is what the rhythm suggests) begins with the change in direction and perspective, from an implied 'hin' to 'wohl her'; and through the advancing of 'ruht' from the expected final position, the second half of the pentameter is felt as pure space, peace, the journey over.

But this correspondence is neither an echo nor a memory; if before the poetic process was a struggle for liberation ultimately explicable as a conflict between the need to exist in a pure poetic world and the wish to

relate and, in the widest sense, communicate, now this struggle has been superseded by the conflict between form and formlessness within the strophe itself. Therefore the function of the transcending form is no longer regressive: the creation of the island of beauty, 'seelige Insel'; the strophe is not autonomous by virtue of the poem, but through its own internal structure. Like the island, the lake knows nothing of the world, of change, time, but is 'seelig', a pure mirror. But idyll does not here abet escapist self-indulgence; it is a comment on the world which, since its demand could never be satisfied, is also tragic. Within a sphere from which action and purpose are banned man's mastery over Nature, the will to power, has become a blind wall built out of fear and crumbling now through love. 'All' is 'verwandt', 'Alles ist Eins', because perceived, through the eye of a child, which does not seek to use, and thus the town, the ship, become gently personified; the very unobtrusiveness of this personification shows that it is no mere ornament. Primitive people gave, children give, life to inanimate objects, humanity to Nature; to do this consciously is a magic art.

And just as in the first strophe 'das Dörflein', so here 'Warm' sets the tone of the final triad, which is, again, a protected space within the autonomous strophe, assured of a 'rest' which has already been achieved. Here, however, the rhythm does not run down in streams, but proceeds in perfectly balanced end-stopped couplets, each an image of peace, a microcosm of the idyll in which it is held. Their poetic effect is entirely dependent upon the

rhythm, for as images they are hardly startlingly original or observant; upon the sense of warmth and peace achieved by concentrating the release of tension and conflict upon 'Warm', which then, as the opening word, spreads out over the whole triad.

This movement towards rest in the final triad, each self-enclosed couplet being itself already an image of complete peace, sets the final couplet apart as the epitome of unity and so brings out its essential and all-embracing statement: 'Alles ... scheint ... verwandt.' In this way the two halves of the poem as of the journey are clearly marked and 'verwandt' becomes the central point. The significance of this, however, can best be sensed if one imagines the poem ending here; immediately its prime concern becomes the actual home-coming, home and family, a poem of simple contentment, and the 'spirit' of the first two strophes becomes more an imaginative way of praising the beauty of the Alps than of expressing the 'near'-ness of the 'god'.

This is because the 'Ich' would then have the last strophe and last word almost to itself. Instead, it is the other way round; the rhythm with its cosmic proportions transcends and absorbs the lyrical 'I' into itself, and the sphere of idyllic home-coming becomes a loss of self in which the poet is 'purely' the instrument of the divine 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht', the controlled act of the Infinite; 'damit nicht/ Ungebeten uns einst plözlich befiele der Geist' becomes the rhythmical determinant. Hence the peculiar quality of the third strophe within the poem's

aesthetic uniformity. 'Theure Verwandte' is a special moment of personal intimacy: the remaining vestige of the 'open' form, it opens the new triad even as the poet, one ordinary person, opens his mouth. It is this private persona that is transcended by the cosmic rhythm, the 'Äußerung' of the 'Geist'. And this conveys itself to the infinite 'Wallen', the 'one'-ness, of the lake, which thus also becomes not merely an expression of the poet's personal feelings, but an ex-pression of the Divine. It absorbs the lyrical 'I' into itself, as a single ripple appears, and is gone, so that the pause after 'Theure Verwandte' becomes the merest glimpse of an ordinary, a non-poetic openness, an acceptance of everyday life with its commonplace happiness, now left far below for the sake of a higher act, of love; the waters seem to close over the poet like a dream in which human reality is a memory.

There is, then, a pathos underlying this part of the 'home-coming', easily enough sensed by replacing the exclamation mark of 'Freilich wohl!' with a comma: the hymnic stance is here an act of will, and the elegiac rhythm of return, 'müd bis in die Seele', would like to reassert itself.³ (That may well be a reason why the exclamation 'Landesleute!' was preferred at the rhythmic juncture; it restores the poem to pure service of the Divine.) Equally, the relativisation of the idyllic ending by the totality of the poem gives to 'Alles scheint verwandt' universal significance. If the poet's self-exclusion from ordinary life is self-devotion to the purity of the Infinite, his implicit demand to the reader is 'das Offene', hymnic

freedom from all limiting 'related'-ness. So 'Alles scheint verwandt' is as much command as statement, as much wish as description, and the address 'an die Verwandten' is a demand if not to them, then to himself, to transcend all such limitation. They, and the journey home, are the material through which the Absolute appears, 'shines', 'der ätherische', through man, 'ein Bild der Gottheit' (2.209, 1).

The fourth strophe follows the established rhythmic pattern. Here too the first couplet is emphatically self-contained, this time through a framing chiasmic structure (predicate + 'ists', 'es ist' + predicate), and again the second inherits this form, but with impatience, first the enjambement and then the absence of a subject impelling forward. Thus, bursting through to a fourth-foot caesura, at last revealing the subject, and naming the 'du', the third hexameter comes as a triumphant break-through joyfully heralded by 'Mit Gesang'; this point of released tension is felt as a bursting into song, an impression vividly supported by the clear-ringing assonance of the stressed syllables: 'Mit Gesang ein wandernder Mann'. 'Gesang', 'Mann', 'Lindau', fuse together as one exclamation. The restraints upon the second couplet have become cast-off shackles, the triad dissolves, the strophic form opens; and with it a prospect which, again, seems infinite: a 'vielversprechende Ferne'. Like the mouth, the eye has opened.

This mighty release of energy joins with and is

possessed by the river, whose presence is marvellously expressed by the rhythm. Because the main pauses of the second triad, in which metrical and syntactical breaks coincide, come after the breaking of the vital coincidence (the triadic division), it is as though they no longer have power to hold. Again, what in earlier elegies took place throughout and by means of the strophic sequence now takes place within the strophe: the second triad contrasts with the first as a new world where the organic, winding laws of Nature have replaced the old world of external form and human calculation ('Sazung', 'Wohnung', in the words of 'Der Rhein'). The pauses are now natural obstacles; green banks, rocks, mountains, themselves participating in, under the will of, the River; and, throughout and despite the various motifs, the traversing current of the second triad is the River-god himself, breaking passage, forming the land. Lent pace by the anaphoric 'dort' in the fourth pentameter, it seems to rear up at the couplet-division and, like the Rhine Falls themselves, to hang briefly before, as the barrier breaks (enjambement) crashing down from on high in flooding dactyls ('Höch in die Ebnēn hērāb'); the hyperbaton, itself the very symbol of Nature's order, endows the name with the power of revelation and concentrates all the released energy in the single 'spirit', the daemonic demi-god who, resting (l.64, an 'Atem-holen') only to find new strength surpassing what was in power and wonder (the anaphoric 'Dort' unifies the rhythm of the triad, but breaks 'into' the fourth-foot caesura), at last, his strength finally spent, falls, in a

succession of dactyls ('Ödër hīnāb wīe dër Tāg'), back 'downwards', to rest, and the formal principle is restored.

Again the restoration of form comes with the second triadic division, but this time, because the final image of the second triad is an 'open' one, it is categorical, an 'Aber'. Beyond the obvious structural parallelism, the responding l.67 contrasts finely with l.61. 'Reizend hinauszugehn in die ...' is an unpausing stream. Here, however, the hexameter at first seems complete with 'geweihte Pforte!', and, similarly, there is a strong anti-metrical pause after 'Heimzugehn'; through this contrast the infinitive becomes isolated, gains a sense of finality, end, 'home', which unites with the intimate address, 'bist du', to create a glowing sense of warmth and love.

Once again, then, 'Heim-', like 'Dörflein' and 'Warm', sets the idyllic tone of the entire final triad; its unity is prestabilised and, released from conflict, it moves towards a rest of which it is already assured. This foreknowledge enables 'Ort' to move forwards from the obvious position (a word order to parallel the hexameter would be: 'Und in Bergen mich nimmt freundlich gefangen ein Ort'), so that the 'end' ('Ort' is the 'place' of beginning and end)⁴ is reached before the end, and leaves an empty, protected space: 'freundlich gefangen mich nimmt'.

By virtue of the symmetrical dissolving and restoring of limitation, the contrast between the heroic prospect and the idyllic landscape, between abroad and home, becomes an harmonious meeting of antagonistic principles; set within the overall rhythm to which this structure conforms,

the encounter gains timeless, mythical, dimension. The specific content of the strophe, the given situation of a person (the lyric 'I'), is subordinated to an eternally-recurring cosmic rhythm. Thus the comparative degree in 'Reizender', indicating personal preference — a matter of chance — is subsumed by the principles of cosmic necessity. For through the different visions experienced, lived out, by the poet, the finite being, appears the mutually dependent metaphysical duality, infinity and finitude.

The two flights of imagination, in themselves products of the subjective vagaries of personality, are a vehicle for cosmic necessity. The landscape of home is 'reizender' to the poet not just because he as an individual naturally prefers his own country, but because as a finite being, albeit at the service of the Divine, his home is finite Earth, and his journey has been a self-abandonment and -exposure to the Infinite, whose nature is carried by the River-god. The second strophe of 'Patmos' comes to mind:

... da entführte ...
... weit, wohin ich nimmer
Zu kommen gedacht, ein Genius mich
Vom eigenen Hauß'.

Personification through 'rational mythology' is no longer merely the embellishing vindication of an 'all-embracing' 'Mutter Natur', no longer an 'Im Arme der Götter wuchs ich groß' ('Da ich ein Knabe war ... ', 1.32), nor, as in 'Brod und Wein', means of loss of self to feminine darkness.

An alien and external 'spirit' has seized the masculine role, is the subject, acts through the poet, so that both masculine and feminine principles appear, within the existential autonomy of the strophe.

And the poet is 'pure' (disinterested) perception, a witness to the metaphysical eroticism of the meeting between Heaven and Earth. In the 'Grund zum Empedokles' this meeting was still allotted to 'man' the artist: 'Diß Gefühl gehört vielleicht zum höchsten ... , wenn beide entgegengesetzte, der verallgemeinerte ... Mensch und die Wohlgestalt der Natur sich begegnen' (4.153, 10-13). Now it has become a mythical 'encounter' for which the poet provides the occasion, the space, as in 'Friedensfeier' the 'Saal'; here, however, performing the same duty as the golden cloud of Zeus and Hera (Iliad, Book 14).⁵ His is the eye: riveted to the exhilarating, intoxicating, dionysiac course of the river-spirit, but resting on the pleasant forms and green contentment of Earth. 'Sich-gesellen' is thus more than a pretty personification; here too 'all' is, by sheer virtue of outline, figure, and shape, 'verwandt'. The very pause after 'Heimzugehn', contrasting with 'das Offene' of 'hinauszugehn ... ', expresses finitude, a contrast to the infinite 'striving' of 'das göttliche Wild'.

Thus the idyllic realm of the final triad is not really preferred, superior, to the foregoing heroic, nor is the strophe primarily even the contrast between one region ('Nekar') and another ('Rhein'). The course of the strophe, the personal feelings of the poet, is the temporal vessel

of a timeless myth of Creation. Water, the flood, is the 'pure spirit', taking form as 'das Belebende': 'der Geist eines Stromes, sofern der Bahn und Gränze macht, mit Gewalt, auf der ursprünglich pfadlosen aufwärts wachsenden Erde' (5.289, 8-10). The 'fair' landscape of the Neckar is not a static object of poetic description that comes after a different, unrelated, description, but springs up, born of the union, Earth become green and fruitful.⁶ Already 'der ätherische Gott' has been associated with such fertility (second strophe, second triad); he and 'das göttliche Wild' are manifestations of a single 'spirit'.

It is, both in spirit and motifs, the same relationship to the Divine as in the ode 'Unter den Alpen gesungen'. There, in the fifth and sixth strophes, phenomena, in contrast to the companionship of things, 'pass by', the tree borne away by the flood, the eye finding no hold; but in the final strophe a 'Daheim-bleiben' is reached, emerges, in the clear outline of a mythical figure: 'heilige Unschuld'. Each strophe of 'Heimkunft' has re-enacted this 'home-coming' and so anticipated the poem as a whole. Now it is the quality of the object of perception that is decisive. There are those which, like trees and flowers, or shade, have clear outline, and those which are, like God, 'hard to grasp', intangible, like 'Licht und Strom und Wind'. These have become signs of the Infinite; and the former are gentle finite forms, a return 'home' to Earth.

At first sight the fifth and penultimate strophe seems

to differ in form from its predecessors. The first triad is composed of three end-stopped couplets with caesuras of firm regularity, and indeed the third couplet with its inset antiphonal doublets is the very type of calm self-containment; there is no trace of restlessness and the first triadic barrier is undisturbed. Nevertheless, this apparent restraint presupposes and serves the same rhythmic purpose, the dissolving and transcending of the strophic form, as before.

The fourth couplet, ordered and self-enclosed, continues the calm progress of the first triad. But in the fifth hexameter the form begins to dissolve; the third-foot caesura gives way, 'joy' bursting through the measured statement, so that 'Thörig red ich', the yet briefer opening sentence, becomes the first member of an expanding movement which will carry on upwards and over the strophic division itself.

So 'Thörig red ich' is not really a detached self-admonition, but a simple statement of fact; for 'to speak foolishly' is to speak like the Delphic priests, prophetic mouth-piece of Apollo, of whom Pindar, composer of the 'Pythian Odes', was for Hölderlin one; it is the antithesis to prosaic common-sense, and thus opens the rhythm of inspiration (compare 'Der Rhein', ll.143-46: ' ... thörig göttlich ... '). Again the mouth is freed to open; and again, with 'künftig', an infinite prospect, the future, opens and the hexameter, the open member of the elegiac couplet, concentrates in itself the entire process of liberation which the first ten lines have become. Its

pentameter likewise no longer answers and contains, but provides a stage in the ascent; and then, in the sixth hexameter, the sense of liberation unites with the leit-motif spring in a flood of alliterative dactyls, the rhythmical image of a shower of blossom spreading out over those beneath.

The blossoming poetic form thus unites the factual depiction, the end of winter in Nature, with the symbolic meaning, the end of winter in man. Frozen forms thaw. This is said indirectly, through the rhythm, or rather, it is sung; which is, in the absence of any concrete indication as to the content of the 'renewal of the times', the sole index to the future. And as the rhythm is itself founded in Nature, spring is certainly not a mere metaphor for an as yet unspecified human 'renewal'; the coincidence of human palingenesis with her eternal rhythm betokens man's openness to Nature, his freedom from the distracting cares and interests, born of need and want, that drive and seduce into exploitation.

Although the barrier between second and third triad is retained, the sixth pentameter falling back in rest, the anaphoric 'Vieles', much as in the second strophe 'Wenn', lifts the verse over the gap, and indeed, because the division is so clearly marked, the transcending ascent becomes the supreme act of the poem. And in the final triad no resting-place at all is permitted; the couplet-divisions fall open, and while the first three lines retain distinct pauses at the caesura, with the final relative clause the sequence of short 'und'-clauses completely

disrupts the metre-syntax relation. Four times the verbs ('gewähret', 'ruft', 'schikt', 'säumt') are left hanging at the metrical divisions, while their objects ('Gaaben', 'Gesang', 'Geister') find no metrical rest, so that the verse is impelled forward, and with 'o säumt nicht' a tension and anticipation have been created that demand fulfilment. Through 'Erhaltenden', the substantivised epithet, this fulfilment becomes identified with the naming of the apostrophised 'Geister', and thus the rhythm thrusts upwards to 'Engel des Jahres!', yet still, because of the persisting anti-metrical syntax, can find no rest. Now the penultimate strophe, but with it the whole poem, stands wide open, and the voice (this strophe must be read aloud) has been carried up from the plateau of 'das Alte' to the highest possible pitch.

The dissolution, rhythmically the supreme act of the poem, assimilates the strophe to its own dissolving triad, so that the same phenomenon has reappeared in grander, threefold, form. This reveals the internal structure of the fifth strophe: its triads are the threefold form of the elegiac couplet as it has functioned hitherto within the triad. Thus the first triad, like the normative first couplet, provides the type of restraint; the second retains this form, but restlessly; and so the third is impelled over the barrier of limitation and into the new world, the final strophe.

Hölderlin uses this transparency of overall form and climactic expansion of the established rhythm to unveil the highest purpose of the poem. The opening triad

contains the moment of meeting, the actual purpose of the journey. But through the symmetrical structure a direct contrast arises between containing and liberated form: 'das Alte noch ists!' becomes opposed to 'das Beste, der Fund', the new, so that the 'Aber' with its clear demarcation marks the opening couplet of the second triad, despite its restraint (expressing the poet's self-denial), as the beginning of the great ascent.

With the third triad the expanding becomes an ascending movement; uniting with the 'great Father' 'in Höhen' and 'über Gebirgen', it becomes a climb into the aethereal regions themselves, far up above the world.

This contrast between old and new was originally directly related to the 'relatives'; Hölderlin wrote: 'Dort empfangen sie mich — o süße Stimme der Meinen! / O du triffest, du regst Langevergangenes auf!' (FHA 6.298, 25f.). The alteration to 'o Stimme der Stadt, der Mutter!' ('der Mutter' is in apposition) and 'Langegelerntes', however, merely confirms what has already taken place, the transcending of personal relationship. As he is carried away in paradigmatic inspiration, the poet leaves behind first 'das Alte', and then 'ihr Lieben' and the humbler motif of spring-time; the transition from second to third triad is the second and decisive step towards the Infinite, a bridge from 'mit euch' to 'von ihm', from human to divine communication, a gap to traverse which the poet is given wings, and soars up like the eagle.

Such a function of the strophic form is clearly anticipated in the essay 'Das Werden im Vergehen'. Hölderlin,

seeking to establish the possibility of a 'fearless' 'Auflösung' (4.283, 34), a revolution free from terror, makes infinite potential the abstract basis. The datum is the dead material, contemporary German society: 'das untergehende Vaterland, Natur und Menschen insofern sie in einer besondern Wechselwirkung stehen, eine besondere ... Verbindung der Dinge ausmachen, und sich insofern auflösen' (4.282, 2-5). 'Dieser Untergang oder Übergang des Vaterlandes' (4.282, 23) is complete 'nachdem [die] Erinnerung des Aufgelösten, Individuellen mit dem unendlichen Lebensgefühl durch die Erinnerung der Auflösung vereinigt und die Lücke zwischen denselben ausgefüllt ist, so gehet aus dieser Vereinigung ... des Vergangenen Einzelnen, und des Unendlichen gegenwärtigen, der eigentlich neue Zustand ... hervor' (4.284, 13-19). Here 'memory' is used with Idealistic overtone: 'Er-innerung', the power to conceptualise through emotional detachment.

The second triad is a perfect example of how the 'gap' between old and new is 'filled'. But what relation does 'der neue Zustand' bear to 'das unendliche Lebensgefühl'? The antithesis between closed and open form makes it clear that the poem's real aim is not a new but ultimately also historical state of society. For since the apparent purpose, the arrival home and reunion with 'die Verwandten', is no more than a supreme mode of the established rhythm, it ceases to differ from the stages of the journey in anything but degree. Not only is the qualitative difference, that here the poet is meeting people, his family, in actual physical encounter, quantified (given 'Bestimmtheit',

'rationalised'); it thereby becomes a supreme example of the antithesis between enclosure and 'das Offene': the greater the personal involvement, the higher the poet's transcending act. Personal relationship is confinement, namely, within the first triad, whose enclosed tone is set by 'Dort empfangen sie mich', itself echoing the 'Gefangen-nehmen' of the previous line. The antithesis, the new, is the liberating ascent to 'das Offene'.

Were 'das Mögliche' ('die Möglichkeit aller Beziehungen') (cf. 4.283, 5-7, 282, 19f.) just the abstract basis for a personified idea, it could yet be an (admittedly utopian) metaphor for change: a humanistic plea for a vaguely conceived broader outlook on life. But it is also real, an empirical object of perception: the Alpine heavens. The antithetical structure of poetic form mediates only, 'purely', between extremes (limitation and infinity), and is therefore not 'open' to the future, but complete and self-sufficient; its conception as an act of love is founded upon the antithesis between society and Nature.

Comparison with 'Stutgard' helps in assessing the final strophe of 'Heimkunft'. At first sight the endings are very similar, 'Stutgard' too involving a long ascent which with its climactic apostrophe 'Engel des Vaterlands!' finally surmounts the strophic division itself.

But there the tone of the final strophe is very different. After the intensity of the exclamation has faded in the first triad, the second with its opening 'Aber die

Nacht kommt!' marks a new departure and a sense of 'haste', urgency, enters the strophe; the second triadic division has no part to play, and the final couplet is the resignative consolation of 'menschliche Freude' (shaking hands) for a failure by no means transcended by the poet. The climax has been lost in the ensuing turmoil of thoughts.

In 'Heimkunft' the climax does not fail, and the final strophe is of the same formal perfection as the rest of the poem. As in 'Stuttgart', the first triad falls away from the moment of climax, but there are signs that Hölderlin took especial care in ensuring this took place naturally and gracefully, for it descends (rather than falls) in clearly graded but, through the fluid metre-syntax relation, unobtrusive steps: through the thronging exclamations, then the optative subjunctives, thence to the less direct purpose-clauses, themselves spreading out in threefold expansion from the still breathless 'nichts Menschlichgutes' to the full, almost leisurely third hexameter. It is as though time has re-entered the poem; and thus the final pentameter is virtually a pure (tautological) statement of what is 'fitting'. Nor does anything that follows disturb this harmony. The second triad is clearly marked as the sphere of question; here the theme of 'naming' enters the poem, but in calm threefold renunciation: 'wen darf ich nennen ... ?', 'Nenn ich den Hohen ... ?', 'Schweigen müssen wir oft'. Thus the harmony of music which fills the final triad expresses the strophe's perfect symmetry: the central triad is the 'Sorge, die unter das Freudige kam', a shadow of doubt serving purely as

harmonious foil to the light, and transcended by the poet even as it is spoken.

In 'Stuttgart' the questioning urgency reached a climax in the penultimate couplet: ' — o kommt! o macht es wahr! denn allein ja/ Bin ich und niemand nimmt mir von der Stirne den Traum?' The poem as a 'dream', deficient towards reality, raised the problem of poetic autonomy, and this thereby became embodied in the strophe, itself the paradigm of autonomous form. So too 'Brod und Wein' existed in darkness; the basic thought-structure consisted of two poles, the poetic self as darkness (self-enclosure, living-death, isolation) and the outside world, contemporary society, as darkness. In treating these as though they were harmonious opposites capable of reconciliation, through the striving for liberation, the poem became a return to its initial assumptions expressed as a journey of discovery. In each poem this process yielded a powerful formal unity, a mounting structure: in 'Stuttgart' finding immediate plastic form in the journey ('zieh freudig das Land wir hinauf', l.58, begins the ascent to the stars); in 'Brod und Wein' the journey to Greece culminated in the mighty structure of consecrated buildings towering up to the sky, and was then extended by the last three strophes.

The journey was the undermining of poetic autonomy by the relativising constant, society, and that is: others. The explicit confession of a priesthood of Nature is word as opposed to act (to 'being'): the moment of failure to achieve a climax. For if relationship to Nature is

'Seeligkeit', the memory of childhood, freedom from time, then the strophe with its perfect autonomy leaves the poem as a whole, with its social act, to relate, but also to speak, to remember, conceptualise, lose.

Here Hölderlin says: 'es fehlen heilige Nahmen'. It is as though he no longer seeks to name the Divine. The conflict in 'Stutgard', between 'Engel des Vaterlands!' and 'Das zu nennen, mein Schmidt! reichen wir beide nicht aus', is superseded, for firstly 'Engel des Haußes, kommt!' is not the pure naming act of a simple exclamation, but a prayer, and, secondly, this prayer has already been addressed to the 'Engel des Jahres', than whom the 'Engel des Haußes' are humbler, so that the points of utmost tension, anticipation, and of release, fulfilment, are only distinguished rhythmically, not syntactically. One has only to substitute 'Engel des Vaterlands!' for 'Engel des Haußes, kommt!' to sense the difference: 'Heimkunft' does not allow any weight to fall upon the climax. It is a pure release from tension.

But not to name the Divine is itself nothing other than religion of Nature, 'rational mythology'. The gods who are freed from names are freed from irrational anthropomorphic religion and transferred to the Subject's realm of objects; these have been named: 'der ätherische Gott', 'das göttliche Wild', and now the 'Engel des Jahres' and 'Engel des Haußes'. The avoidance of a climax is not an abdication of the religion of Nature, but its fulfilment. The failure to name, the forces that hitherto undermined the 'Mythologie der Vernunft', has been replaced by a renunciation of

naming which is itself an essential aspect of the 'rational mythology', and so by a conflict which is always harmonious, transcended by the poet: a 'Peace'.⁷ Such freedom from conflict and discord is directly related to the perfection of the elegiac form in this poem:—

It is now no longer thinkable that Hölderlin could make mistakes with the number of lines. As the penultimate strophe reproduced the dissolving first triad of the first four strophes in threefold form, so the final strophe with its calm triadic disposition is the symmetrical strophic equivalent of the third triad, which appeared in perfect form at the end of the first half of the poem (ll.49-54). Here the asymmetry created by the last two strophes, which rhythmically form a single sphere, is aesthetically decisive: the final triad of the first half (ll.49-54) with its perfect couplets, images of idyllic peace, has found extended rhythmical recreation in the final strophe with its self-contained triads, of which the last two consist of pure end-stopped couplets; and its final couplet (ll. 53-54), set apart as the 'all'-embracing statement of harmony, is recreated as the final triad. This then is felt as a more perfect form of an already experienced perfection, so that the ending, despite the common motif, the coming of soothing harmony, differs crucially from that of 'Brod und Wein'. The music, 'Saitenspiel', is no longer consolation, but an already anticipated 'peace'; it does not appease 'Cerberus', that complex symbol of discord and pain, but 'rejoices' 'Himmlische'.

Within this harmonious climax, the political event (the Peace of Lunéville) is the 'sphere' of 'the year', and 'menschliche Freude', 'wie jetzt, wenn Liebende wieder sich finden', is the sphere of 'the house'. The climax can be located neither solely by content, in 'Engel des Jahres', nor solely by form, in 'Engel des Hauses', for rhythmically the two (strophic) spheres form an indissoluble part within the poem. Nor can one say that the climax is complete harmony of political and private life, since that is to redivide the spheres into the categories of rational thinking, and so to undo the poet's unifying work. On the contrary, the poem with its five spheres yields, through the pervading identity of rhythmic structure, a series of enclosed worlds of potentially infinite self-reproduction, each of which is stretched open, extended, by the formless tendency, and returns to itself, to fulfilled form: returns home. This process differs radically from the earlier elegies, in which the stretching-open of form was a single process extending over the whole poem; now the strophic barrier has moved back into the strophe itself, leaving, through the premature release of tension, a pure poetic space from which movement and change — poetic time — have been eliminated. The strophe itself is no longer held within movement. The rhythmic dynamic, the 'arc', has moved from the strophe as a potentially open unit within the poem to its internal constitution, of which the poem is the 'pure' (extended) mirror: 'des Friedens Bogen'. Five microcosmic spheres, each self-sufficient, each a 'Heimkunft', so that the purpose of

the poem is already contained, realised, in each: the three-fold form (strophe, first half, poem) of idyllic 'Ein-falt'.

Thus the final couplet is set apart as an ultimate expression of peace, a 'peace' consisting in the definitive separation of poetry from the outside world; 'die anderen' (which can refer both to 'Sorgen' and 'Sänger': the 'singer' as opposed to 'others') joins with the absolute finality of 'nicht', the last word. The technique is the same as with 'Alles scheint verwandt', the specific 'Sorge' (l.105) being generalised into universal statement. But thereby the statement of total harmony has been rhythmically subordinated to that of the antithesis between the poetic and the real world: All is One within the former. Thus the final couplet is enabled to epitomise the whole poem and its idea of art; the elegiac couplet, type of enclosure, has become the clear vessel, the contemplative mirror of the Divine: a symbol of the soul.

The perfection of antiphonal response lends to 'Heimkunft', which divides into two and not three, a pure harmony unmatched by the other elegies; this indicates that the triadic form now serves to constitute a dualistic micro-cosm:—

'Das Schöne' and 'das Erhabene'

The dualism categorised by Kant in the Kritik der Urteilskraft is touched upon by Hölderlin in the letter to his sister from Hauptwil: 'Die große Natur in diesen

Gegenden erhebt und befriediget meine Seele wunderbar' (B228, 17f.). The whole poem is a descent, unfolding in stages (spheres) which are, however, of identical structure, from the Alpine heavens, 'die große Natur', to Swabian earth.⁸ But the descent by the 'pure poetic spirit' is also, in direct analogy, that by 'der reine seelige Gott': the Absolute Spirit who, in that his tendency to formless infinity ('Reinheit', 'Seeligkeit') takes form within and through the poem, takes the form, shape, of 'spirits'; (literally) 'above' all as the Alpine sky ('der Hohe', in this sense), but also as the infinitely-streaming River-spirit.⁹

This is achieved through the addition of the Judaeo-Christian personal God to the 'rational mythology'. In the final strophe the traditional Christian hierarchy — God, angels, mankind (Psalms 8. 5: 'Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels') — emerges in clear outline (and Christian offices are added for good measure, ll.97-98). Not to name 'der Hohe' is to define 'him' as the All: 'an sich, kein Ich'; yet, having the attributes of a personal god, 'he' is simultaneously a subject, acting, entering the world.

Far from being a regression to Christianity, this step represents the ultimate in the polemics of love: the metaphysical appropriation of Christian feeling to the religion of Nature. For the active principle, the subject, is identified with the sublime in Nature; in the intensity of perception (the 'Staunen' of 'Unter den Alpen gesungen' and B228, 22) the sky ('das Offene') and the Infinite ('das

Offene') become one; the affected senses are touched by God. And as the poet takes the passive role of perception, 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht', the constituents of the poet's pure world, pass to the divine Subject, the Hen ('ein vorzüglich Einiges ... ').

Nature, the object of love, has split into two within the pure poetic world. The antithesis to 'das Offene' is enclosure, the responding feminine principle, 'das Harmoniscentgegengesetzte'; as the infinite potential of the Spirit enters the finite world and becomes fruitful, so Nature bears fruit, herself takes form, 'Wohlgestalt'. Hölderlin will have seen this as service to a divinity he had previously ignored: 'Wir haben gedienet der Mutter Erd'/ Und haben jüngst dem Sonnenlichte gedient' ('Patmos', 11.220-21). In this sense the poet has 'long kept silent' about him; she, Nature, has been the divine object of love. Now each 'sphere' contains the totality of Nature (the All): 'das Erhabene', (ex-expression of) the Infinite in his controlled loss of self to the finite world; and 'das Schöne', the fruit, at once formed and form-giving.

The strophic 'sphere' had been that of the purified act, 'Hingabe' governed by 'Eigenmacht', 'Bestimmung' itself free from 'Bestimmung'. The will is irrational, implicating in the chaos of physicality; in that this act does not primarily relate to an object (person, thing), but to the self, the subject, it has rational, 'calculable', basis, and is also elevated beyond physical mediocrity and onto a mythical plane. The sphere reflects a 'rational mythology', an idealisation, of action: 'Tätigkeit' become

'die Tat'.

The single arc of diminishing intensity carried the defect in the poetic process: the relationship of language ('reflection', consciousness) to the object of the poem's search ('Seyn', infinity). That was the subject-object relationship, the archetypal split between self and Nature. In that absolute union is the highest good (the Ideal), love is the highest relationship (that is, defective mode of 'being'; relationship presupposes duality) and the conscious mind's equivalent to 'Seeligkeit', the ideal of childhood, is death. Despite its superficial resemblance to classical poetry, poetic form therefore had the a priori negative function of limitation; representing and enacting the archetypal burden of consciousness, it was the 'Zurückschrecken' of a limitation on death, holding the self on the brink of the Empedoklean abyss.

Death existed as love, and love as death, within the pure poetic sphere of lost divinity (memory); and the poetry succeeded by and through this aesthetic criterion: the identification of love and death. The 'measure' of, generating, 'intensity' was therefore the pain of loss; and it is not any socially acceptable value, but this acceptance of the elegiac situation, the poet's taking upon himself of otherness, apartness, isolation, that was the necessary concomitant, sign, of poetic integrity, sincerity. The poetry's success was, not incidentally, partially, but directly and unequivocally dependent upon personal suffering, which then is justified in the transposed 'myth' of Christ, 'Halbgott', 'aus Licht und Nacht geboren'.

Thus the poem had the form of remembered love and, as a logical consequence, of a simultaneous striving for liberation from enclosure, for communication; only in retrospect did the perfect strophe gain its vindicating truth and harmony. But therewith the poetic process became a regressive act of self-enclosure.

Now the process of liberation and regressive 'technique' of diminishing intensity have fallen away. The 'hymnic' style of 'Heimkunft' (cf. 2.625, 28-32) has been shown to express essential aspects of Hölderlin's hymnic poetry: the aesthetic stability of the strophic form; the presence ('near'-ness: 'Patmos', l.1) of the Divine.

In that the (idealised) act of communication has passed into the strophic sphere itself, the poetic process is no longer a search for relationship, and therewith the enclosed poetic world no longer presupposes an outside world inimical to itself, but recreates itself within, and so in harmonious antithesis to, itself. This antithetical mode is the open — exposed — poetic world.

Thus it is no longer the poetic self that enters Nature, but Nature that enters the self, breaks down and tears open its barriers and defences. 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht', action as love, are now divine acts whereby the Absolute appears, as formless will. This Nature is an expression of masculine (entering, penetrating) will; and what is left, the pure poetic space, is idyllic because it is release, freedom, from the purpose of another. And as the Spirit withdraws, so the poem, like Semele 'göttlichgetroffen', 'Unendlichem bekannt' ('known', in this double

sense), 'bears fruit' ('Wie wenn am Feiertage ... ', sixth strophe). For the poet, as paradigmatic finite consciousness, takes the passive role of Earth, and as Earth is shaped by and so gives form to Heaven, so the poet is shaped by, and gives the form of consciousness to, the ('in itself') word-less Absolute, which gains mythical form: 'der reine seelige Gott' is mediated as the Alpine heavens. The poem is no longer a search because it is actual relationship.

Thus the poetic world divides with Nature into two: surrender to the will of another, 'Entführen', movement; and released perception, the beauty of rest: the spheres of the riveted and the resting eye. The poetic soul, accepting and thereby giving form, becomes, in an open-ness wonderfully expressed in these very late lines, 'das Schöne':

... o mein Herz wird
Untrügbarer Krystall an dem
Das Licht sich prüfet ...
(2.251, 35-37)

The elegiac strophe, the form of loss of self, re-created the pure subject-object relationship; the poet, standing as 'der Geliebte vor der Geliebten', was ultimately active, Nature passive. Now the reversal of roles and the accompanying dissolution of the triadic structure represent a paradigmatic breaking-down of the barriers between gods and men: a surrender of the dividing fences of 'fear' ('Der Abschied', fourth strophe), now yielded

up for the sake of a higher truth. The dissolving transitions are both the rhythmic sign of the acting god in his aethereal lightness, transcendental purity, and the expression of the poet's lightness, receptivity, for as the eye loses itself in the open infinity of the sky, self is surrendered.¹⁰

But the subject-object relation is the Divine; 'das Göttliche ist in der Mitte von beiden'. As its pure memory, the elegiac strophic sphere remembers the 'Seeligkeit' of childhood, mediated by the 'Hingabe' of love; it arose out of the lament for Diotima as a search and lament for infinity.

Hölderlin will have seen this transition to the hymnic mode as an act of self-purification from hubristic 'titanic' aspiration. The hymnic form of 'Heimkunft' expresses the 'peace' of arrival at a stabilised conception of the poet's role. In rhythmic terms, this stability expresses itself in the recurring act of love. The poet has detached himself from hubristic wish; infinity has become the Infinite. With this mythopoeic objectivisation of the metaphysics of the individual, loss of divine status is left behind, the 'open' form becomes redundant.

But we, if we are ourselves to be sincere and do justice to Hölderlin's poetry, cannot accept this self-assessment, for if we do we lose the dimension of suffering and with it the poet's personal achievement. By limp paraphrases such as 'service to the Divine' we lose the fear and pity of a tragic act.

The limitation of the elegiac 'open' form, the

deficiency in relationship with the outside world, was also the limitation upon loss of self to Nature. The sole function and purpose of the intellect and will was therefore negative: to set a limit upon an act through which the poetic self, solipsistic, would indeed 'contain all reality', for the relationship between self and Nature is exclusive. Personification through 'rational mythology', the peopling of the cosmos by 'gods', is no mere ornament, as for 'die scheinheiligen Dichter'; in such a universe, Nature would once more centre about the child.

But loss of self works towards elimination of the controlling intellect. What the poem denied the strophe granted: the memory of love, purified not only to idealise the beloved object, but for the sake of the self. The hubris of Frankfurt, divine 'Seeligkeit', is renounced not merely for fear of its intensity; thereby the act, and the acting self, is dissociated from needs and desires, those hostages to physical death, for the sake of its divine intensity and immortal youth. 'Ja! ja! ich bin vorausbezahlt, ich habe gelebt. Mehr Freude konnt' ein Gott ertragen, aber ich nicht' (Hyperion, I, 113/15f.). Art is the mirror of the act in its beauty.

In that the 'open' form is discarded, it is this principle that, working on, is finally confirmed; the will of the poetic self, the subject, is (in its own eyes) purified from the vestige of physical need and desire, in psychological terms, from motivation. For the act of love now being that of another, the poet is himself purely 'open', his art freed from the remnant of 'Bestimmung',

physical dependence; it is no longer a sublimation that betrays underlying 'interest', but pure receptivity. Therewith the elegiac controlling limit, the perspective of past divinity as measure of the present, is gone. This step is not abdication of aspiration (unless one accepts the for our century unreal criterion of individual divine potential), but the intensification of metaphysical status. There is, then, objectively speaking, no decision of change.

Similarly, the reversal of roles is objectively an illusion, as is indeed indicated by its theoretical anticipation in the 'Grund zum Empedokles'. The negativity of the elegiac form — the search for relationship and the complaint at the prosaic un-divinity of 'day' (consciousness), each implying the other — was no more than the hold of reality (perspective of time) upon loss of self. For loss of self is already surrender: to be 'federleicht hinweggerissen', 'untergegangen in ... Umarmungen' (Hyperion, I, 49/11, 61/6-16).

As the already negatively conceived search for reality falls away, the poem is liberated from extraneous purpose. Intellect and will, which are identified in the formal principle, are reduced to the pure bounds of perception; and perception, being absolutely freed from discriminating purpose, becomes undifferentiated: the pure mirror of the All, fired with the intensity of love. Once again the universe, Nature, centres about the child, and the shackles of man's mastering hold are finally dissolved. The poem as the sphere of pure relationship with Nature, of perception,

is the idyllic world of childhood security in the arms of the All. Each sphere has recreated this 'Ein-falt'.¹¹ The world is love; 'Ich fühl es endlich, nur in ganzer Kraft ist ganze Liebe' (B229, 40). Sublimated into pure creative power, freed from finite blemish, the libido, which was at once the isolating root of all evil, of fall from grace, innocence, into consciousness, masculine will, and the dynamic creative potential of a universe, has become a cosmic principle. By the mediation of Eros within the child's protected world, the conflict is finally harmonised. But the schizophrenic self-division, masculine and feminine in a self-sufficient world, renders this new-found stability an illusion. And it seems, with regard to Hölderlin's madness, that a choice is made; even as the poet looks at the face of winter, the 'Lebensalter' of the second 'Hälfte des Lebens', the world intensifies; the cup of Lethe is taken again and drained to the dregs, and, for a little while, 'wir schwelgen, wir tödten im Rausche die Zeit': 'jezt ewigen Jünglingen ähnlich' ('Friedensfeier', l.39).

The Irrational finds rational, cosmic form, but only as numen of potential pathless destruction and unmediated burning presence. Unlike the autonomous elegiac strophe, the hymnic barrier of form, demarcating the sphere of Earth, appears with such clarity because it is endangered; what is explicit in the second and third strophes (ll.25-27, 39-40) is implicit throughout in the rhythm. It limits form-destroying forces. Thus here too the aesthetic criterion of the Elegies is satisfied: the negative and there-

fore indirect function of poetic form, a paradigm but not a communication, setting the 'mortal' limit upon the 'Seeligkeit' of surrender, upon the self-exposure of a venture into the Unknown. It is the criterion failed by 'Der Rhein'. In so far as aesthetic value is dependent upon the contradictions and tensions out of which artistic form is created, however, it is 'Brod und Wein' that represents the summit of the elegiac achievement. That of the Hymns is not reached till 'Patmos' and 'Der Einzige', where, the autonomy of the strophic sphere now absolute, the transition has become a cleft in the work, requiring a communicating 'bridge'; which then too, in the later version, crumbles.

Here, love, freed from mortal object, the intensity of longing, the purity of isolation, of which he asks 'ists Seegen oder Fluch' (B230, 11), these meet, and are confronted by the snow-covered peaks shining in the blue sky far above the world.

NOTES

HJb = Hölderlin-Jahrbuch

I. INTRODUCTION

1. 'Wir wollen ... behaupten, daß sein Wille zur Vollendung in der Gesetzmäßigkeit ... ihn ziemlich eindeutig zum Klassiker stempelt' (Lawrence J. Ryan, Hölderlins Lehre vom Wechsel der Töne (Stuttgart, 1960), p.363).

2. An example of the second and more strictly political Marxist approach is Hans-Wolf Jäger's contribution 'Zur Frage des "Mythischen" bei Hölderlin' to Hölderlin ohne Mythos, ed. Ingrid Riedel (Göttingen, 1973), pp.81-90. 'Das mehr-als-"bloß Politische" ist für uns nicht Grund zu größerer Verehrung, sondern Anhalt für Kritik des idealistischen ... Revolutions- oder Reformgedankens bei Hölderlin ... ' (89).

3. The 'Streit um die "Friedensfeier"' has provided an epitome of the first, traditional kind of Hölderlin scholarship. The attempt to identify the 'Fürst des Festes' with an allegorical meaning treats the poem as an algebraic formula. It is rebuked by Peter Szondi in his interpretation 'Er selbst, der Fürst des Festes: Die Hymne "Friedensfeier"' (Peter Szondi, Hölderlin-Studien: Mit einem Traktat über philologische Erkenntnis, edition suhrkamp (Frankfurt/Main, 1970), pp.62-92). 'Die Frage "Wer ist der Fürst des Festes?" war von Anfang an falsch gestellt' (87).

4. Szondi 27. His 'Über philologische Erkenntnis', with its distinction between 'Erkenntnis' (here, 'literary criticism') and 'Wissenschaft' (scientific knowledge), is directed in the first place against the indiscriminate use of textual parallels out of context as evidence of meaning, but has far wider implications. Above all the plea, in terms of Dilthey's 'hermeneutic circle', that the role of subjectivity in study of the arts be acknowledged — 'Nicht selten erwecken historische Arbeiten den Anschein, als wolle ihr Verfasser der intensiven Versenkung in das einzelne Kunstwerk aus dem Wege gehen, als scheue er diese Intimität' (23) — suggests a peculiar deficiency in most work on Hölderlin. See also David Constantine, 'The Meaning of a Hölderlin Poem', Oxford German Studies, 9 (1978), pp.45-67: 'This concentrating ... on the difficulty renders the poem less demanding. For although a poem may be very demanding in its difficulty those demands are less — they touch us less closely — than the poem would itself. It is a way of avoiding the poem ... ' (45).

5. Karl Marx, 'Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie' (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Über Religion (Berlin, 1958)), pp.35-38.

6. For an account of the impact made on the Stiftler by Kant, see Panajotis Kondylis, Die Entstehung der Dialektik: Eine Analyse der geistigen Entwicklung von Hölderlin, Schelling und Hegel bis 1802 (Stuttgart, 1979), pp.163-85. Rudolf Magenau's reminiscence: 'Kants Philosophie machte die meisten Köpfe schwindeln, und die Kanzel wiedertönte von Zeit u. Raum, und dergleichen' (7.i, 386).

7. Werner Becker, Selbstbewußtsein und Spekulation: Zur Kritik der Transzendentalphilosophie (Freiburg, 1972), p.67: 'der Kantische Freiheitsbegriff ... stellt sich in Gestalt des uns innewohnenden intelligiblen Charakters als das positive Analogon zur Unbestimmbarkeit des transzendentalen Selbstbewußtseins dar.'

F.A. Lea, A Defence of Philosophy (London, 1962) speaks of the Idealists inheriting 'the Nessus-shirt of Newton' (66).

8. Kondylis 192: 'Die Spaltung zwischen Wirklichkeit und Ideal ist aber geradezu das eigentliche Lebensthema und -drama der deutschen Intelligenz im letzten Drittel des 18. Jahrh. (man könnte vielleicht ihr ganzes geistiges Schaffen von diesem Standpunkt aus rekonstruieren), und in ihrer Haltung den revolutionären Ereignissen gegenüber spielt sich nur ein Akt desselben ab.' Kondylis nevertheless tends to underestimate the significance both of the French Revolution and of Fichte in the development of the Idealistic thought-structure: a single error. Compare the summary of the poet's revolutionary role — German parallel to Rousseau — in 'Der Rhein' by Guido Schmidlin, 'Die Psyche unter Freunden': Hölderlins Gespräch mit Schelling', HJb, 19-20 (1975-77), pp.303-27 (pp.324f.). Kondylis himself observes that revolutionary will is transformed into a search to preserve an untarnished ideal in the face of the Terror (192f.), a process presupposing the adaptation and introversion of practical ideology from abroad, with the wish to transcend the moral responsibility of the ensuing contradiction between freedom and equality. On the European background and the development of bourgeois revolutionary ideology, see Reinhard Kühnl, Formen bürgerlicher Herrschaft: Liberalismus — Faschismus (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1971), pp. 9-69.

9. In Fichte's 'decisive' 'practical' solution (quoted below, p.53), the 'etwa' underplaying the philosopher's role contradicts his pre-eminent demonstrative function.

10. For a concise outline of this process, see the lasting study by Hans H. Gerth, Bürgerliche Intelligenz um 1800: Zur Soziologie des deutschen Frühliberalismus, ed. Ulrich Herrmann, Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft, 19 (Göttingen, 1976).

11. 'Für die Stiftler steht natürlich die Freiheit als lebendige Dynamik über allem' (Kondylis 181); whereas for Kant freedom means 'Beherrschung der Kräfte durch die Vernunft', for his disciples in Tübingen it is 'Entwicklung aller Kräfte', understood as the condition for the divinity

of human nature (184f.). This 'postulate' leaves 'Heteronomie', alien authority, as its antithesis: physical dependency.

12. For the latest contributions to the dispute over the fragment's authorship, see Michael Franz, 'Hölderlin und das "Älteste Systemprogramm des deutschen Idealismus"', HJb, 19-20 (1975-77), pp.328-57; Friedrich Strack, 'Nachtrag zum "Systemprogramm" und zu Hölderlins Philosophie', HJb, 21 (1978/79), pp.67-87. But Beißner's conclusion, the traditional view, still seems the best: 'Den in Hegels Handschrift überlieferten Text ... hat Schelling formuliert, in hohem Maße, zumal in der Konzeption der Schönheitsidee, von Hölderlin angeregt.' Hegel's copy was made 'between June and August 1796', and the original will have arisen out of (during or after) Schelling's three conversations with Hölderlin, in summer and December 1795 and April 1796 (4.425, 4-20).

13. The important step taken by Fichte in turning the unknowability of self-consciousness as highest (universal) principle of knowledge, as demonstrated by Kant, into a positive value is criticised as irrational by Becker in two chapters (66-109). 'Fichtes "kopernikanische Wendung" zu einer Ich-Metaphysik ... gelingt allerdings nur um den Preis der metaphysischen Verabsolutierung des Ich, welche sich letztlich nur als eine späte Apotheose von Descartes' religiösem Interesse an der Konzeption des reinen Selbstbewußtseins: [dem Interesse] an der Unsterblichkeit der Seele, charakterisieren läßt' (85).

14. For a full discussion of this fragment in its relationship to Fichte, see Dieter Henrich, 'Hölderlin über Urteil und Sein: Eine Studie zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Idealismus', HJb, 14 (1965/66), pp.73-96. Hölderlin is using Kantian categories to limit the power of philosophy itself; thereby 'Ich bin Ich' becomes paradigmatic 'Trennung' (79).

The inherent tendency, which must be preserved, to hypostasis in the transcendental categories makes a rendering, here of 'Seyn', into English impossible except at the beginning of sentences.

15. On the symbolic meaning of Hyper-ion's name, see the essay 'Hölderlins Namenssymbolik', in Wolfgang Binder, Hölderlin-Aufsätze (Frankfurt/Main, 1970), pp.134-260 (pp.180-92). As 'Nahmensbruder' of Apollo-Helios, he 'passes over', and thus both 'looks upon a whole' and performs an 'exzentrische Bahn'.

16. 'O könnt' ich dich sehn in deiner künftigen Schöne!', Diotima, about to die, writes to Hyperion (II, 104/14). This narcissistic element is examined in the Freudian study by Jean Laplanche, Hölderlin und die Suche nach dem Vater, trans. Karl Heinz Schmitz (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1975); see especially the chapter 'Die dualen Dialektiken des "Hyperion"' (pp.77-99). It tends to pass unnoticed because,

like self-pity, it is for the eighteenth century by no means cultural taboo. However, Laplanche often infers traumatic events in the unconscious from what are really exaggerated but commonplace topoi, such as the purity of the beloved, the lover's sense of unworthiness; these reflect rather the perpetual desire to elevate and intensify experience beyond the measure of daily life and in a perfect world.

To this desire the position of Hofmeister lent itself ideally. 'Das Engagement ... wirkte — darin ähnlich der Liebe des Troubadour — in der Richtung einer Erlebnis-tiefe, von der her die Geliebte außeralltäglich und überhöht empfunden wurde. ... wir können in diesem Verhältnis zur sozial höher stehenden, den alltäglichen Funktionen ent-hobenen Dame einen der Faktoren sehen, die zur Herauslösung des Erotischen aus dem alltäglichen Lebenszusammenhang als einer ihm enthobenen Sphäre führten' (Gerth 56f.).

17. For a full and perceptive examination of Hyperion, see Friedbert Aspetsberger, Welteinheit und epische Gestaltung: Hölderlins 'Hyperion' (Munich, 1971). Hyperion's speech at Athens is the 'axle' of the novel (44), a central statement of the Ideal of beauty which is, however, as pure idea merely theoretical; by the end Hyperion has won 'was er nicht entwarf, nämlich die Vermittlung von Ideal und Wirklichkeit in der Geschichte', 'Auflösung des Entwurfs in die Zeit ... im Erzieherberuf' (68-70). The relationship of narrating to narrated 'I' is itself related to the central conception of art as mirror of the 'schöner Mensch' (85).

In these aesthetics I find, if not influence, then a powerful spiritual affinity to Winckelmann: in the view that art depicts man in his highest potential, a divinely eternal peace and calm of which all events are the subordinated sign, in the underlying sense that action and emotion are voluntary movement rather than response forced by circumstances, and so (like eighteenth-century dances) graceful, beautiful, expressing a condescension to participate in the world. Like Winckelmann's Apollo, Hyperion has his deeds behind him (compare the fragment 'An Kallias', 4.218f., with its ecstatic exclamation 'Und nun die Siegesfreude nach dem ungeheuren Wagestück!'); and Winckelmann's 'So wie die Tiefe des Meeres allezeit ruhig bleibt, die Oberfläche mag noch so wüten, ebenso zeigt der Ausdruck in den Figuren der Griechen bei allen Leidenschaften eine große und gesetzte Seele' (Winckelmann, Sämtliche Werke, ed. Joseph Eiselein, 12 vols (Donaueschingen, 1825-29), I, 30f.) would be far more appropriate for Hyperion than Laokoon; after reproducing the letter bringing news of Diotima's death, he writes to Bellarmin: 'Bester! ich bin ruhig, denn ich will nichts bessers haben, als die Götter. Muß nicht alles leiden? Und je treflicher es ist, je tiefer!' (II, 106/13f.). The undergraduate dissertation on Greek culture, heavily influenced by Winckelmann, already contains the essential 'Wechsel der Töne' (4.199, 13-16). See the article by Bernhard Böschenstein, 'Winckelmann, Goethe und Hölderlin als Deuter antiker Plastik', HJb, 15 (1967/68), pp.158-79, who, however, seems not to feel this affinity. The 'dream

of eternal recurrence' and 'Ausdruck' connecting the pure soul to life (Böschenstein 161, 163) are key and closely related motifs in my thesis.

Cf. Aspetsberger 171: 'In dem Sich-Gegenüberstellen im Erzählen erscheint am Leben des Erzählenden selbst das (schöne) Sein als dauernder Wert und als Einheit über alle zeitliche Bedrängnis und alles Schicksal hinweg ...'. The chaos of time reappears, ordered, as 'locks' to the head, an ornament of the 'spirit'.

18. For the symbolic references to artistic creation at the beginning of Vol.I, Book ii, see Aspetsberger 212-14. Since Hyperion is becoming an artist in the course of his letters to Bellarmin, it is his spiritual progress which is involved; at the beginning he had 'nichts, wovon ich sagen möchte, es sey mein eigen'. These and other structural moments (compare the ending of Vol.I, Book i with that of the whole novel) show that Hölderlin did at least intend the narrating Hyperion too to traverse an 'exzentrische Bahn', which Aspetsberger 322-27, against Lawrence Ryan, Hölderlins 'Hyperion': Exzentrische Bahn und Dichterberuf (Stuttgart, 1965), pp.223-27, denies. The dispute seems, however, to derive from an over-rigid application of novelistic criteria. In Hyperion time is always philosophically conceived, so that the gap between past and present, the fictional basis, is overborne by the stylistic unity of the 'elegischer Charakter' (I, 4/2).

19. The symbolic interchangeability of 'leben' and 'lieben' (a theme of the Goethezeit) is discussed by Rolf Zuberbühler, Hölderlins Erneuerung der Sprache aus ihren etymologischen Ursprüngen (Berlin, 1968), pp.43-45. See esp. 'Der gute Glaube' (1.252).

20. Beyond the Sturm und Drang celebration of youthful vigour, Hölderlin's use of the word 'Kräfte' often justifies a Freudian significance: sexual energy, and fear of its possible exhaustion. See Laplanche 44-46.

21. 'Die Erfassung der Einheit kann auch auf der Stufe einer relativen Einheit, wie der der Liebe, erfolgen; die wirkliche, höchste Einheit darf aber nichts außer sich lassen, sie kann per definitionem nur allumfassend sein' (Kondylis 356). 'Hyperion hat die Entsagung im Leben dichtend geleistet, und seine künftige Dichtung wird nur noch das "einige, ewige, glühende Leben" des Alls besingen' (Binder Aufsätze 190).

The 'Lichtstral', procreative 'Organ', appears at the beginning, the birth, of both 'Der Rhein' (see Bernhard Böschenstein, Hölderlins Rheinymne, second edition (Zürich, 1968), p.26) and 'Heimkunft'. The structure of universal self-consciousness is quickened with erotic mystique and power; in this Hyperion anticipates Hegel's Phänomenologie des Geistes.

22. Aspetsberger finds that both the initial and final visions are represented as deficient (103-46); the novel

as a whole expresses acceptance that the timeless, undifferentiated Ideal ('Seyn', 'Schönheit') has no meaning for human life unless bound to the actual experiences of an individual. In this way Hyperion achieves the transition from a perfect but destroyed past (Athens) to a concrete future ('Fatherland'), and the All ceases to be the one side of a self-sufficient relationship between an individual and Nature, and becomes truly universal, embracing social and political change (285-92). But the converse applies: since this transition is from the pure eternity of the idea to events in time, these are always measured by a standard they inevitably fall short of, not by their specific 'historical' content; thus Hyperion's 'development' appears as an (albeit necessary) error, and, equally, the contemporary world is attacked and rejected not for remediable failings, but for dealing in the relative mode of social and political intercourse. Hyperion's ultimate statement is a lament: why must the divine nature of the self be contradicted by the nature of human society? Hence the consistently negative conception, thoroughly demonstrated by Aspetsberger himself (148-64, 173-97), of narration and language, which are identified with the need to think, to be conscious; but logically this negativity must also apply to Hyperion's 'mediation' of the Ideal.

A more realistic assessment is arrived at by Gerhart Mayer, 'Hölderlin's "Hyperion" — ein frühromantischer Bildungsroman' (HJb, 19-20 (1975-77), pp.244-57: the artist's development implies 'die zunehmende Gewißheit des Wesenszusammenhangs zwischen dem "transzendentalen" Poeten und dem absoluten Sein, die mit einem wachsenden Absolutheitsanspruch des subjektiven Weltentwurfs verbunden ist. Daraus wiederum resultiert die zunehmende Verinnerlichung und Distanzierung gegenüber der gesellschaftlichen Umwelt' (254).

23. The fundamental importance of childhood in Hölderlin's weltanschauung is rarely more than acknowledged by critics. Kondylis observes that childhood is (for Hölderlin) the ultimate possibility of transcendental reflection, 'Einheit von Ich und Welt' (344). Jürgen Söring, Die Dialektik der Rechtfertigung: Überlegungen zu Hölderlins Empedokles-Projekt (Frankfurt/Main, 1973), correctly notes that the 'exzentrische Bahn' presupposes the favoured primacy of the natural state: 'Wir müßten ... das Bildungsideal gleichsam als "deriviertes" Ideal betrachten, das angestrebt werden muß, wenn das Dasein mit dem notwendig auftretenden Widerspruch fertig werden will ... Wir sind zu der Annahme versucht, daß Hölderlin im vorliegenden Zusammenhang seine Neigung zu dem regressiven Natur-Ideal bekundet' (44f.). Gerhard Kurz, Mittelbarkeit und Vereinigung: Zum Verhältnis von Poesie, Reflexion und Revolution bei Hölderlin (Stuttgart, 1975) also stresses the importance of childhood, but sees it as a metaphor carrying a utopian vision of human potential: 'Wie kaum einer seiner Zeitgenossen hat sich Hölderlin dieser utopischen Bedeutung des Kindes bedient' (46).

The very brevity of the treatment in Hyperion confirms

the ideal nature of childhood: 'von Kindheit, Unschuld haben wir keine Begriffe' (I, 13/2).

24. Aspetsberger stresses the contrary, Hyperion's ideally organic development and the ideal of Bildung represented by Adamas. But Adamas is remedial rather than formative — 'Ich war aufgewachsen, wie eine Rebe ohne Stab ...' (I, 18/14f.) — and himself an 'elegiac character'.

25. This elegiac 'Grundton' leads to the conviction that any rational solution to life is inadequate, a view which led to basic disagreement between Hölderlin and Hegel while together in Frankfurt. See Dieter Henrich, Hegel im Kontext (Frankfurt, 1975), esp. 24-29, 35-39: 'Dies ist ... Hegels eigentümlicher Gedanke: daß die Relata in der Entgegensetzung zwar aus einem Ganzen verstanden werden müssen, daß dieses Ganze ihnen aber nicht vorausgeht als Sein oder als intellektuale Anschauung, — sondern daß es nur der entwickelte Begriff der Relation selber ist' (36). For Hegel philosophy is adequate, indeed self-sufficient, through insight into its own insufficiency; for Hölderlin it is the sphere of the Fichtean 'Ich' (Hegel found Hölderlin's thought still too 'fichteanisch': Henrich 38).

26. For this compromise Kondylis coins the apt paradox 'minimale Endlichkeit'.

27. 'In [dem] Systemprogramm wird die Idee der Schönheit zum A und O der Philosophie erhoben. Faßt man diese Idee in ihrer logisch-methodischen Bedeutung ... , dann bezeichnet sie die Grundkategorie ... : das "Harmoniscentgegengesetzte"' (Michael Konrad, Hölderlins Philosophie im Grundriß: Analytisch-kritischer Kommentar zu Hölderlins Aufsatzfragment 'Über die Verfahrungsweise des poetischen Geistes' (Bonn, 1967), p.222, n.7). But the type of conflict remains what it was for Fichte: that between divine and mortal self. Furthermore, 'das Harmoniscentgegengesetzte' is the 'idea' not just of beauty, but of love.

28. For the 'renewal' of the word 'Re-flexion' by Fichte, see Zuberbühler 30, 33. The infinite activity of the Absolute I is 'turned back' by the 'Anstoß' of materiality, relativity, but, equally, the universe therewith becomes the mirroring stage of its cosmic protagonist. See Fichte, Gesamtausgabe, ed. Reinhard Lauth and Hans Jacob, Werke, 4 vols (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1964-70), I, ii, p.369, 14-18.

29. The walls of Denkendorf and Maulbronn must have been a very symbol of growing up — 'Da wär ich nun wieder im Kloster. Es war mir noch nie so eng ...' (B23, 256) — and Tübingen a gloomy confirmation: 'In der Studierstube-enge Tübingens glüht der Stiftler nach Natur und Freiheit' (Lothar Kempfer, Hölderlin in Hauptwil, second edition (Tübingen, 1975), p.53).

30. Both Kurz and Aspetsberger see the ending as a most

positive affirmation of future action with social potential: 'Der Roman verlangt nach seiner Fortsetzung im freien schöpferischen Handeln, das, von ihm allererst freigesetzt, ihn zugleich überholt' (Kurz 161); 'Mit der Briefform und dem Briefpartner Bellarmin scheint der über alles bloß Individuelle am Schicksal Hyperions hinausgehende Anspruch seines Anliegens an Öffentlichkeit ganz klar dargestellt' (Aspetsberger 274f.). The 'open' form is rightly emphasised against Ryan's resignative view ('Hyperion'). But Aspetsberger's unwillingness to go beyond an immanent recreation of Hölderlin's intention leaves him with untreated contradictions; for elsewhere he can write: '[Die] Einengung aller Lebensbereiche auf die Kunst und der Rückzug aus der Welt ist erst in der endgültigen Fassung in dieser Unbedingtheit durchgeführt' (296); 'Darüber hinaus scheint — sieht man von seiner Einsamkeit ab — keine höhere Harmonie von Freude und Leid möglich' (339) (of Hyperion's situation as he prepares to narrate of Diotima).

31. Schmidlin ('"Psyche"') and 'Hölderlin und Schellings Philosophie der Mythologie und Offenbarung', HJb, 17 (1971/72), pp.43-55, finds a nexus of 'Halbgötter' — Prometheus, Herakles, Christ — bound together by the key figure of Chiron, the tutor-centaur who, 'zwiegestalt', symbolises the nature and role of the poet. The poet, by acknowledging (in terms of Christ: taking upon himself) and teaching man's dual nature, becomes highest 'Lehrer der Menschheit'; science, (violent) revolution and reason are the single error of Prometheus-Herakles, man's striving after infinity.

32. Klaus-Rüdiger Wöhrmann, Hölderlins Wille zur Tragödie (Munich, 1967), p.64: Hölderlin rejected 'die stur-männliche Vernunft des Sittengesetzes'. Through the philosophy of 'practical reason' 'will' and 'becoming a man' are identified: 'Unter rastloser Thätigkeit reift man zum Manne, unter dem Bestreben, aus Pflicht zu handeln ...' (B86, 7f.; cf. B88, 68-71).

33. From 'Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung'; the image, and the warning it carries, appears, strikingly, twice: Schiller, Werke, Nationalausgabe, XX, i, ed. Benno von Wiese (Weimar, 1962), pp.428, 13-34, 503, 12-20.

Laplanche 60 sees in Schiller's commissioning from Hölderlin in Jena a translation of Ovid's Phaëthon story a similar warning, in the context of Hölderlin's 'search for the father'. Even if one rejects the Freudian interpretation, the myth of the youth who stole his father's sun-chariot for a day and drove to destruction is startlingly apt for the young author of Hyperion.

On the decline of the father-figure as a general social phenomenon in this period, as father of the family, Landesvater, God the Father, see Gerth 47.

34. Schiller, 'Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung', 493, 5-7.

35. Hyperion was intended to find favour with women: B60, 32-35.

Gerth describes the developing split between art, with its often moral and didactic purpose, and the man's role in society: '[Die Frau] gestaltet das Heim, von dem aus der Mann 'hinaus ins feindliche Leben' muß ... Losgelöst von den Arbeitsfunktionen auch des Haushalts wird sie zur Dame, die in größerer Muße und Distanz vom alltäglichen Lebenskampf seelischer Verfeinerung ... sich widmen mag' (66f.).

Now in this light the Idealistic celebration of relationship ('subject-object'), of 'the other', concreteness, becomes the abstraction of compensation, and the 'manly' idealism epitomised by Kant and Fichte can truly be seen as the seeds of Romanticism: the preference of dream to action and reality. If the artist-philosopher is guided by the ideal of 'interesseloses Gefallen', the man's task of fighting his way through the world compromises the absolute freedom apparently proclaimed by the Revolution.

The position of Hofmeister, although preserving some inner freedom, was a lamentable compromise. See Gerth's chapter 'Der Hofmeister' (51-60), also Kondylis 214-17. Gerth 62 speaks of 'die soziale Obdachlosigkeit der weder institutionell noch personal Gebundenen' that made literature a necessity.

36. Söring uses the model of conflict between the tragic hero and his environment to demonstrate the dramatic failure of the three versions. 'Das Interesse liegt nur darin, wie man sich — selbstbezogen — jeder Verwicklung, der öffentlichen wie privaten, entzieht, um ganz sich selbst leben zu können' (86); 'Solcher Geist scheitert daher niemals, er geht, indem er sich entzieht, nur immer wieder rein zu sich hervor, weil er sich selbst verbietet, in der Welt als seinem Widerspruch zu bleiben' (182).

For Binder the figure of Empedokles represents the very opposite of self-projection: 'Hölderlin leistet in der Verfremdung seiner eigenen Seelengeschichte in die dramatische Fabel von Empedokles denselben Subjektverzicht, den Empedokles in der Hingabe an den seienden Gott leistet ...' (Wolfgang Binder, 'Hölderlins Dichtung Homburg 1799', HJb, 19-20 (1975-77), pp.76-93 (p.90)).

37. The image recurs at the end of the letter. When the 'strangers' of the fifth strophe of 'Patmos' come to the island 'vom Schiffbruch ... klagend', one may think back to this letter.

38. See 7.ii, Lebensdokumente 196b, 201, with Beck's comments.

39. Death seems a question rarely discussed in Hölderlin scholarship. Yet it is perhaps the central question of Hyperion: in the nihilistic attack on human life and its meaninglessness which closes the first Book ('Aber Einer nur hat seine Feste unter euch; das ist der Tod' (I, 80/9)); in Diotima's ultimate confession of faith, persuading a

still doubting Hyperion that Nature can redeem even from death and is therefore truly divine (I, 102/10-15); above all, in the final apostrophe to Nature, which reveals the whole novel to have been a struggle with mortality: "'O Seele! Seele! Schönheit der Welt! du unzerstörbare! du entzückende! mit deiner ewigen Jugend! du bist; was ist denn der Tod und alles Wehe der Menschen?'"'. Death is not so much the physical event, vulgar fear of which Hyperion has nothing but scorn for (II, 117/16), as the meaningless mediocrity and accompanying awareness of physical causality which make that event a calamity (cf. 'An Hiller', ll.1-13; 'An die Parzen', ll.11-12; Hyperion, II, 107/13). Thus Hyperion's solution lies in 'Begeisterung', in being lifted up above the world.

40. For the sense of 'Meta-pher' (with transitive force: 'a carrying-across', 'Übertragen') and further interpretation, see Wöhrmann 65-73 ('Die Definition des tragischen Gedichts'); Szondi's essay 'Gattungspoetik und Geschichtsphilosophie' (119-63); and cf. Konrad 51. On the theoretical background, the eighteenth-century search for an harmonious tragedy typified (but not achieved) by Lessing and culminating in Hölderlin's and Schelling's conception of tragic conflict as supreme vindication of the vision of absolute unity ('intellektuelle Anschauung'), see Wöhrmann 7-65.

The conviction of the divinity of love is also expressed in the poems 'Das Unverzeihliche' and 'Menschenbeifall'. 'An das Göttliche glauben/ Die alleyn, die es selber sind.'

41. In Hegel's reflections in Frankfurt on the nature and destiny of Christ Emil Staiger recognised the profound impression made by Hölderlin's loss of Susette Gontard on his friend. They express both deep sympathy and philosophical reserve. "'Indem sich aber so der Mensch das vollständigste Schicksal selbst gegenüber setzt, so hat er sich zugleich über alles Schicksal erhoben; das Leben ist ihm untreu geworden, aber er nicht dem Leben; er hat es geflohen, aber nicht verletzt, und er mag sich nach ihm, als einem abwesenden Freunde, sehnen, aber es kann ihn nicht als ein Feind verfolgen; und er ist auf keiner Seite verwundbar, wie die schamhafte Pflanze zieht er sich bei jeder Berührung in sich, und ehe er das Leben sich zum Feinde machte, ehe er ein Schicksal gegen sich aufreizte, entflieht er dem Leben." Diese unvergleichlichen Worte sind angesichts Hölderlins und Diotimas niedergeschrieben.'

Perhaps these thoughts go some way towards explaining Hölderlin's feeling that loss of Susette and subsequent isolation were a 'selbgeschlagene Wunde', an expression unexplained by Szondi (see p.223 below, and the note), for if self-devotion to the 'gods' were relatable to an ultimate fear of involvement with people the question of psychological purity would indeed become critical. Staiger quotes further: "'Anschauung der Liebe scheint die Forderung der Vollständigkeit zu erfüllen, aber es ist ein Widerspruch, das Anschauende, Vorstellende ist ein Beschränkendes und nur Beschränktes Aufnehmendes, das Objekt aber wäre ein Unendliches; das Unendliche kann nicht in diesem Gefäße getragen

werden —

Reines Leben zu denken ist die Aufgabe, alle Taten, alles zu entfernen, was der Mensch war oder sein wird" (from Emil Staiger, Der Geist der Liebe und das Schicksal: Schelling, Hegel und Hölderlin (Frauenfeld/Leipzig, 1935), pp.68f., 105). This infinite perspective is finally attained, after abandonment of the 'Empedokles' project, in 'Das Werden im Vergehen'.

42. The theme of 'Belaidigung' begins with Hölderlin's very first (extant) letter: 'die kleinste Beleidigung schien [mein Herz] zu überzeugen, wie die Menschen so sehr böse, so teuflisch seyen' (22-24; cf. B4, 17-19, B5, 13-15); and continues until, with the abandonment of the 'Empedokles', it has been purged away. It provides an extreme example of how opinions can differ; while the Frankfurter Ausgabe speaks of 'die späten, vielsagend mit "Nachtgesänge" überschriebenen Gedichte' (Einleitung, p.16; cf. the last sentence on the cover), Laplanche writes: 'Er wälzt einen Teil der Verantwortung auf das Unglück der Zeit ab, auf die "Barbaren" um ihn her; eine Deutung, die ... projektiv, wenn nicht gar verrückt erscheint, die sich aber bald zu einem Mythos entfalten wird, dessen Wahrheit es zu enthüllen gilt' (113).

43. So much in Hölderlin's feeling for Susette, in Hyperion's for Diotima, recalls childhood: she is the 'göttliche Selbstgenügsame' (I, 130/2); the lovers lead a protected life in the island of a magic circle ('... ich weiß von nichts, als meiner seeligen Insel', I, 156/11f.), a 'geheimere Welt' ('Götter wandelten einst ...', l.12) free from care. 'Ich gehe ... so hin in fröhlichem schönen Frieden, wie ein Kind ...' (B136, 49f.; cf. B123, 23-25). Compare Laplanche 87. Binder finely distinguishes between Hölderlin's and Schiller's conception of childhood grace: for Schiller it means free untrammelled action, spontaneity, for Hölderlin, freedom from the world, self-sufficiency: 'Schiller sieht die Absolutheit des Kindes in seinem ungebrochenen Aus-sich-selbst-sein, Hölderlin in einem unbedürftigen In-sich-sein, das noch von keiner Welt weiß und darum ein Ich im vollen Sinne nicht ist ... Dort die Freiheit eines in sich selbst gegründeten Seins, hier ein Frei-sein vom Umweltdruck, ein Leben und Atmen in seligem Frieden mit sich selbst — Schillerische Autonomie und Hölderlinische Integrität' (Aufsätze, 121).

44. 'Auch die Komposition des Ganzen zeigt den Stilwandel vom Frankfurter Plan an und durch die drei Fassungen hin in einer fortschreitenden "Verläugnung des Accidentellen"' (4.329, 8-10); most obviously in the disappearance of family circumstances.

45. The passage from B170 is a reminiscence of Genesis 19. 17 ('Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain ...'), but perhaps also of Moses' ascent to receive the Ten Commandments from the Lord ('wo man zum Gefühle der Gottheit sich

erhoben hat').

46. Binder (Aufsätze, 257) only discusses the Greek derivation of the name, 'prophet', 'seer', although Hölderlin's technique, illustrated by him, of signalling Namenssymbolik by the initial response of a second character is obvious here ('die Todten'). Another Latin-derived significance is 'Agri-gent' (cf. 'Empedokles' II, 112-19).

47. A crucial topic, but rarely more than touched upon in Hölderlin scholarship. 'Als verwüstende Herrschaft äußert sich menschliche Tätigkeit, verselbständigt sie sich von ihrem Grund, der Natur' (Kurz 15; but 'Natur' is probably meant in Marx-Engels' (anachronistic) sense.

Staiger too sees the 'Grund zum Empedokles' as a 'Kritik der Aufklärung' (100).

48. 'Loss of self' in the 'abyss' of Nature is a truly Romantic leitmotif; one senses its presence in the work of Caspar David Friedrich and the late Turner. 'Selbstbewußtseyn setzt die Gefahr voraus, das Ich zu verlieren. Es ist kein freier Akt des Unwandelbaren, sondern ein abgedrungenes Streben des wandelbaren Ichs ... , seine Identität zu retten und im forttreißenden Strom des Wechsels sich selbst wieder zu ergreifen ... '; 'Wir erwachen aus der intellektualen Anschauung wie aus dem Zustande des Todes. Wir erwachen durch Reflexion, d.h. durch abgenöthigte Rückkehr zu uns selbst' (Schelling, Sämtliche Werke, ed. K.F.A. Schelling, 1.Abteilung, ten vols (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1856-61), I, 180, 325).

This is criticism of Fichte. But Schelling's philosophy too will have seemed to Hölderlin to perpetuate man's mastery, for even though it centres on a Spinozistic surrender to the All, it remains, being philosophy, mere theory and therefore Reason; compare Beißner's comment on 'Die Weisen aber ... ' (4.409, 27) and Schmidlin ('"Psyche"') 305: 'Als die Philosophie um 1800 den Schritt zur dialektischen Methode ... vollzog und damit den Gegensatz von Philosophie und Religion endgültig überwand, sorgte Hölderlin dafür, daß der überwundene Gegensatz nicht verschwand, sondern als Gegensatz von Poesie und Philosophie sichtbar blieb.' Hölderlin's paradoxical task is thus at once to correct and put into practice, go beyond. Naturally, since the measure is Fichte and Schiller, Schelling (and Hegel) will have seen themselves as going that 'step' further.

(The fiery heat of the sun is for Hölderlin the very essence of the Orient: a life too close to Nature, opposite of that in Germany (so already in the undergraduate dissertation, 4.189, 24-29).)

49. Epic and drama as fictional forms, the lyric genre as 'Aussage eines echten Aussagesubjekts', 'Wirklichkeitsaussage, die keine Funktion in einem Wirklichkeitszusammenhang haben will', is the fundamental distinction established by Käte Hamburger, Die Logik der Dichtung, second edition (Stuttgart, 1968) (cf. pp.216f.). The definitions indicate categorically which genre lends itself to the idealisation

of the individual and his elevation above society. The lyric poem is for Hölderlin 'Metapher Eines Gefühls' (4. 266, 3), universalisation, then of union ('Eines zu seyn'); therewith the archetypal model is childhood oneness with Nature, and the 'Metapher' represents completion of a 'Lebenslauf': 'jene Stufe der Bildung, wo der Mensch aus ursprünglicher Kindheit hervorgegangen ... zur höchsten Form, zum reinen Wiederklang des ersten Lebens emporgerungen hat' (4.263, 6-8). This 'highest form' (i.e. maximum abstraction) is (cf. Konrad 99f.) the 'transzendente Empfindung': the visionary sense of the unity of all things. In such terms the fictional Hyperion and Empedokles can only be eventually obstructive and redundant stages towards completely free self-expression. The diminishing breadth and gathering depth of these figures from the novel through to the third version of the drama graphically mark this progress.

50. Szondi's interpretation of the letter as a self-disciplining turn to reality in which Hölderlin overcomes his 'allzugroße Scheu' and finds 'das Lebendige' 'in der "Nüchternheit" ... , die der Empirie zugewandt ist', is too simply positive (115-17, 125-31). It ignores the ambivalence of the 'Scheu': if 'Nüchternheit' is the opposite of 'Begeisterung' it cannot be equated with 'zerstörende Wirklichkeit', for the mediocrity ('bornirte Häuslichkeit', the German characteristic: B172, 52) of life, however depressing, is not an object of fear. Because Szondi adopts Hölderlin's ambivalent terminology and speaks of 'das Zerstörerische einer prosaischen Welt', his summary of the letter — 'Das Lebendige ... ist das Konkrete: die mit der Wirklichkeit verwachsene Idee' — achieves no more than a paraphrase and overlooks the essential, unsolved and insoluble, conflict: sensitivity combined with Empedoklean aspiration precludes entry into the world. He himself observes the suspect terminology 'Licht'/'Schatten', but sees it as a remnant of 'Scheu', later overcome (129f.); and thus his chief point of comparison, the Tübingen Hymns, is misleading also, for the letter is concerned with an immediate deficiency ('jezt', 'noch': 31, 33). Now 'Licht' and 'Schatten' constitute the world of Hyperion: 'Du mußt, wie der Lichtstral, herab'

Binder's assessment simply allows metaphysical and ethical aspects to merge: 'Hölderlin zieht jetzt die poetologische Konsequenz: ich muß das unreine Endliche, vor dem ich mich so sehr scheue, unbedenklich und hart darstellen ... ' ('Homburg' 85). Laplanche is more realistic: 'Das Bewußtsein seiner Schwäche treibt ihn dazu, sich in seinem Kontakt zum Object "mit den Dingen, die" auf ihn "zerstörend wirken", so einzurichten, daß er sie nicht "an sich", sondern nur als ästhetisches Material nimmt' (111). Like Szondi, Binder too finds in this period a turn from what is loosely called 'Idealism' to reality: 'Nur der Mensch im geschehenden Jetzt und der Gott, der kommt und schon "nah ist", beschäftigt Hölderlin noch' (Aufsätze, 25). Yet the Idealistic principle, the anthropocentric nature of the

universe, remains valid. For Söring the turning-point is marked by 'Das Werden im Vergehen': the idealisation of individual potential (the Empedoklean destiny) is renounced in favour of the objective historical process. 'Die kategoriale Bestimmung des Zeitschicksals ... als eines Überganges verweist das Geschick des Einzelnen in den Bereich der Kontingenz, deren Konstitutivität für den Übergang nicht justifizierbar ist. Das Postulat des "Grundes" ist somit nichts anderes als eine grandiose Insinuation ... Das empirische Subjekt — sei es noch so gesteigert — ist unter diesem globalen Aspekt eine negligible Größe' (241f.). This view reflects a crude adoption of values — drama = failure, (late) poetry = success — which therewith become facts awaiting rational justification. Söring's own summary of the mimetic-anamnestic function Hölderlin now ascribes to poetry ('Der Dichter hat ... Epoche zu üben', 236) scarcely suggests that the individual's 'global' role has been abandoned. Schmidlin sees more clearly: Hölderlin's 'Empedokles' has 'prophetic' meaning, 'indem er im Leben die Empedokles-Rolle übernimmt' ('"Psyche"', 309). He is thinking, however, of the mythopoeic binding of the Absolute (in anthropocentric analogy: of the longing for infinity) to finite matter, the chironic role of, for example, 'Stimme des Volks' (cf. 'Empedokles' II, 125-31, III, 374), than of the 'Postulat des "Grundes": loss of self, death.

51. On this 'kühnster und letzter Versuch' Konrad comments: 'Wenn man ... das Pathos der Betonung der Wichtigkeit und Schwierigkeit des ... Schrittes streicht, dann könnte er inhaltsgleich auch so formuliert werden: Es ist die letzte Hyperbel in der Verfahrungsweise des poetischen Geistes, das poetische Ich aufzufassen' (51). This reduction of the experiential to the transcendental-logical is undoubtedly methodologically necessary, but distorts the meaning. In another context Konrad can take up Hölderlin's stress on the 'importance' of a point (115), and elsewhere he accepts that 'die Hypostasierung stellt sich nicht als etwas hinzukommendes Neues dar, sondern umgekehrt: Das, was als Hypostasiertes erscheint, ist gerade das Vorausgesetzte ...' (39f.; cf. 205). His reordering of the essay so that the 'last act' comes first, although useful, similarly obscures the experiential element.

52. See Konrad's overall division into three parts (24-25). At the end of each transcendental deduction he refers to the result of the other (72, 176). Thus, following his divisions, the first part reflects upon the objective expression, 'Äußerung', of the Spirit, namely, the poem, and thus leads to the 'Ich' ('subjective' reflection); and the second part reflects upon the inner basis, the 'Ich', and thus leads to the poem ('objective' reflection). The interdependence of the two parts is complete 'mit der Begründung der Notwendigkeit des Zirkels der Gedankenführung' (93f.).

53. Fichte, Werke, I, ii, 301. For Hölderlin's rejection of this 'Gewaltlösung', see Konrad 66f.; for his initial

response to Fichte as a 'Titan', Hegel's letter to Schelling (Jan. 1795), 7.ii, 19. (Schiller too has a 'kolossalischer Geist': B89, 78f..)

54. 'Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung', 496, 21-24, 26-28.

55. 'Das Problem der Individuation von Geist und Leben in viele Einzelpersonen' is for Konrad 'heikelster Punkt der ganzen Gedankenführung' (105; cf. 115-17: for Hölderlin to have accepted human individuation as a problem would have had 'einschneidende Konsequenzen für sämtlich ... erarbeitete Voraussetzungen' (116)). He finds (116f.) a solution in 'Über Religion'; but it is perhaps significant that his quotation omits Hölderlin's proviso: men will join their different ways of conceiving of the Divine 'so lange sie nicht gekränkt und geärgert, nicht gedrückt und nicht empört in gerechtem oder ungerechtem Kampfe begriffen sind' (4. 279, 12-17). The proviso is absence of 'Belaidigung'; cf. 4.235, 11-17, 236, 6-21. The solipsistic potential of Hölderlin's 'religion' seems clearly indicated in Konrad's summary of Hölderlin's epistemology: 'daß der Geist auch in seinen anderen bei sich ist, so daß alle Erkenntnis Selbsterkenntnis ist' (176). This depends on: homogeneity of the term 'Geist'; failure to distinguish between relationship to the object-world and to people ('in seinen anderen'); reference of all experience back to the self (as reflecting the individual spirit). Now these are typical elements of Romantic philosophy, from Kant to Schleiermacher. It seems to me that Hölderlin's apparent attempts to correct its failings are explicable less as criticism than as arising from a greater exposure to the dangers involved.

56. Kurz uncritically celebrates 'Dichtung als anamnetisches Bewußtsein der "Thaten der Welt"' (170-84). His statement 'Schärfer noch als Hegel hat Hölderlin darauf insistiert, daß Endlichkeit, daß Trennung und "Dürftigkeit" ... Bedingung bewußten Lebens ist' (71f.) is meaningless unless one assumes a factual alternative (to 'Endlichkeit'). If one looks for such an alternative in contemporary thought, it is to be found not in Schiller or Fichte, but in the work that accompanied the 'Verfahrungsweise': (Empedoklean) suicide. Cf. Kondylis 407: union of Subject and Object in poetry is the alternative to Empedokles' choice, the absolute union of ceasing to be human.

57. Kondylis 400f.: the function of the intellect is solely to expose its own inadequacy. 'Die Erkenntnis von der Beschaffenheit der Erkenntnis des subjektiven Ich läuft also auf die Erkenntnis von den Schranken der Reflexion überhaupt hinaus' (401). He too sees Hölderlin's 'Triplizitätsstruktur' as an answer to Fichte: 'Die ... Einsicht, Fichte gehe nicht über das Bewußtsein hinaus, ließ die ganze Wissenschaftslehre als nur auf die zweite Stufe des triadischen Schemas, nämlich die Spaltung, bezogen erscheinen' (450f.). 'Hölderlin stellt ... den Begriff eines poetischen

Ich auf, welches dem subjektiven Ich überlegen sein und den Träger der göttlichen Empfindung darstellen soll' (406). This should be appended to Konrad's note on Hölderlin's step beyond Schiller (226f.).

58. Konrad sees the 'Verfahrungsweise' as based on 'two experiences': poetry; and 'das natürliche Verhalten des ursprünglichen Menschen im mechanisch schönen Leben' (204). He defines the 'Mittelzustand' as being 'zwischen dem Zustand der Weltgebundenheit des Kindes und der Weltverfügbarkeit des Mannes' (64), but without taking the hypostasis seriously. Wöhrmann observes: 'Die Befolgung der Regel ['Seze dich mit freier Wahl ... '] soll aus jenem "Mittelzustand zwischen Kindheit und reifer Humanität" erlösen, in dem er sich selbst, dem dreißigsten Jahre nahe, immer noch fühlt' (63); he finds similar biographical reference in 'Accommodation eines gewöhnlichen Menschen' (64). Cf. Aspetsberger 343: 'Hyperion ... hat in seiner Entwicklung die Lebensbahn vom Kinde zum Manne durchlaufen'

Hölderlin writes to his brother: 'Weist Du die Wurzel alles meines Übels? Ich möchte der Kunst leben ... , und muß mich herumarbeiten unter den Menschen ... ' (B152, 66-68). The sociological background, the emergence of an artist-intellectual alienated from the nascent capitalist society and so from his own class, is documented by Schiller's discussion of the purpose of art in 'Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung': 'wir müssen uns ... nach einer Klasse von Menschen umsehen, welche, ohne zu arbeiten, thätig ist ... Nur eine solche Klasse kann das schöne Ganze menschlicher Natur, welches durch jede Arbeit augenblicklich, und durch ein arbeitendes Leben anhaltend zerstört wird, aufbewahren' (490, 25f., 30-33). That this alienation is metaphysical as well as ethical is clear from the discussion that follows ('Realist und Idealist'): 'der Realist läßt sich bestimmen durch die Notwendigkeit der Natur' (493, 1-2). Hegel says: 'Sprache und Arbeit sind Äußerungen, worin das Individuum nicht mehr an ihm selbst sich behält und besitzt, sondern das Innere ganz außer sich kommen läßt und dasselbe Anderem preisgibt' (G.W.F. Hegel, Werke in 20 Bänden (Frankfurt/Main, 1970-79), III, 235). On these terms the article by Jeffrey Barnouw, '"Der Trieb bestimmt zu werden": Hölderlin, Schiller und Schelling als Antwort auf Fichte', Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift, 46 (1972), pp.248-93, with its conclusion — 'in Hölderlins Jenaer Bruchstücken vereinigt Eros widerstreitende Triebe, damit der Mensch nicht "thierisch" (bloß "bestimmt") aber mehr noch "menschlich" sei' (293) — amounts to no more than a paraphrase. For the problem lies not in lack of coherence, but in the elevation above reality of the terminology. Konrad defines the 'starting-point' of the 'Verfahrungsweise' as 'die Situation des empirischen Ich, das sich in dem Zwiespalt sieht, in seinen Verhaltensweisen entweder seine sinnliche oder seine geistige Natur verletzen zu müssen' (35). Altogether the problem of 'Vernunft' in this period expresses the same crisis; there is no thinker (not even Kant) who does not reject 'reason', yet each sees the others as defective on that very count.

59. On Hölderlin's initial misunderstanding of Fichte as Spinozistic 'dogma', see Kondylis 305-10: 'Der (für Fichte maßgebende) praktische Ton im "Ich = Ich" wird einfach überhört' (309). Konrad doubts whether Hölderlin ever understood the meaning of 'primacy of practical reason' (67). Kurz observes a similar shift in Schiller's interpretation of Kant as divisively rational: 'Schillers Schritt über Kant hinaus verstrickt sich jedoch in tiefe Widersprüche. Die Versöhnung von Vernunft und Sinnlichkeit im Schönen, die Schiller gegen die "strenge und grelle Entgegensetzung beyder" bei Kant setzen wollte, endete in einer Verschärfung dieses Gegensatzes ... Diese Verstrickung ist erklärbar aus einer offensichtlich traumatischen Erfahrung der "blinden Gewalt" der Trieb- und Bedürfnisnatur des Menschen, die jede Harmonie mit ihr verdächtigen muß' (71). To have conceded that Hölderlin's own 'step' further 'über die Kantische Gränzlinie' (B88, 96f.) involved further 'Verstrickung' would, however, have invalidated his optimistic approach.

Spinner in his essay on 'Unter den Alpen gesungen' (Kaspar H. Spinner, Zur Struktur des lyrischen Ich (Frankfurt/Main, 1975), pp.59-74) also senses the powerful autobiographical element in the 'Verfahrungsweise': 'Die Klagen über das eigene "Einsamsein", in der Hauptwiler Zeit etwa im [zweiten] Brief an Landauer, sind das biographische Äquivalent zur theoretischen Äußerung in der Verfahrensweise' (69). Laplanche sees in the 'circular' form of the essays a search for escape (125). Only on the basis of intensification of a potential admittedly inherent in Fichte — 'eine Abspaltung des Bewußtseinsmoments von der Beziehung auf einen gewußten Gegenstand führt ... auf einen isolierten und notwendig selbstbezüglichen Ich-Begriff' (Becker 20) — can one speak of Hölderlin's rejecting the 'Ich' concept. But Spinner says: 'Die Bedeutsamkeit von Hölderlins Auseinandersetzung mit der Ich-Problematik liegt vor allem in der Ablehnung des Anspruchs auf Autonomie des Ich, wie er sonst im Idealismus erhoben wurde' (70). Yet his supportive quotation, from 'Urtheil und Seyn', in fact shows that for Hölderlin the prime division is within the self, not in its relations to the outside world: in the 'Urtheilung' that precedes all social relativity. Spinner skates over this problematic mediation of 'self-consciousness' with 'object-consciousness' (on this Idealistic crux, see Becker 19-26) towards a harmonious solution: 'Bei Hölderlin ist der deutsche humanistische Individuumsbegriff infragegestellt. Das Individuum soll für ihn nicht das "Untheilbare" sein, vielmehr soll das Ich gerade im Bezug zum Anderen und zu anderen selbst Identität gewinnen' (71). On the contrary, 'Urtheil und Seyn' suggests that the individual should be indivisible, but is not. When Empedokles laments his selfhood with 'Klagen über das eigene "Einsamsein"' (II, 342-46), it is Nature, not people, he has lost; it is striking how he regains harmony not through his own efforts, but through his exile by the people.

Spinner's interpretation follows the inspiring article by Martin Walser, 'Hölderlin zu entsprechen', HJb, 16 (1969/70), pp.1-18; he quotes (71) the dictum: 'Das Individuum

ist eine glänzende europäische Sackgasse.' Walser himself writes within the tradition of the Frankfurter Schule, which in its turn owes much to German Idealism: 'Er mußte sich in anderen erfahren' (Walser 7). So too Szondi: 'Die Dinge sind sein anderes, ohne das er auch nicht er selber ist' (116). But when the Frankfurter Ausgabe celebrates through Hölderlin the 'Apriorität des Individuellen über das Ganze' — 'das Individuelle spiegelt nicht nur das Ganze, es behauptet seine Autonomie gegen den Herrschaftsanspruch des Allgemeinen' (Einleitung, 19) — one sees that such terms are not viable social concepts.

Although intuitive rather than systematic, the interpretation by Rudolf Berlinger, 'Hölderlins philosophische Denkart', Euphorion, 62 (1968), pp.1-12, seems best to place the 'Verfahrungsweise' in the history of philosophy: its context is 'die seit der Renaissance sich artikulierende Autonomie-Problematik von Welt, in der das mit dem Idealismus aufkommende Problem der Selbstkonstruktion seinen systematischen Ort hat' (3). It is the 'experimentum suae medietatis' (Augustine) with its ascetic fear of physical dependence, the search to become 'causa sui' (cf. Berlinger 1).

60. '"Mit einer stozen Silbe" ... Die Silbe "ich" muß gemeint sein, das absolute Ich' (Binder (Aufsätze) 21).

61. Kondylis stresses that philosophy is for Hölderlin at once 'division' and poetic theory: 'Mit Hilfe der schönen Reflexion ... erreicht der poetische Geist die Erkenntnis des poetischen Ich, die aber nur insofern eine Selbsterkenntnis sein kann, als das poetische Ich noch nicht ein vollendetes ist, d.h. als es die Poesie nur auf der Ebene der Poetik, nämlich nur programmatisch, realisiert hat' (399).

62. 'Das Distichon'. Schiller, Werke, Nationalausgabe, I, ed. Julius Petersen and Friedrich Beißner (Weimar, 1943), p.285.

63. See the finely sensitive and perceptive consideration of Hölderlin's elegiac couplet by Ludwig Strauß, 'Zur Struktur des deutschen Distichons', Trivium, 6 (1948), pp.52-83 (pp.69-83).

64. For the alternation of rise and fall in the alcaic strophe Binder finds the analogy of breathing or the swell ('Dünung') of the sea ('Hölderlins Odenstrophe' (Aufsätze, pp.47-75), p.54). At the end of 'Der Archipelagus' comes the prayer: 'Laß der Stille mich dann in deiner Tiefe gedenken'; the sea is peace. The distinction between the epic hexameter with its 'grenzenloses Weiterströmen ... in ununterbrochener Reihe vieler Verse' (Strauß 65) and the elegiac couplet in its potentially endless rise and fall is not, as with classical forms, rigid, and the creation of the strophic form out of the elegiac couplet can presuppose the same infinite potential as is symbolised by the hexameter.

65. Cf. Binder (Aufsätze) 20, ('Homburg') 86. '"Das Sein"

... versteht er ... mit einem ehemals mystischen Begriff als "Grund" (20).

66. Cf. the use of 'Geister', 4.159, 30.

67. Strauß speaks of 'der Widerstand gegen das Unendlichkeits-Streben des Hexameters im lyrisch-elegischen Distichon' (65).

68. Cf. A.W. Schlegel's lines on the birth of the elegiac couplet.

Als der Hexameter einst in unendlichen Räumen des Epos
Ernst hinwandelnd, umsonst innigen Liebesverein
Suchte, da schuf aus eignem Geblüt ihm ein weibliches
Abbild,
Pentametrea, und ward selber, Apoll, Paranymphe
Ihres unsterblichen Bundes. Ihr sanft anschmiegend Umarmen
Brachte dem Heldengemahl ...
manch anmutiges Kind, elegeische Lieder.

('Die Elegie'. A.W. Schlegel, Kritische Schriften und Briefe, ed. Edgar Lohner, 6 vols (Stuttgart, 1962-67), III, 234f..) This conception seems even to go back to the Baroque; Hanmann's appendix to Opitz's 'Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey' says: 'Elegien seynd Alexandrinische Verse, da ein Weiblicher und Männlicher umb einander gesetzt werden' (quoted by Friedrich Beißner, Geschichte der deutschen Elegie (Berlin, 1941), p.63).

Cf. Strauß on the symbolism of Goethe's elegiac couplet (reference below, p.369, n.33).

69. Such open-ness to the All, the very essence of Hölderlin's poetic process, appeared in relation to 'Verstand' and in the 'Grund' (4.159, 9-11); it appears in the 'Verfahrungsweise' as the third (poetic) stage, following 'Natur' and 'Kunst' (= reflection) (4.261, 10-263, 2). Konrad 100: 'Wenn das Ideal dasjenige ist, das "alles aufnimmt", so ist es außerhalb dieser Funktion Nichts, Leere — eben das, was Allem noch gegenüberliegen kann ... Das Abstrakteste ist reine Form, nicht als prägend gedacht, sondern als aufnehmend; es ist das Nichts eines Innenraumes, totale Empfänglichkeit, Rezeptivität des Geistes.'

For lyric poetry as self-universalisation ('unendlicher Geist'), cf. the definition at 4.246, 3: 'der Geist verallgemeinert alles besondere.'

70. On the formative influence of Shaftesbury and Winckelmann, see Walther Rehm, Griechentum und Goethezeit (Bern and Munich, 1968), pp.24-55. But the ancestor of the conception of the self as divine, yet also potentially lifeless, unit is the Leibnizian monad; the poetic 'sphere' is governed by the question Konrad extracts from Hölderlin's philosophy: 'Wie kann ein Ganzes in seiner Einheit als Individuelles erkannt werden, ohne in dieser Betrachtung zum Atom zu werden' (42f.).

71. Kondylis speaks of 'teleological reflection' in Hyperion; suffering is necessary, good, being the form of finitude in its union with eternity (342f.).

72. The poetic sphere with its 'Hingabe' and 'Eigenmacht' has its source in the very essence of Hölderlin's being: the longing to surrender which cannot be surrendered to, except in the world of poetry. Its nature requires intuition from critics, knowledge, then, which is not fragmented into objectivity by various levels (theological, philosophical, sociological, psychological, etc.). Closest to this is Kempfer's perceptiveness. He formulates the law of Hölderlin's life — 'das Gebundene suchte die Trennung, das Entfernte die Vereinigung' (cf. 4.246, 2f.) — a law whose one side is 'flight' from captivity, whose other side is 'longing': 'Hölderlins Leben ist ein ständiges Ergriffensein und zugleich ein Weggehen' (24, 53). With Diotima in Frankfurt, Homburg is the sphere of 'Treue' and 'Sehnsucht' (Kempfer 53): 'Vor den gegenwärtigen Göttern zurücktretend oder den kommenden Göttern vorausgehend, beide Male spart sich Hölderlin den Raum des Dichtenkönnens aus, um den Göttern zu dienen' (Binder ('Homburg') 93). Yet the origin of the law lies before Frankfurt, in the origin itself, around which are drawn 'concentric circles': Nürtingen, Schwaben, later, Vaterland-Hesperien. 'Aber auch die innere Heimat, der Nürtinger Raum zwischen Albrand und Neckar, hat noch einmal einen innersten Punkt, die Familie, oder eigentlich die Gestalt der Mutter'; hence 'Verzicht auf ... jede Art von Wirklichkeit in dem bedingten, zeitlichen Dasein, das andere warm und bergend umgibt' (Binder (Aufsätze) 79, 83). The 'Angelpunkt des Ödipuskomplexes — der Vater als Urheber des Gesetzes ... — ist niemals in das Bedeutungssystem des Subjekts aufgenommen worden'; Hölderlin 'versucht ... ein solches Gesetz auf der Sprache zu gründen' (Laplanche 57, 145). Rehm speaks of the dream of Greece, 'das Heimweh der ins schwere Leben hinausgestoßenen Menschen nach dem Heimat- und Kinderland' (10). Hence the 'exzentrische Bahn', the attempt to return which cannot be, and hence the semi-solution, love which can never be union; Hyperion's bower, formed out of the traditional idyllic motif, uniting exclusion and enclosure (Aspetsberger 95), becomes the poetic sphere.

II. 'DER WANDERER': IDYLL

1. Cf. B205, 63; Zuberbühler 97-100 (esp. on 'Patmos', 2.186, 1.176): 'Aus der Verwandtschaft mit dem Namen "Gott" schöpft das Wort "gut" bei Hölderlin seine Leuchtkraft und seine Glut' (99).

2. Bertolt Brecht, Die Antigone des Sophokles: Materialien zur 'Antigone', edition suhrkamp (Frankfurt/Main, 1965), in a brief reference to 'Hölderlins Antigone-Sprache', gives examples of 'der schwäbische Volksgestus'. In the poetry this 'gesture' is founded upon the conflict between form and freedom, and is not so much a rhetorical accompaniment to speech as lyrical enhancement of images of liberation.

3. 'Living-death' is the state of lost love, the elegiac situation, the Underworld conveyed at the beginning of 'Elegie'. In the draft of a letter to Susette Gontard Hölderlin writes 'leise ruf' ich mir das Schreckenswort zu: lebendig Todter!' (B182, 8f.). It is lost inspiration (cf. B198, 7-16), 'dejection', familiar from other Romantic poets: from 'Life-in-Death' and the Ancient Mariner's becalmed ship ('Alone, alone, all, all alone'; compare Empedokles' 'Weh! einsam! einsam! einsam!' (II, 342)), from Keats' 'Knight-at-arms/ Alone and palely loitering' where, as at the beginning of 'Der Wanderer' and 'Der Gang aufs Land', 'no birds sing' (in 'Stutgard' they have already returned).

4. Compare the criticism by Andreas Müller, 'Die beiden Fassungen von Hölderlins Elegie "Der Wanderer"', HJb, 3 (1948/49), pp.103-31 (p.125): 'Man mag den Vers ... überlastet, auch die Zusammenfassung zweier so unterschiedlicher Vorgänge ... bedenklich finden.'

5. In notes for a lecture on Pindaric lyric A.W. Schlegel writes: 'Wie steht's dabei um die lyrische Begeisterung? ... Epischer Gang — ruhige Bewegung in gerader Linie. Höchste Lyrik ebenfalls ruhig nur in konzentrischen Schwingungen. Gleichnisse: mittlere Region, obere heitre. Falkenflug — Schweben, plötzliches Treffen' (III, 218). Compare the opening of Goethe's poem 'Harzreise im Winter'.

6. Müller sees the elimination of concrete detail as being always designed to lead up to 'Vater Aether' (1.98), and holds this tendency towards 'das Allgemeinere, vielleicht auch Sinnigere, gewiß: Entsinlichtere' (126) partly responsible for the poem's failure: here (in comparison with the earlier poem) 'ist ... nur von einer Symmetrie der Proportionen, einer bloß äußeren Übereinstimmung zu sprechen, nicht ... von einer Harmonie, die dort als der Widerschein einer wahrhaft glücklichen inneren Ausgewogenheit des Gedichts zu erkennen ist' (130; cf. 131). This would be fair criticism if the thus deconcretised idyll were indeed subordinated to the end; but it is the 'higher' purpose that frees the poem as a whole from external reference.

The Wanderer's return made a powerful impact on Müller:

'In einer gewaltigen und gewaltsamen Erschütterung ist er sich seiner völligen Einsamkeit, einer grenzenlosen Verlassenheit bewußt geworden, in der er jetzt die tiefste Tragik menschlichen Seins, die Ohnmacht vor den Folgen der eigenen Tat, die er dem Leben preisgegeben, das Ausgeliefertsein an die grausige Allgewalt der Zeit, das er damit selbst verschuldet hat, begreift' (129). This reads like a piece of post-war German psychology.

7. III, 266. The proximity of epic to reality (the epic poet's 'objective' detachment) amounts to a definition in this period. Schlegel says that the epic poet has the 'general' (i.e. 'universal') personality 'eines besonnenen, ruhig beschauenden, gleichsam über den Gegenständen schwebenden Geistes, den wir nur durch das Medium der dargestellten äußeren Welt erblicken' (III, 199). Hölderlin, who prefers quotation to literary criticism, observes simply: 'Der ausführliche, stetige, wirklich wahre Ton fällt in die Augen.'

Und so hält sich dann auch das epische Gedicht im Größeren an das Wirkliche' (4.230, 1-3).

Schlegel's important lectures on literature began even as Hölderlin was composing his greatest poetry, and are thus often valuable in revealing the premises on which Hölderlin's more complex and abstract conceptions are built. Hölderlin's own Idealistic systematisation of the genres, which is not immediately relevant here (see Szondi 138-46), remains founded on the conventional view. Similarly, the principles of poetry discussed here with the problem of creativity are common cultural property (the classical statements are in the work of Hamann and Herder) already integrated, inherited rather than stated, in Hölderlin (cf. e.g. 4.182, 16-18).

8. For these principles, see Renate Böschenstein-Schäfer, Idylle, second edition (Stuttgart, 1978), and Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), esp. pp. 45-64 ('Simplicity'). Although his work is concerned with pastoral proper, Rosenmeyer's observations often cross into idyll, and the blurring of generic boundaries entailed in my discussion is appropriate to the Idealistic context: to the view that fixed forms ('Positivität') are, without the rejuvenating breath of the universal Spirit, dead art. Epic, pastoral and idyll can fall under the category 'naive' because the implicit and absolute ideal is return to Nature. 'Hier ist Arkadien; vor Dir, um Dich, es sei nur in Dir ... Groß und neu wird hiemit das Gebiet des Idylls' (Herder, Sämtliche Werke, ed. Bernhard Suphan, 33 vols (Berlin, 1877-1913), XXIII, p.305).

9. Müller 111.

10. III, 229. Such an unformed succession of couplets is, again, 'epic' simplicity, in which, Schlegel says, 'each moment' is 'there for its own sake'; in the garden of Alcinous the fruits fall one after another from the tree 'dem Genießenden in die Hand' (II, 312f.); again the association

of idyll with epic. Naturally the use of such terms here presupposes comparison with the second, formed, version of 'Der Wanderer'.

My understanding of Hölderlin's elegiac form follows Schlegel's dictum: 'Wir müssen auf den ... Grundsatz zurückgehen, daß das Silbenmaß immer den Geist des Ganzen bezeichnen soll' (III, 198). This is a Romantic conception: metre is designed to generate a mood in the poet rather than conform to objectively definable types of subject-matter. Despite Binder's excellent essay, 'Hölderlins Odenstrophe' (Aufsätze, 47-75), far too little thought has been given to this.

11. In some way this step beyond idyllic 'Ruhe' seems connected with the systematic philosophical step beyond Schiller's 'Wechselwirkung' to the triadic 'dialectic', even though Schiller's personal form is 'satiric' tragedy and not idyll. Cf. Konrad 226f.: 'Die Konsequenz der Schillerschen Bestimmung des Ideals als Gleichgewicht wäre für das Kunstschaffen die "Idylle" als höchste Kunstform — Schiller hat das Untragische dieser Bestimmung anscheinend selbst gesehen, die Konsequenz jedenfalls für sein eigenes Schaffen nicht gezogen.' But if Schiller's tragedies are really a 'Meta-pher' for the conflict between 'Idealist' and 'Realist', ideal and reality, then the resulting balance could be called 'idyllic' even if its form is dramatic. And Hölderlin's 'step further' could in the end reflect rejection by the 'Phantast' of any such reconciliation or compromise, indeed, refusal to acknowledge the obstacle; the 'Idealist' no longer struggles in and with the world (that being the superseded 'heroic' way) but recreates it.

12. Hölderlin, Werke und Briefe, ed. Friedrich Beißner and Jochen Schmidt, 3 vols (Frankfurt/Main, 1969), III, p.48. (Henceforth referred to as Insel-Ausgabe.)

13. The transition from musical harmony (beauty) to life (reality) is one of the two major 'hyperboles' in the 'Verfahrungsweise' (the other is the transition to reality by the reflecting 'Ich'): Konrad 218, 157-62.

III. 'DER GANG AUFS LAND': WISH AND FULFILMENT

1. One may compare the use of 'verständlich' in Goethe's 'Hermann und Dorothea', where, with the classical treatment in general, the honorific epithet has a touch of irony.

2. On 'Geist' and its sound, see Zuberbühler 50-54. 'Auch Hölderlin spürt in "Geist" die vermeintliche Grundbedeutung "Gest"/"Gischt" ... Man muß sich dabei vergegenwärtigen, daß sowohl Schiller wie Hegel und Hölderlin "Geist" wohl als "Geischt" ausgesprochen haben' (51f.).

IV. 'STUTGARD': THE QUESTION OF COMMUNITY

1. Compare, for example, the finality of the mountain in the first half of 'Der Wanderer' ('lächelnd und ernst'); 'offen' closing the first strophe of 'Der Gang aufs Land'; 'seelig und arm', concluding 'An eine Verlobte'.

2. The Heraclitean image of the bow provides a natural expression for the 'exzentrische Bahn', the journey away from the origin and enriched return. Although its bending 'outwards' is thus an idealised act ('That-handlung'), it is Hyperion's image rather than Alabanda's; it is not aggressive, and indeed in the first strophe of 'Lebenslauf' it is by no means clear that an archer's bow is meant. Rather, the sign of the arc as such is involved: the straight line, infinity, deflected by life. The bow is thus the symbol of 'harmoniously-opposed' spirit and matter, of beauty, and so of ultimate unity. Empedokles' triumphant monologue (I, 1910-1942) concludes with 'Iris Bogen', and from the variants it is clear that Hölderlin moved the motif to this final position, thus finding a perfect formal unity; the rainbow that thus spreads out over the passage is the symbol of peace.

So the 'arc' carries a fundamental metaphysical dualism, a conflict between infinite longing and real life, a never-ending search for peace. The elegiac couplet is the 'vessel', but not solution, of this conflict; Konrad's summary (138) of the 'Verfahrungsweise' — 'Das Aus-sich-herausgehen des Geistes kann als ein Bei-sich-bleiben des Geistes begriffen werden' — expresses the same insistence on ultimate control, the longing yet inability to surrender.

3. On the categories 'Langsamkeit' and 'Schnelligkeit' defining the conception of rhythm in the 'Verfahrungsweise', see Konrad 138f.. In his n.59 (p.241f.) he cites parallel definitions from Plato and Aristotle. But it is important to distinguish between the Greek and Idealistic conceptions; the latter is inseparable from the ethical ideal ('interesseloses Gefallen', 'Zweck an sich'), whereas the Greek is less idealistic, being concerned with aesthetic proportion, and can thus comprehend oratory, for example, with its will to persuade.

4. For the 'epic' ('naive') principles involved here, see above, on 'Der Wanderer', ll.55-79. Here too 'stehen' and 'schauen' (cf. 'Der Wanderer', ll.64, 74) gain intensified meaning through the passivity of the poetic self.

V. 'BROD UND WEIN': THE ANATOMY OF LONGING

1. This feeling is one form of the deep spiritual affinity to Rousseau, who in the 'Abgezogenheit von allem Lebendigen' ('Fragment von Hyperion', 218/8) of the Rêveries du promeneur solitaire again and again turns to, then away from, the world of men and its vanity: 'Car pour eux actifs, remuans, ambitieux, détestant la liberté dans les autres et n'en voulant point pour eux même, pourvu qu'ils fassent quelquefois leur volonté, ou plustot qu'ils dominent celle d'autrui, ils se gênent toute leur vie à faire ce qui leur répugne et n'omettent rien de servile pour commander' (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Oeuvres complètes, ed. Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Bruges, 1964—), I, p. 1059). It is the same feeling, but with the intensity of youth, expressed at the end of Hyperion: 'Und Einmal sah' ich noch in die kalte Nacht der Menschen zurück und schauert' und weinte vor Freuden, daß ich so seelig war ... ' (II, 122/15f.). In this period idealisation of art goes hand-in-hand with antipathy to the world of affairs. For A.W. Schlegel Pindaric lyric dissolves 'der Zwang, die Bedürfnisse, die Mühseligkeiten' (III, 217); thus Kant's 'interesseloses Gefallen' heralds the elevation above ordinary life of Romanticism. The celebration of 'epic' detachment has more than a trace of this distaste.
2. 'Spirit' is the breath of life. Hölderlin's panentheism, like Hegel's, is founded upon the biblical tradition of the creative Logos which begins in Genesis 1 ('And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters ... ') and culminates in the Johannine christology. Hölderlin transfers this agency to Nature (cf. 'Empedokles' II, 538).
3. See Strauß's highly sensitive metrical analysis of this strophe (72-75). His conclusions: '1. Die Melodie der dreiaktigen Kurzverse mit männlichem Schluß geht als fast ununterbrochene Säule durch die ganze Elegie ... und läßt die zweiten Hexameterhälften eine eigene, deutlich abgehobene Stimme singen ... 2. An vier von den acht Distichengrenzen ... wallt der Satz über den Rand der Distichonschale, aber in den nächsten Hexameter ergießt er sich nicht ungehemmt, sondern die neue Schale der pentametrischen ersten Hexameterhälfte fängt ihn auf; zweimal freilich überwallt er auch dieser "zweiten Schale Rund".' Thus he finds the strophe characteristic of Hölderlin's elegies in their growing intensification of connecting flow between rhythmic units (75).
4. The ideal of 'renewal of language' is part of the great reaction against the Enlightenment; the task of literature, above all of poetry, becomes to restore literal vitality to language deadened by metaphor (cf. Zuberbühler's introduction). But the ideal identity of word and object, sign and significate, implies, beyond mere artistic vividness and immediacy, a resuscitation of the primitive search for the magic word of power. The speaker has power over the

object, to release which an access of unwonted energy is needed. The natural time and place of such an act is night, when knowledge cedes to intuition, and so it belongs to the dark 'romantic' north rather than the classical south (runes were signs of power). There are signs of a similar intention in Hegel (cf. Werner Becker, Hegels Begriff der Dialektik und das Prinzip des Idealismus: Zur systematischen Kritik der logischen und der phänomenologischen Dialektik (Stuttgart, 1969), pp.125f.).

5. Compare the position and function of 'the mountains' in the first strophe of 'Stuttgart', of 'der Alte, der Taunus' in 'Der Wanderer', likewise the image of the hill that underlies the rhythm of 'Der Gang aufs Land'. Formal unity is dependent upon these images, just as a poem's genos is determined not by abstract formal considerations, but by Nature.

6. I interpreted the essence — beyond Empedokles, Agri- gent, Greece and Germany, and all other 'accidentality' — of the 'Grund zum Empedokles' as erotic loss of self ('death') of the individual ('Subjekt') to Nature ('Ob- jekt'), and withdrawal. This withdrawal, 'Trennung' 'im Übermaße der Innigkeit, wo sich die Entgegengesetzten ver- wechseln', is 'Erkenntniß' as opposed to 'Gefühl'; an archetypal fall from grace into consciousness (cf. Genesis 2. 17).

7. Discussion of the poem is typically in terms such as 'die erhoffte Wanderung göttlicher Erfüllung von Osten nach Westen, von Griechenland ins heimatliche Hesperien' (Insel- Ausgabe, iii, 54). Since they can scarcely touch us emotionally such terms tend to reduce the poem to an ob- ject of historical interest, while such comments seem to me to go beyond the legitimate function (by and large ob- served in the parent Stuttgarter Ausgabe) of 'Erläuterungen', since they already involve interpretation. This is the approach Constantine is correcting when he speaks of the 'basic elegiac inspiration'; it is 'not necessary to di- stinguish the more personal poems from the odes and hymns whose subjects are, ostensibly, Greece and Hesperia ... The historical-religious "system" in his later poetry can best be understood in terms of the same emotional impulses as form the poems lamenting the separation from Susette Gontard' (49). 'The problems of an interpretative method which does not seek to explain the ideas in poetry but only their poetic function arise chiefly with poems such as ... "Brod und Wein" ... out of which Hölderlin's "mythology" has been abstracted'; what matters is always the 'emotional need out of which the poem grew' (54f.).

8. The lines (and their alliteration) are inspired by John 3. 8: 'Der Wind bläset, wo er will, und du hörest sein Sausen wohl; aber du weißt nicht, von wannen er kommt und wohin er fährt. Also ist ein jeglicher, der aus dem Geist geboren ist.'

9. The transitional association of the eye with water is already apparent in 'Hyperions Schicksaalslied', where the liquid l sounds of 'Und die seeligen Augen/ Bliken in stiller/ Ewiger Klarheit' yield a rhythm like eternally-dropping water. The Bruchstück no.18 (2.319), where 'Thränen' and 'klares Auge' are already virtually paratactic Keimworte, shows how closely this circle of motifs is related to the loss of Susette Gontard; thus the harmonious contrast of warm land and cool shade is the one half of 'Hälfte des Lebens'. In 'Thränen' and 'Patmos' (where the island is also a place of 'shade') these associations have become poetic vocabulary.

10. Lethe and the Styx merge in Hyperion's surrender of will: 'Ich gab mich hin ... , und bildete mir ein, ich liege in Charons Nachen. O es ist süß, so aus der Schaaale der Vergessenheit zu trinken' (I, 86/12-15). The passage is a slight reminiscence of the Rêveries; in the ode 'Rousseau' the poet-seer stands on the banks of the river that parts the living from the dead. For a discussion of the ideas and motifs connecting Rousseau to Hölderlin, see Paul de Man, 'Hölderlins Rousseaubild', HJb, 15 (1967/68), pp. 180-208.

11. Like so many in 'Brod und Wein', the motif comes from the New Testament (Matthew 26. 40f.).

12. My reconstruction of the rhythm in the third strophe often converges with that of Jochen Schmidt, Hölderlins Elegie 'Brod und Wein': Die Entwicklung des hymnischen Stils in der elegischen Dichtung (Berlin, 1968), pp.64-68. My main contribution here is in the overriding rhythmic continuity within which the third strophe, whose structure is the most pronounced in the poem, is held.

13. Cf. A.W. Schlegel, II, 311: 'so wird der Schluß des echten Epos immer zwischen ungeendet und endlos in der Mitte schweben'; his own example: 'Immer noch mehr verlangen die Hörenden, wenn der Gesang tönt.' Of the metre: 'Das epische Silbenmaß ist der Hexameter, der durch seine gleiche Taktart der Ruhe, durch seinen zwischen Fall und Schwung gleich gemessenen Rhythmus der unbestimmten Richtung, durch seinen unerschöpflichen Wechsel dem Umfange, und durch seine leichten und immer verschiedenen Übergänge aus einem Verse in den anderen der Grenzenlosigkeit des Epos entspricht. Er ist schwebend, stetig, zwischen Verweilen und Fortschreiten gleich gewogen, und kann deswegen, ohne zu ermüden, den Hörer auf einer mittleren Höhe in ungemessene Weiten forttragen' (II, 316). Conceptually this corresponds to the 'Einheit' and 'Mannigfaltigkeit' of Hölderlin's poetics (the Iliad expresses the Ideal, 'Alles ist Eins'; see Konrad's nn.65, 84). It seems that the setting of the great Homeric epics, above all that of the Iliad on the sea-shore, has imparted itself to the sense of their form; not the least aspect of German Griechentum is longing for the sea.

14. Kempter compares the strophic form to the flow and impediment of a river: 'Die rhythmische Flut ... in Hölderlins Gesang bewegt und staut sich in der triadischen Fügung der Strophen ... Hölderlins Strophen arbeiten sich durch ein Gebirge von Schranken, Verklammerungen, Einschaltungen, bis der Durchstoß gelingt' (69); Maurice Benn, Hölderlin and Pindar (The Hague, 1962) speaks of the poem's passion 'as it surges against the unyielding triadic structure like a wave breaking over a rock' (117); for Schmidt the rhythmic divisions of this strophe are like 'pillars' and 'blocks of stone', so that the verse is like a river breaking against 'Felstrümmern', and the whole strophe is a path through and over great obstacles, in its impulse to break through the normal 'Maß' of time and place an anticipation of the great hymnic journeys (66f.). The 'Fesseln' ('Der gefesselte Strom') and 'Strike' ('Der Rhein', l.98) dissolve as at last the river loses itself, its individual being, in the infinity of the open sea: 'dann ... in den Ozean freudig nieder!' ('Der Main'). So too in 'Abendphantasie' and 'Mein Eigentum' the poet stands before the sky.

Yet I do not find that the poetry of this strophe has the sensitivity of true perception of Nature; one may compare the sense of the sea, wonderfully suggestive and indirect, in 'Andenken' (written after the return from Bordeaux).

15. Schmidt 67f. notes this change of direction: 'Das "dorthin" im letzten Vers stellt die vollendete Umkehrung des anfänglichen Richtungsadverbs "dorthin" dar' (68).

16. FHA 6.203 (but cf. Stuttgarter Ausgabe 2.591). The Frankfurter Ausgabe provides the clearer picture of the textual history.

17. For the associations and their sources, see Schmidt 62-64.

18. The first word of absence, 'Thronen', reveals the same anthropocentric thought-sequence as in the opening to 'Der Archipelagus': Nature in her fullness misses man 'wie Heroën den Kranz'; man crowns Nature (cf. Hyperion, I, 150/12-16; 4.152, 14f., 19f.). Schmidt 70f. is too precise in his rejection of appositional usage here; the metaphorical and literal possibilities are allowed to co-exist in elegiac unity, so that 'Thronen' and 'Tempel', 'Gefäße' and 'Gesang', are at once distinct and associated. Behind this process lies the incompatibility of Hölderlin's 'religion' with that of Greece, indeed with any institutionalised forms ('Positivität').

19. Schmidt summarises the 'zweite Strophentrias' as 'Hölderlins Idee der Kultur' (68), the fifth strophe as 'Das Werden der Kultur' (89). The ease with which the poetry thus becomes a philosophy of history is disturbing.

20. Such a transition suggests that these lines at least

were composed about the same time as 'Heimkunft', whose second strophe, indeed, has the same Sprachgestus through enjambement: 'Der ätherische scheint Leben zu geben geneigt, / Freude zu schaffen ... '.

21. Strauß too senses an 'inhaltlose Unendlichkeit' in the metrical form of ll.96-97 (76).

22. See Szondi's chapter 'Der andere Pfeil: Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des hymnischen Spätstils' (pp.37-61).

23. See Konrad's comments on the view of language implied by the 'Verfahrungsweise' (pp.105, 107, 115f.): the fragment breaks off at the point where Hölderlin would have had to consider language as 'das Medium der Mitteilung' (115).

24. On Hölderlin's 'Mythologie der Vernunft', see esp. Schmidlin's two articles. Whether Schelling was as constantly in Hölderlin's mind as Schmidlin suggests remains an hypothesis, the allegorisation ("Psyche") of 'Andenken' a wild one. But it seems inevitable that Hölderlin will have 'brooded' (7.ii, 381 (Ld.362.a, 4)) upon the philosopher's meteoric success and his own obscurity; and that this will have hardened his view that Germany preferred 'reason' to beauty, and confirmed the analogy to Christ, whom the world knew not, and the need for sacrificial death. On the presence of Hegel in the later stages of 'Empedokles', see Emil Staiger, 'Der Opfertod von Hölderlins Empedokles', HJb, 13 (1963/64), pp.1-20 (pp.18f.).

25. Compare the sixth strophe of 'Der Mensch'.

26. Terms like 'to overcome' and 'higher level' are frequently to be encountered in writing on Hölderlin. So here the Insel-Ausgabe on the relationship of the sixth to the fourth strophe (of l.99 to l.59): 'Hier ist der Gedankengang wieder, auf einer höheren Ebene, dort angelangt, wo er ... unterbrochen worden ist' (iii, 55). The value upon which this assessment is based is rational and not poetic; cf. Constantine 49: it is Hölderlin's manner to give impulses expression 'not in any Gedankengang, but in oscillation and wavering between them'; 'the poem's meaning ... is not that the poet "wins through in the end" ... , but is all the demands of his emotional situation that the poem has struggled to compose' (47). He too finds the fifth strophe poetically deficient (61f.).

27. 'Untersucht man nämlich, wie jene Motive, die aus der griechischen Tragödie, aus den Vorsokratikern und aus der Philosophie Platons für Hölderlins Denken wirksam wurden, so läßt sich unschwer erkennen, daß dieser Rezeption griechischer Denkmotive dasselbe Geschick einer fundamentalen Umformung der ontologischen Fragestellung ... im Umkreis der Autonomie-Problematik von Welt widerfährt, wie es sich in Philosophieren Hegels begibt' (Berlinger 2). The same is true of the classical poetic forms.

28. There is admittedly a thematic transition between ll. 102 and 103, a 'Wendung' from 'die äußeren glanzvollen Erscheinungen der Kultur' 'zum innerlichen, vergeistigten Bereich' (Schmidt 106); its aesthetic weakness is brought out by the numinous power of the final couplet.

29. Essentially the divinity of 'Brod und Wein' is of the same quality as that of 'Friedensfeier': 'Der Gott ... gibt sich im Fortgang des Gedichts zu erkennen ... erst zusammengenommen sind die Bezeichnungen der Name für den Gott ... , erst in der inneren Dynamik ihrer Gesamtheit spiegelt sich die Bewegung des Gedichts selbst' (Szondi 80); indeed, this dependence of the deity upon the subjective instance should be more obvious in the elegy than in the hymn, where the poet seems to speak with objective certainty.

30. See the chapter on 'Brod und Wein' in Richard Unger, Hölderlin's Major Poetry: The Dialectics of Unity (Bloomington (Indiana), 1975); cf. Insel-Ausgabe, iii, 52.

31. On the association of 'Dank' with 'denken', see Zuberbühler 88-90: 'Der "Dank" erweist sich im rechten "Gedenken" ... Danken und (ge)denken stehen in etymologischem Zusammenhang' (89). (Compare the senses of 'Gedächtnis' in 1.36.)

32. Schmidt allows no such ambivalence: 'Das Distichon ... ist von einer gewissen verständniserschwerenden Ambivalenz ... Die Worte "er" und "selbst" sind auf Dionysos zu beziehen' (148).

Similarly, he states categorically (38f.) that 'die Schwärmerische' (1.15) has transitive force. But the grammar of poetry, especially Hölderlin's, cannot be tied to a single exclusive function; part of the beauty of the verse lies in the faint suggestion that, perhaps, Night too is wrapped up in her dreams, unreachable, 'wenig bekümmert um uns'. Thus the merely rational personification by 'Mythologie der Vernunft', which in itself would be aridly anthropocentric, has, in non-rational, mysterious fashion, lent itself to a personal description with irrational anthropomorphic undertone; even 'die Erstaunende', although logically obviously transitive, has this second, subliminal, function.

33. Cf. Spinner's concluding observations on 'Unter den Alpen gesungen': 'Das Ich erscheint nicht als real kommunizierendes, sondern als eines, das Kommunikation intendiert ... ' (72). Again one is reminded of Hegel's dictum: 'Sprache und Arbeit sind Äußerungen, worin das Individuum nicht mehr an ihm selbst sich behält und besitzt, sondern das Innere ganz außer sich kommen läßt und dasselbe Anderem preisgibt.' The vagueness and (through the capital letter) slight personification of 'Anderem' convey a quiver of fascination and fear; language too is a kind of self-surrender, and must needs be ('rationally') reconstructed so as to preserve the sphere of the individual.

Few writers on Hölderlin have seen communication as thematic, and only Strauß, in his eloquent comparison of Hölderlin with Goethe, relates it directly to poetic form: the flowing rhythm of the Elegies expresses a longing for community, a striving beyond the limitations of a closed form as beyond those of (contemporary) bourgeois society (81-83); this he contrasts with Goethe's ultimate acceptance of formal limitation (the 'pair', couple, of lines in the couplet) as of the individual's place within society. The main discussion closest to the issue, in recent left-wing scholarship, generally consists in the crude assertion that Hölderlin rejects the classical claim to autonomy by the work of art (FHA, Einleitung, 17; Kurz 102). If communication is indeed thematic this assertion must be (not abandoned, but) qualified; for if the theme of communication were itself an object of communication (i.e. were part of the poet's message) it would be redundant.

34. The ambiguity is closer to the surface in the description of Empedokles' charismatic power (4.159, 29-31): 'in der räthselhaften Nacht der Zeit'.

35. 'Nehme ich dazu, daß unser Geist — oder die ganze Kraft unsers schon wirklich gewordenen Individuums — unsers Ichs — in den ersten Stunden, ja vielleicht in den ersten Tagen nach der Empfängniß, in einem Tröpfchen zarter Flüssigkeit ... enthalten ist ...'; 'ein kleines ... helles, durchsichtiges Tröpfchen' (S.Th. Sömmering, Über das Organ der Seele (Königsberg, 1796), pp.42, 43). (See the two Frankfurt epigrams, 1.227.)

36. From the lines attributed to Heinrich Meibom; Mörike's 'Schlaf! süßer Schlaf! obwohl dem Tod wie du nichts gleicht ...' is a pallid translation.

37. Virgil, Aeneid, 6, 731-34, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Virgil in two volumes, Loeb Classical Library, revised edition (London, 1967)).

38. Rehm touches upon this paradox in his section on Herder: 'Nur weil das Griechentum ganz naturhaft ein "Maximum" von nationaler Art darbot, konnt es auch aus dieser seiner Eigenart zwar allgemeingültige und übergeschichtliche, aber nicht ungeschichtliche Werte prägen und verkörpern' (93).

39. Konrad comments in passing on the ambiguity of 'Kunst': 'Positiv gewordene Sprache der Natur ist also immer durch Kunst (wohl im weitesten Sinne des Wortes, so daß auch Wissenschaft darunter zu zählen ist) vermittelte Sprache' (115).

40. The celebration of music and its soothing power in the opening to Pindar's first Pythian ode is undoubtedly an inspiration here (although there the inhabitant of Hell is represented as afraid). There are signs of Orphism in Pindar: 'Each man's body follows the call of overmastering death; yet still there is left alive an image of life, for

this alone is from the gods' (fr.116B.; trans. by E.R. Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1973), p.135. It is part of what Benn calls the 'spiritual affinity' between the two poets.

41. Constantine speaks of a 'semblance of progressive, chronological thinking' (52): 'Since the form of his poem is rarely a simple progression from regret to hope and rarely has the confidence of dialectic argument, but is rather a swinging to and fro between emotional demands, so that within the poem the affirmation may several times be won and lost, the feeling is that the end of the poem may not be final, the impulses continue in play and a new poem must deal with them again' (47, on the elegies for Susette Gontard). Not till 'Heimkunft' does this feeling disappear.

42. On Friedrich Schlegel and the 'Interpretatio Christiana', see Rehm 255-318. As with the question of Greece's historicity, it is not so much a problem that is involved as an 'harmonious contradiction' whose unresolvable conflict positively serves the poetic purpose; a 'sign', then, of the 'spirit'.

On Heinse, see Rehm 78-83; also Adolf Beck's comment: 'Heinse begriff und bejahte ... nur, was seiner vitalistisch-dionysischen Lebensauffassung zu entsprechen schien. Hölderlin seinerseits sah in Heinse, mit dem er den Äther-Glauben teilte, einen Geistesverwandten' (Hölderlin: Eine Chronik in Text und Bild, ed. Adolf Beck and Paul Raabe (Frankfurt/Main, 1970), p.376).

43. Benn dares to criticise 'Der Rhein', though for different reasons: 'In "Der Rhein" and "Patmos" ... are ... verses which seem to be not entirely free from morbidity and which convey a disquieting sense of the instability of the poet's mind' (154). What I find disquieting in 'Der Rhein' is not mental instability, but that fatal streak in the history of the German mind: worship of power and perfection. Admiration for its formal perfection — e.g. Böschenstein (Rheinhymne) 12: '"Der Rhein" stellt in der durchgängigen Bezogenheit aller Teile aufeinander den Höhepunkt Hölderlinischer Komposition dar' — seems to me to derive from a false criterion. Schmidt has similar admiration for 'Brod und Wein', 'die im formalen Aufbau am gesetzmäßigsten gegliederte der Elegien': 'In "Brod und Wein" allein kommt die Dreizahl ganz zur Herrschaft ... eine absolute Zahlenharmonie ...' (8). He makes little attempt to relate the strophic form to the thematic material and to ask whether and to what extent the external divisions contribute to the poetic effect. I myself find that 'Brod und Wein' is by no means formally perfect ('Heimkunft' is the perfect elegy) and that its greatness depends upon this imperfection. 'Der Rhein', on the other hand, is indeed externally perfect (and highly intellectual) but lacks depth. It is not just, as Szondi says, that with interpretations of an hermetic poem the task cannot be 'dem Gedicht dessen entschlüsseltes Bild an die Seite zu stellen' (12), but that where this can be done the poem has deserved

it, and failed.

In the briefest space Strauß captures the essence of the aesthetic criterion in the Elegies: 'eben diese Spannung zwischen Strömung und Ordnung, auch die Spannung zwischen Satzordnung und Versordnung, schafft eine Beziehungsdynamik ...' (78); and this leads to the Hymns: 'Die rhythmische Form ... gewinnt bei Hölderlin Erfüllung in der höchsten dramatischen Spannung zur Sprachbewegung' (83).

VI. 'HEIMKUNFT': HYMNIC ELEGY

1. Cf. the variant to the first version of 'Der Einzige', 'Und treppenweise steigt/ Der Himmlische nieder' (2.745, 5f.), also the fourth line of 'Der Rhein'.
2. Heidegger described l.13 of 'Andenken' as an 'Atem-holen' (Martin Heidegger, Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung (Frankfurt/Main, 1971), p.100).
3. 'Solche "Schwermut" ist es auch, was in Hölderlins Dichtungen stetsfort als überwunden anwesend ist und was noch den hellsten von ihnen ihre Tiefe, ihre Schwere, ihren Ernst verleiht' (Rolf Zuberbühler, 'Hölderlin: "Heimkunft"', HJb, 19-20 (1975-77), pp.56-75 (p.61)).
4. 'Der Ausdruck "in Bergen ein Ort" ... scheint das unaussprechliche Wesen der Heimat in eine Formel zu verdichten; denn "Ort" hat für Hölderlin den Sinn von "Ursprung" und "Ziel" und "Ruhestätte" zugleich, und die "Berge" sind die mütterlich Bergenden und Behütenden' (Zuberbühler ('"Heimkunft"') 72).
5. Lines 300-351. Hölderlin will have interpreted this as a cosmic myth; see Szondi's comments on the interpretation of Apollo and Juno as Light and Earth (99).
6. 'As he spoke, the Son of Chronos took his Wife in his arms; and the gracious earth sent up fresh grass beneath them, dewy lotus and crocuses, and a soft and crowded bed of hyacinths, to lift them off the ground. In this they lay, covered by a beautiful golden cloud, from which a rain of glistening dew-drops fell.' (Homer, Iliad, 14, ll.346-51, trans. E.V. Rieu (Homer, The Iliad, Penguin Books (Harmondsworth, 1953), p.266)). Cf. 'Der Wanderer' (first version), ll.23-28.
7. Zuberbühler ('"Heimkunft"') speaks of the poet's awakening from the 'glowing dream' to face the distance of the ideal future, and then finding answer and consolation in music (74f.). This description seems to me far more appropriate to 'Brod und Wein', especially its last six lines; here there is neither search nor disappointment.
He too sees at the heart of 'Heimkunft' the 'ex-centric' journey, the 'Aus-sich-Heraustreten' and 'In-sich-Bleiben' (57): 'Jetzt, im Lichte der "Heimkunft", da sich der Ursprung als Ziel erweist, erscheint die Ausfahrt als "töricht" ... ' (69).
8. This descent, foreshadowed in B170, 52-59, is intimated in Hyperion (I, 157/12-14). Thus the poet brings not only inspiration, but 'Erziehung', 'Gericht' (2.318), 'Geseze' ('Dichterberuf', l.6); like Kant, like Moses: 'Kant ist der Moses unserer Nation, der sie aus der ägyptischen Erschlaffung in die freie einsame Wüste seiner Speculation führt, und der das energische Gesez vom heiligen Berge bringt' (B172, 93-95). So the mythical journey to the

divinely awful origin (of Nature) (see Schmidlin ('"Psyche"') 321) is a Mosaic venture.

9. There is a 'renewal of language' in the famous gnome 'Ein Räthsel ist Reintentsprungenes' ('Der Rhein', 1.46).

10. Compare Spinner's analysis of 'Unter den Alpen gesungen': the poem is a progressive self-reconstruction, above all a regaining of the power to speak, and thus of personal identity; the implied opposite (Spinner does not bring this out sufficiently) is perception. 'Durch den Deutenden und Singenden wird das Geschaute zum Gedeuteten, wie umgekehrt das Ich durch das Geschaute (durch die heilige Unschuld, durch die Natur) zum Deutenden und Singenden wird' (68); by the final strophe 'das Ich ist nicht mehr ein staunendes, unmittelbar betroffenes, sondern ein deuten und singen wollendes. Das Medium Sprache ist zum Bindeglied zwischen Ich und Himmlischem geworden' (66). I do not, however, find this progressive structure (which would have been aesthetically mechanical); rather, the first four strophes are themselves already 'Deutung', for here pure perception has taken the mythical form of 'heilige Unschuld' and the hymnic form of invocation; the infinity of the Alpine sky has found outline through association with (through taking the shape of) an 'innocent' child (cf. Spinner 61f.). Through this conceptualising interpretation of 'Staunen' as implicit antithesis to 'purity', which in turn enables concretisation in the child, the first four and final strophes provide the framework, the safety of a remembered sphere, in which loss of self can take place. But with the fifth strophe comes, suddenly, the word 'allein'; 'du' falls away, and 'im fortreißenden Strom des Wechsels' (cf. p.349, above, n.48), in a stream of formless phenomena passing over the line-endings and into one another, carried by unpausing 'und's, unlimited even by articles, the 'Ich' yields itself. Thus the 'Betroffenheit', the tearing-away from its 'Mittelpunkt' of the poetic self, is in the fifth and sixth strophes: where it can be interpreted. (Spinner says that the 'Siehe' of the third strophe reduces the 'Abstand des Staunenden vom Bestaunten' and creates the 'Raum einer Kommunikation zwischen zwei Gesprächspartnern' (64); but the very first line addresses the 'du'.)

11. The concluding line of the fourth strophe, 'Und in Bergen ein Ort freundlich gefangen mich nimmt', merely renders the quality of each strophic sphere of 'Heimkunft' explicit. Compare 1.72 of 'Der Wanderer', 'Freundlich nimmst du, wie einst, Himmel der Heimath, mich auf', a line which, lending outline to the emerging strophic form, functions dynamically in entry deeper into the idyllic realm. The definitions of pastoral and idyllic purpose by Rosenmeyer ('a state of suspension' where 'all flux ... is put to rest', 67), and Böschenstein-Schäfer ('Die Idylle ... beschreibt einen abgegrenzten Raum, in dem sich Grundformen menschlicher Existenz verwirklichen', 13) illuminate the proximity of Hölderlin's strophic form to idyll; but this proximity derives from an extreme idealisation of the nature

of art as capable of absolute freedom from necessity, time, and purpose. Rosenmeyer observes: 'In a sense all literature is a retreat from action' (68). With Hölderlin, however, this retreat takes place for a higher purpose (cf. the criticism of Kant and Fichte, B172, 90f.). The paradigmatic cutting of the bond between perception and intellect, namely, of function, yields a crucial but problematic merging of the concepts 'Nature' and (empirical) 'reality' (cf. B186, 70-72). Szondi's essays often circle about this issue (see esp. his analysis of the 'epic' tendency in the hymnic preludes (148-56): 'Hölderlins Werk in den Jahren 1802-1804' is 'Affirmation des Unterschiedenen, das sich zum Ganzen nicht mehr fügen muß' (163). In this he develops the work of Walter Benjamin and Theodor W. Adorno; see especially the latter's essay 'Parataxis: Zur späten Lyrik Hölderlins' (Theodor W. Adorno, Gesammelte Schriften, 16 vols (Frankfurt/Main, 1973-78), XI, pp.447-91).

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