The Artist-Philosopher in the Age of Addiction

Heidegger's Climatology

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There are those who insist that Heidegger goes back to Hölderlin because Hölderlin epitomizes the xenophobic German poet. Hölderlin embodies, it is said, the "blood and soil" ideology that the Nazis take up as a favorite slogan. As this argument goes, Hölderlin is grounded in the poetry and thinking of Classical Greece, just as Heidegger is grounded in the same. The Greco-German lineage supposedly verifies the pure Aryan bloodline that supposedly runs through German veins. In 1935, the year in which the Nuremburg Laws were imposed, E. M. Butler, British author of *The Tyranny of Greece Over Germany*, writes, "Hölderlin was writing poetry and working at a tragedy in which the spirit of Greece is far more truly present than in the wooden *Achillies*, let alone the eccentric modern version of *Oedipus Tyrannus*" (207). The *Achillies* he refers to is Goethe's rendition of Homer; the *Oedipus Tyrannus* is Schiller's of Sophocles. According to Butler, "The dreams of the two great classical writers to establish Hellenism in German literature bade fair to be realized in Hölderlin" (207). Heidegger himself said that Hölderlin was the greatest of the modern German poets because Hölderlin's poetry was arguably the most authentically rooted in the thinking and poetry of the Greeks. Lecturing in 1935 on the "Metaphysical Locale of Hölderlin's Poeticizing," and speaking of Hölderlin directly, Heidegger tells his audience, "The supreme freedom of the creator places him in the most extreme oppositionality. Yet this is the sole true way of being bound to the originality of that commencement with the Greeks." He adds: "Genuine repetition springs forth from originary transformation" (*Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"* 266). By "originary transformation," Heidegger refers to Hölderlin's poetic hermeneutic translation of Greek poetic language into German. In the process, the Greek is left as it is, unviolated, as it were, except that the original can now be heard and felt in light of Hölderlin's translation, whereas Hölderlin's German appears newly created, original in the emergent moment of the poet's making, a striking example of polyphonic poiesis. This explains why Heidegger says that Hölderlin is the greatest of the modern German poets: due to the polyphonic richness of his poetic word, its capacity for intoning Greek and German in the same utterance, the Greek as it was in its originary grandeur, the German as it never had been before, now in its originary rebirth, Hölderlin's poetry is the most authentically rooted in the thinking and poetry of the Greeks. Apropos of Hölderlin, whom Heidegger considered a great philosopher as well as a great poet, Heidegger insists more than once that philosophy can be thought only in two languages: German and Greek. Even as late as 1966, in the *Der Spiegel* interview, Heidegger will speak of the "special inner kinship between the German language and the Greeks and their thought" (Wolin 113). He attributes his grasp of that inner kinship as having resulted from his "dialogues with Hölderlin." If Heidegger were alive today, he would undoubtedly say the same.

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But he would do so, and in fact he does do so, with the added proviso that, after Hölderlin, he no longer wants to think or speak or write in the language of philosophy. More specifically, he means the language of Western metaphysics, which in his view runs from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Hegel and Nietzsche. As is commonly known, more than once Heidegger remarks that *Being and Time* is forged in the language of metaphysics. As he tells it, he never finished the job of writing *Being and Time* because somewhere along the way the language of metaphysics bogs down in concepts and ultimately proves inadequate to a task that requires more than conceptual logic. Metaphysics had "run him up against" the limit of philosophical language. Beginning with the process of writing *Being and Time*, and certainly after *Being and Time*, Heidegger will learn to think in the language of scientific-poetic consciousness. From here, he sets out to break his own addiction *to* metaphysics by way of his poetic hermeneutic translation *of* metaphysics. More particularly, by way of poetic hermeneutic translation, Heidegger binds the formation of his poetic thinking to "the originality of [his] commencement with the Greeks." His teacher is Hölderlin. His introductory textbooks are "Germania" and "The Rhine." Not until the dialogues with Hölderlin have sufficiently deepened, however, does Hölderlin's poetic hermeneutic effect on Heidegger's thinking begin to take visible shape and dimension. By that time—in the late 1930s, say, and especially in the early 1940s, when Heidegger is delivering the lectures on Hölderlin's river hymns, "Remembrance" and "The Ister"—Heidegger has become a full-fledged practitioner of poetic hermeneutics.

In the "Remembrance" course, he writes,

> [I]t is not the fatherland as a present-at-hand political constellation that he [Hölderlin] belatedly wants to discuss with verse, but rather the "holy fatherland," the fatherland grounded in the holy, that he wants to poeticize; indeed not even just this, but rather "the angels of the fatherland." It is not the princes that he wants to honor with verse, but rather he wants to poeticize the ancestors of the princely and their "seats," that is, the commencements of genuine sovereignty and power, in the sense that Hölderlin gives this word in his poem, "Nature and Art":
>
> . . . and from out of the ancient
> Joys has grown every power.
>
> (41)

In a more direct reference to the events then spilling out from the Third Reich, and alluding to Hitler in particular, Heidegger adds that like the Böhlendorff letters he refers to earlier, "the dedication of the translation of Sophocles' tragedies announces the inviable and essential certainty in which the poet's own poetic certainty stands. And yet," Heidegger insists, "this certainty remains separated by an abyss from the naïve fanaticism of a blind enthusiast" (41). As if to widen the spatiotemporal gulf that separates Hölderlin's holy fatherland from the fanaticism that explains current political events, Heidegger insists that the "poet is now entering the range of a different time-space." Moreover, "entering into the range of a different essential locale is, at the same time, an abandonment of the previous locale" (41). In other words, Hölderlin's fatherland no longer has anything to do with Germany, with the "present-at-hand political constellation," except insofar as it stands as "an abyss," as something not only far and away from what Germany is at that moment, in the winter semester of 1941–42, but indeed as something that altogether precedes German cultural consciousness. Nor is this fatherland to be confused

with Athens, the supposed origin of German classical consciousness. Rather, if Hölderlin's holy fatherland is to be located anywhere in Ancient Greece at all, it is to be sought on the shorelines of Ionia and Magna Graecia. Anaximander of Miletus, Heraclitus of Ephesus, and Parmenides of Elea—these thinkers were geographically situated at the maritime crossroads between East and West, literally and figuratively open to the East. As West says of Anaximander, his "world-model . . . is not a Greek scheme; it is oriental" (87). His way of seeing the world is, in other words, anything but xenophobic. The same can be said of the early Greek thinkers in general. Pythagoras remains the most obvious case in point.

As Heidegger's ongoing poetic hermeneutic translation transports him further and further away from Neo-Kantianism and German Idealism, his thinking goes more and more deeply into the poetic thinking of Hölderlin. As we know, this same kind of thinking is to be found in the early Greeks, and this thinking, as we just said, is open to and indeed infused with Eastern modes of thought. As a matter of tendency, Hölderlin's philosophical thinking is not that of the subject examining the object of analysis or the kind of self-critique by which Kant defines metaphysics as critique; indeed, it is thinking as creative discovery mixed with poetic wonderment in which discovery and wonderment have nothing to do with a so-called object, let alone subjectivity. Among the early Greeks, the subject/object relation has yet to be scientifically thematized and polarized in hierarchical relativity. More often than not, the subject and the object are intersubjectively engaged. Here again, in this kind of thinking we see elements of Eastern modes of thought.

It is precisely this kind of nonhierarchical perspective that, early on, Heidegger ascribes to Aristotle. At Marburg he says that "Apprehending the world is a definite possibility of being in it; only by being in the world can we apprehend it." Moreover, "With the subject/object distinction, one does not get at the facts of the matter; the basic phenomenon of being-in-the-world does not come into view" (*Basic Concepts* 40). With this latter comment, Heidegger is describing the very distinction that in his view Aristotle avoids. He writes, "This orientation toward the subject and object must be fundamentally set aside." Not only is it the case that these basic concepts, subject/object and their meanings, do not appear in Greek philosophy, but even the orientation of subject/object is meaningless, insofar as neither subject nor object is concerned with "characterizing *a mode of apprehending the world*." Rather, "their concern is *being* in it" (40). What Heidegger says here certainly applies to the early Greeks. But not only does Aristotle fail to get around "the subject/object distinction"; in fact, as Heidegger will eventually come to see, it is none other than Aristotle who establishes the subject/object paradigm as the fundamental principle of scientific knowledge. Precisely insofar as Aristotle predicates his concept of scientific knowledge on unmediated perception, the subject/object, "the basic phenomenon of being-in-the world does not come into view" (40). To the contrary, Being itself is subsumed underneath Aristotle's scientific knowledge of the world. In the already remarked striking premonition of the pending sea change that will occur in Heidegger's thinking, the young Heidegger adds: "For we must always keep in mind that one must set oneself free from the traditional ways of posing philosophical questions" (40). With this remark, which anticipates the famous introduction to *Being and Time*, Heidegger puts his finger on the problem, that being the subject/object construct that takes hold of Greek thought at the very outset of Western metaphysics. Be that as it may, Heidegger has not yet begun to realize his own entrapment within Aristotle's scientific paradigm. Hence we see, for instance, that the Marburg lecture "The Basic Concepts of Aristotelean Philosophy" rivals Aristotle's rigorous specificity and determinant assertion of scientific knowledge.

Not until *Being and Time* does Heidegger's notorious penchant for word coinage and nuanced double entendre come into extended play. Both strategies undermine the strict demand for word precision in the scientific description of things. From the late 1920s on, we see in these well-known stylistic developments a trending away from scientific-technological thinking and toward scientific-poetic thinking. In the aftermath of sustained dialogues with Hölderlin and Nietzsche, both of whom clue Heidegger into the subject/object construct as the fundamental ground of scientific calculation and measure, we see a more demonstrative development in Heidegger's shifting perspective. What began as the philosopher's observations regarding the poetic object, from outside looking in, as it were, now speaks from inside the poetic construct, in the language of poetic consciousness. Through further encounters with Hölderlin and Nietzsche, especially intense in the early 1940s, and with various other poets as well as painters, Heidegger's poeticization of philosophical prose emerges in the mid-1940s as a full-fledged style. This movement toward poetic expression is variously explained in terms of the *Kehre*. William McNeill, for one, has shown that, more than Nietzsche, Hölderlin's intertextual presence in Heidegger's thinking informs the poetic stylization of his philosophical prose (McNeill). Indeed, according to McNeill, Hölderlin's effect on the *Kehre* cannot be overestimated. On exactly this point, however, we have yet to fully appreciate Heidegger's ongoing, if carefully understated, encounters with Daoism. This equally important turn in Heidegger's development, which to this day is too much ignored and woefully underestimated, takes place at the same time as *and in concert with* Heidegger's turn toward Hölderlin's poetic thinking.

In the 1936 lecture course on Schelling's essay, *The Essence of Freedom*, Heidegger quotes Schelling as follows:

> Truly universal philosophy cannot possibly be the property of a single nation. As long as philosophy does not go beyond the limits of an individual people, one can confidently assume that it is not yet true philosophy although it may be on its way. (*Schelling's Treatise* 90)

However one might object to the validity of these sentiments as they apply to Heidegger, the fact remains that Heidegger is making explicit reference to a non-xenophobic, non-Germanic idea of philosophic thinking; and he is doing so in a lecture course devoted to the question of freedom, while all around him he sees the increasingly ugly signs of a rising fascist state. It is none other than Schelling, perhaps, who draws Heidegger away from his xenophobic investment in German Idealism. To this point, Heidegger understands German Idealism as fundamentally grounded in Greek metaphysics. His intent early on was to clarify and strengthen German Idealism's originary relation to Greek metaphysics. His lectures on *The Basic Concepts of Aristotelean Philosophy* were conducted with a view toward that very goal. Schelling sets Heidegger on a new course—one, as I say, that has yet to be fully recognized, let alone appreciated. Jay Goulding writes that "Indispensable to Martin Heidegger's understanding of Daoism is the provocative reading initiated by Friedrich Schelling (1775–1854) in the 1842 Berlin Lectures" (Goulding 47). It bears mentioning here that Schelling's interest in and attitude toward Laozi and the Dao stands in stark contrast to Hegel's Eurocentric take on Laozi.

In direct contradiction to Hegel, Schelling writes that "Tao does not mean reason, as people who have translated it until now, Tao doctrine does not mean doctrine of reason." To the contrary, "Tao means portal, Tao doctrine is the doctrine of a great portal

in Being, from the Not-beings, the mere being can be (*seyn Könnenden*), through which every finite being enters into real being." For Schelling, again in direct confrontation with his old friend, Hegel, "The entire *Daodejing* is concerned with showing, through a great variety of the most pregnant tropes, the great and insuperable power of nonbeing" (Wong).[1]

The extent to which Schelling goes against Hegel's patently Eurocentric prejudice toward Laozi gives measure to Schelling's proximity to Hölderlin. This is specifically the case as regards the question of non-being in relation to the dissolution of subject/object relativity. The same holds true of Schelling's intertextual alignment with Heidegger on the same question. As Goulding remarks, "Schelling's early, unique, and pinpoint inquiry into the essence of Dao directly connects with Heidegger's later interpretation" indeed, "by way of the Dao, Schelling's work becomes a primordial crossing for Heidegger" (Goulding 47, 78).

Few will concur. Graham Parkes, for one, acknowledges a relation between Heidegger's interest in the Dao and his turn toward "planetary thinking" (Parkes 14, n10). But Parkes will not go so far as to say that Heidegger's shift toward planetary thinking indicates anything like a Daoist *Kehre*, especially in the face of what he calls the "great divide between East and West." These doubts, he says, apply "equally for both European and East Asian language, and above all for the realm of their possible dialogue." He adds, though, that "neither side can of itself open up and establish this realm" (Parkes 13). In which case, "planetary thinking" depends, or so Parkes implies, on some kind of dialogical inter-subjectification of East and West. Be that as it may, Goulding is not alone in suggesting Heidegger's turn marks a turn to the East. Fabian Heubel asks, "Does it make sense to speak of a 'second turn' (*zweite Kehre*): a transcultural turn (*Kehre*) of Heidegger's thought, this time not through the Greek South, but through the Chinese East?" (Chai 228). Along these same lines, Eric Nelson argues that the "Daoist turn in Heidegger's thinking . . . helped shape his Postwar thought" ("Heidegger's Daoist Turn" 362). For Nelson, Heidegger's turn to the Dao comes in "response to the crisis conditions of National Socialism and German defeat and the technocratic regime" (382). Nonetheless, the "blood and soil" slogan that connects Heidegger to Nazi xenophobia remains fixed in the minds of many.

Daniel Fried, for example, characterizes Heidegger's turn toward East Asian thought as little more than a self-serving ruse. On this view, Heidegger has no intention of interpreting Hölderlin's allusions to the East in good faith; rather, Heidegger bends Hölderlin's poetic language to his own underlying purpose. Along these lines, Fried takes strong exception to Heidegger's reading of "Remembrance." He is particularly disturbed that "the 'Indus' as a river image is entirely an interpolation by Heidegger," when in fact, as Fried puts it, "Hölderlin only mentions 'Indians'" (Fried 188). We take it that Heidegger interprets Hölderlin's reference to "Indians" in the poem "Remembrance" in terms of the "Indus" because Hölderlin gives us the intertextual reference in "The Ister," in the line, "We, however, sing from the Indus." Elsewhere, Heidegger says of Hölderlin's poetry that "The poem, which then stands in its own right, will itself throw light directly on the other poems. And so when we read the other poems, we feel as though we understand them in this way," adding that "It is well for us to feel this" (*Existence and Being* 235).

In Fried's judgment, nonetheless, switching "the Indus" for "Indians" reveals "a place where Heidegger is simultaneously near his darkest and most compromised, and a place that holds the most clues toward the value of his Orientalism" (Fried 188). Interpreting Hölderlin's text in the arbitrary manner that he does, Heidegger raises the question—and

here Fried quotes Heidegger directly—of whether the "distant provenance of Germania were at the Indus and the parents of our native homeland had come from there." Such language "in the Germany of 1941," we are told, "echoed with the language of Aryan origins, despite the fact that Heidegger opposed the idea that race-'science' should be central to Nazi philosophy." By voicing such an "echo," Fried continues, Heidegger's writing in 1941 meant to "redirect discussions of Aryan superiority from genetics to a certain power of historical vision" (188). The allusion to Said's concept of Orientalism underscores Fried's take on Heidegger's motive, which again in Fried's view is to initiate Nazi discourse concerning "Aryan superiority." As for the question of Heidegger's engagement with Daoism, under the section heading, "Heidegger's Postwar Daoist Appropriations," Fried writes: "Heidegger frames Laozi as an exotic source of wisdom from whom he claims as treasure and brings it back into European philosophy, acting out both Hölderlin and George" (198). Here again, as we are given to understand, the charge of Orientalism as a discourse of cultural supremacy points to Heidegger's dubious and indeed sinister intentions.

One can readily attribute an attitude of cultural superiority to Heidegger's earlier writings. We can take, for example, Heidegger's frequent complaints about those who expect the non-Western world to hold answers to questions arising in Western philosophy. In *Being and Time*, he complains that "Dasein has had its historicality so thoroughly uprooted by tradition that it confines its interest to the multiformity of possible types, directions, and standpoints of philosophical activity in the most exotic and alien of cultures" (43). In the latter third of *Being and Time*, he returns to the same theme:

> With special regard to the interpretation of Dasein, the opinion may now arise that the understanding of the most alien cultures and 'synthesizing' them with one's own may lead to Dasein's becoming for the first time thoroughly and genuinely enlightened about itself.
>
> (222)

In either case, he probably has Malinowski in mind, but Jung or Frazer could as easily explain Heidegger's ire toward anthropology, which was then taking hold in Europe. Besides the obvious xenophobia, remarks of the kind reveal all the more tellingly how Heidegger at this point in his thinking still considers the concept of Dasein as a mode of Being that pertains to the West and only to the West. This kind of prejudice, Heidegger's detractors insist, goes a long way in explaining Heidegger's Nazism and anti-Semitism. To a certain extent, they are right.

By the late 1930s, though, Heidegger has come to see anthropology in a somewhat different if equally despairing light. In "The Age of the World Picture" (1938) he describes anthropology as "that interpretation of humanity which already knows, fundamentally, who man is and can, therefore, never ask who he might be" (*Beaten Track* 84). In that last clause, Heidegger is obviously referring to Nietzsche. It is Nietzsche, of course, who wants to know who it is that man might become, if only Dasein could escape the shackles of Western thought. Thus, for Heidegger, Nietzsche as "the last thinker of metaphysics can be comprehended as an exercise in questioning, and his antagonism to Wagner as a necessity of our history" (77). There can be little doubt that Heidegger is directly alluding here to Nietzsche's *Will to Power*, which Nazi propaganda had bent to its own use through the editorial distortions of Nietzsche's anti-Semitic sister, Elizabeth. As to the question of Heidegger's xenophobia, even earlier, in 1932, as Heidegger heads into the

Rectorate, Heidegger directs his attention toward the Greek thinkers who come before Plato and Aristotle, before metaphysics. The lectures on Anaximander and Parmenides make it quite clear that Heidegger is fully aware that early Greek thinking comes of age in the already referred-to encounter between East and West.

Like the early Greeks, Laozi and Zhuangzi "poeticized" philosophical thinking. And like Laozi and Zhuangzi, early Greek thinking is not the least hidebound to conceptual reasoning. This is especially the case concerning causality and subject/object relativity. Nourished and cultivated in a decades-long running dialogue with leading ancient and contemporary East Asian thinkers, by the early 1940s, Heidegger is well attuned to these Daoist intertextual ties with early Greek thinking. And he is equally attuned to Hölderlin's intertextual links with the early Greeks and by extension with the Dao. Indeed, if it wasn't Schelling who first alerted Heidegger to the Dao, it would be Hölderlin, Schelling's undeclared confederate in opposition to Hegel's science of logic and correlative disparagement of East Asian philosophy.

This directional development toward the East goes hand in hand with Heidegger's continued stepping away from what he begins to perceive as his own habituated dependency on Western metaphysics. We can discern the habit of thinking into which he has "fallen" in the unmistakable contrast between the early Greeks, Hölderlin, Schelling, and Laozi on the one side, and Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Hegel on the other. More particularly, through Hölderlin and Schelling—and increasingly through Laozi (and less so, Zhuangzi)—Heidegger's eyes open to his own confinement in the "subject/object distinction" that grounds Western metaphysics. Having just completed the lecture course on Nietzsche at about that time, Heidegger begins his lecture course on "Remembrance." Following that, in the summer semester of 1942, he introduces the course on "The Ister." Precisely insofar as Hölderlin is seeking a way out of subject/object relativity, in his philosophical prose writing as well as in the poetry, in both Hölderlin courses, Heidegger constantly positions his own sense of historicality as a stepping away from the confines of historiographic analysis, which predicates its methodology on "the subject/object distinction" that defines German Idealism and metaphysics more generally.

In Laozi, Heidegger discovers a distinct absence of subject/object binarism. The same absence plays out in Laozi's take on being and nothing, which for Western metaphysics grounds the subject/object relation and the scientific binarism that Nietzsche deconstructs. Moreover, in Laozi, Heidegger sees how the absence of the subject/object binary, and the absence of binary dialectics in the relation between being and nothing, is related to meditative thinking and a style of perception that begins with attentiveness. In Heidegger's view, the subject/object distinction that comes to full measure in the Cartesian *subiectum* has nothing to do with the essence of human consciousness, as it is grounded in meditative thought, a way of thinking that now begins to align with Hölderlin's poetic spirit. According to Heidegger, "The *subiectum*, the fundamental certainty, is that always secured entity which representing man always co-represents along with human and nonhuman beings, along, that is, with the objectified." As he goes on to say, "This is the fundamental equation of all calculating belonging to self-securing representing." In this way, "Man establishes himself as the measure of all measures with which whatever can count as certain, i.e., true, in being, is measured off and measured out" (82). As such, man gives measure to his own certainty and thereby is grounded in the mathematics of his own being, his truth, as affirmed by his own subjectivity, as it stands over and against his world as the object of his perception. "Man as the rational being of the Enlightenment is no less subject than man who grasps himself as nation, wills himself as people, nurtures

himself as race, and finally, empowers himself as lord of the earth." We should follow this thought to its conclusion:

> Through this, subjectivity only gains in power. In the Planetary imperialism of technically organized man the subjectivism of man reaches its highest point from which it will descend to the flatness of organized uniformity and there establish itself. This uniformity becomes the surest instrument of the total, i.e., technological, dominion over the earth. The modern freedom of subjectivity is completely absorbed into the corresponding objectivity. By himself, man cannot abandon this destining of his modern essence; he cannot abolish it by fiat. But he can, in thoughtful anticipation, ponder this: that mankind's being a subject is not the only possibility of the primal essence of historical humanity there has ever been and ever will be.
>
> (84)

Here Heidegger is describing Dasein locked into its addiction to the essence of technology and its total incapacity to resist a force it does not recognize due to its own blindness, what clinicians would call denial. When Heidegger says that man cannot come into a thinking such as Hölderlin's and Laozi's, "by himself," he is once again referring to a power to which Dasein's subjectivity must surrender if it is going to survive, albeit in a form of consciousness emancipated from that of addiction.

. . .

According to Chung-yuan Chang, the thinking characterized as "poetic," that Heidegger attributes to Laozi, applies no less to Heidegger. Here Chang turns to Heidegger's essay on "The Nature of Language," wherein Heidegger writes, "The key word in Laozi's *poetic thinking* [my italics] is *Tao*, which 'properly speaking' means way" (Laozi and Chang 9). Chang remarks that

> In the more than forty years from 1927, when *Time and Being* was published, to the publication of *On Time and Being* in 1968, Professor Martin Heidegger has developed a new way of thinking and the language to reveal it, which are not novel to *Taoist* philosophy.

Chang continues, "Heidegger is the only Western philosopher who not only intellectually understands *Tao* but intuitively experienced the essence of it as well" (8). He then quotes from *Existence and Being* as follows:

> Only on the basis of the original manifestness of Nothing can our human *Da-sein* advance towards and enter into what-is. But insofar as *Da-sein* naturally relates to what is, as that which it is not and which itself is, *Da-sein* qua *Da-sein* always proceeds from Nothing as manifest.
>
> (9)

This "new way of thinking," as Chang is suggesting, underscores Heidegger's way toward poetic thinking as a fundamentally Daoist mode of thought, not least as regards the not-being, the nothing. It is the place from which Dasein sees the world as something other than its object.

For Heidegger, Laozi's poetic thinking, like Hölderlin's, is always a stepping back from scientific-technological thinking, a stepping away from the subject/object paradigm that underwrites Western science and secures the unanswerability of Heidegger's ontological question. At the same time, Heidegger's poetic thinking always involves poetic hermeneutic reflection, a mnemonic looking back over the shoulder *toward* his own experience *in* Western metaphysics. In other words, Heidegger's thinking projects eastward and then back again in remembrance of his own life as a scientific-technological thinker. In this sense, his thinking begins from the place whence it steps back in reversal. And so, we see that Heidegger's poetic thinking always involves a to-and-fro dynamic, a back and forth between scientific-poetic thinking and the mnemonic experience of scientific-technological thinking, between historicity and historicality. But again, this to-and-fro is not to be understood in terms of hierarchical dialectics of the kind we ascribe to Hegel. Rather, it is to be thought in terms of the nonhierarchal dialogics that Bakhtin ascribes to intersubjective consciousnesses or in the terms that Hölderlin talks about as poetic spirit.

The "Nature of Language" passage Chang is quoting from reads in full:

> But because we are prone to think of "way" superficially, as a stretch connecting two places, our word "way" has all too rashly been considered unfit to name what *Tao* says. *Tao* is then translated as reason, mind, *raison*, meaning, *logos*.
>
> (*On the Way to Language* 92)

Here Heidegger is not merely comparing and contrasting two modes of thought. The one is shown to be misunderstood in terms of the other. And it is precisely this misunderstanding that gets in the way of any kind of dialogical encounter between the two. "Yet," Heidegger continues, "*Tao* could be the way that gives all ways, the very source of our power to think what reason, mind, meaning, logos, properly mean to say—properly, by their nature" (92). By this, Heidegger suggests that the way of the West, the way of Western metaphysics, in this case, Hegel in particular, does not speak in a language proper to nature, nor to the nature of words like reason, mind, meaning, and especially *logos*. "Perhaps," he writes,

> the mystery of mysteries of thoughtful Saying conceals itself in the word "way," *Tao*, if only we will let these names return to what they leave unspoken, if only we are capable of this, to allow them to do so.
>
> (92)

In this, Heidegger echoes Chapter 1 of the *Tao Te Ching*, which reads, in part, the Dao's

> wonder and manifestations are one and the same.
> Their Identity is called the mystery
> From mystery to further mystery:
> The entry of all wonders.
>
> (Laozi and Chang 9)

Wonderment and manifestation: the difference between the two, between being and beings, in Laozi becomes the dissolution of identity difference. Likewise, Being and nothing are one and the same. The subject/object relativity between what can be calculated and measured and that which cannot, as established in Aristotle and ratified in Descartes, has no proximity to the "entry of all wonders." By now, in 1957, Heidegger is clearly

open to the possibility of East and West conjoining in an intersubjective dialogic from which might commence a new path for Dasein, a way.

As to how Heidegger's meditative thinking can be seen as folding into East Asian thought, we might ask, to begin with, how it is that Heidegger wants to emancipate world consciousness from its dependency on Western metaphysics? In a preliminary way, let us observe that any possibility for breaking free of metaphysics depends, for Heidegger, on art's healing power. Insofar as Heidegger sees himself as laying the groundwork for such an event, his post-*Kehre* project can be understood, in part, as a shamanistic undertaking. Glossing Heidegger's 1967 Athens paper, "The Origin of Art and the Determination of Thinking," Pöggeler writes, "Heidegger contrasts the regulation of the system of world civilization through cybernetics with the art which is rooted in cult and which still has a relation to a curing whole and to the divine" ("Hermeneutics of the Technological World" 33). For Heidegger, the way to healing is through poetic thinking, not least through that of Laozi, whose poetic consciousness stretches far back into the shamanistic traditions of primordial Daoism. We will come back to this observation in due course. For now, let us briefly underscore the fact that the ancient, and indeed archaic, origins of Daoism emerge from within its earliest shamanist traditions.

In the course on Hölderlin's "Remembrance," Heidegger says that "Poeticizing and thinking is authentic seeking" (*Hölderlin's Hymn "Remembrance"* 114). As the singular verb "to be" indicates in no uncertain terms, for Hölderlin, poeticizing and thinking *is* the same: poetic thinking. By the same token, such thinking, such seeking, marks Laozi's "entry of all wonders." To notice that in Laozi there exists a dialogue with Hölderlin is only to point to the fact that Heidegger's project for a future beyond metaphysics is not without intertextual premise. Just as Hölderlin and then Heidegger are responding to the "reign" of metaphysics and, more specifically, to Hegel's scientific logic, Laozi also responds to metaphysics, precisely insofar as he is a futural poet. In the lectures on Schelling's essence of freedom, Heidegger observes that somewhere along the line, "human conception itself becomes metaphysical" whereupon, the word "way" becomes a matter of direction, from point A to point B (*Schelling's Treatise* 90). Habituated to a "one-track" mode of thought, Dasein is no longer free to think Being as anything but scientific-technological being, as anything but grounded in Western metaphysics and its weddedness to beings as a matter of calculation and measure. Hence, Heidegger seeks out the "saving power" of Hölderlin's "river poems." In these hymns the words by which Western metaphysics defines itself as science—words such as "reason, mind, *raison*, meaning, *logos*"—return to themselves by way of Hölderlin's poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics in general. In the lectures on Nietzsche, completed just prior to the Hölderlin seminars, Heidegger interprets Nietzsche's convalescence as a homecoming, a coming home to one's "ownmost." He writes: "Longing is the agony of the nearness of what lies afar." We are at that point furthest away from ourselves.

> Whither the one in transition goes, there his longing is at home. The one in transition, and even the one who points out the way to him, the teacher, is (as we have already heard) on the way home to the essence that is most proper to him. He is the convalescent.
>
> (*Nietzsche Vol 2* 217)

For Heidegger, the poetic nature of Nietzsche's philosophical prose, his seeking in wonderment for its own sake and not as a step in the conceptual process toward scientific

knowledge, speaks to a healing, to Dasein's desire to come home, to return to itself, its authentic being-in-the-world. In this, Heidegger glimpses another side of Nietzsche, a letting go of the will to power that, in Heidegger's view, Nietzsche never quite realized.

Be that as it may, Krell, in his introduction to his translated edition of the Nietzsche lectures, will insist that the Heidegger who gave the Nietzsche lectures from 1936 to 1940 was the same Heidegger who colluded with the National Socialists in 1933–34. One wonders if Krell would hold to that opinion in light of Heidegger's turn to the East. It is this move, after all, that opens Heidegger to a life philosophy, the one he calls "meditative thinking," while Krell explains Heidegger's Nazism on the basis of Heidegger's lack of a philosophy to live by, a point Krell later repents in the *Daimon* book (Krell and Heidegger ix–xxvii). Be that as it may, Krell does not overlook those points in the Nietzsche lectures where Heidegger undermines fascist racism and speaks against National Socialism under the radar, as it were, though not without grave risk. Whatever Heidegger might have seen in Hitler's promise of a spiritual awakening for the German people, by now he had seen the depth and extent of Hitler's technocratic monstrosity. As he says in the Zarathustra lecture: "We today, because of the peculiar ascendency of the modern sciences, are caught up in the strange misconception that knowledge can be obtained from science and that thinking is subject to the jurisdiction of science" (*Nietzsche Vol 2* 227). We read this as a thinly veiled repudiation of his Rectoral address at Freiburg, which he had infamously framed as his "commitment to the spiritual leadership of this institution of higher learning." Whether the spiritual leadership to which Heidegger was referring was his own or Hitler's, Heidegger leaves us to discern for ourselves.

By the time Heidegger delivers the Nietzsche lectures in the early 1940s, we are well beyond his early thinking. As we see in the 1920s lectures on phenomenology, this early thinking stood foursquare on Aristotle's and Kant's scientific principles. When Arendt talks about Heidegger as the teacher who "brought thinking to life again," she has in mind the thinking of scientific-technological consciousness and not the questioning of scientific-technological consciousness that arises during and after the composition of *Being and Time*. True, at the time he is writing *Being and Time*, Heidegger still believes that Aristotle had guaranteed the scientific legitimacy of German scientific-technological consciousness. In this respect, Heidegger's project bore all the markings of Husserl. The task of *Being and Time* lay in bringing out the everydayness of Dasein's *being-in-the-world* in light of Aristotle's fundamental principles. Heidegger had extensively elaborated these matters at Marburg, in the already-mentioned 1924 lecture course delivered under the title "Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy." At the outset of the course, Heidegger will remark that

> Aristotle says in the *Metaphysics* that the old question: . . . "what is the being?" is really the question concerning the being of beings. . . . Aristotle brings scientific research, for the first time, to this ground, a ground that even *Plato* never noticed.
> (*Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* 19)

If Plato never noticed the question of being in light of scientific research, but only remained "perplexed," that is likely because to some extent he is still mixed up in the Pythagorian strains of ancient shamanism that Aristotle will finally eradicate in the name of scientific research vis-à-vis the treatise.

But, as I said, by the time of the Nietzsche lectures, in 1941, the question of metaphysics has already become problematic. Heidegger no longer sees any point in going back to "the great beginning" of Western metaphysics and rebuilding from there—as was the premise up to and through to the end of *Being and Time*. He writes: "Present as

something waiting over against us, the great beginning becomes something small." With this remark, Heidegger gestures in a decidedly un-xenophobic direction:

> But nor can this something small remain any longer in Western isolation. It is opening itself to the few other great beginnings that belong with their own to the Same of the beginning of the infinite relationship in which the earth is included.
>
> (May 104)

Graham Parkes, from whose essay on Heidegger's engagement with East Asian thinking we are quoting, adds that the "opening anticipated here must at the very least be an opening to the 'great beginning' of East Asian thought, wherever one locates it" (104). Parkes goes on to note that Heidegger, in his 1963 letter to Kojima Takehiko, insists on the paramount necessity of stepping back, "if"—as Parkes puts it in paraphrase—"if human beings are to escape the domination of positivism" (104). Well before the 1960s, positivism, for Heidegger, had come to represent the most recent form of domination as exacted under the rubric of Western metaphysics. Parkes quotes Heidegger as saying: "The step back does not mean a flight of thinking into bygone ages, and least of all a reanimation of the beginnings of Western philosophy" (104). It hardly needs mentioning that with the phrase "beginnings of Western philosophy" Heidegger means early Greek thinking, not Western metaphysics. By this remark he reiterates his earlier suggestion, to the effect that contemporary positivism merely represents the current form of Western thought, the latest highlight of scientific-technological consciousness. While Heidegger has said that Western metaphysics ends with Hegel or ends with Schelling—or that Nietzsche stands as the last metaphysician—there can be no doubt that for Heidegger, the present form of Western metaphysics has to be understood as very much alive and supremely dangerous.

And yet prior to the dialogue with Hölderlin, Heidegger seems unaware that Western metaphysics had become the habitual and altogether habituated, and therefore unseen and unquestioned, ground of his own thinking. As Heidegger becomes attentive to Hölderlin's poetic thinking—as exemplified, for instance, in the 1934 Hölderlin seminar, the 1930s drafts of the essay on "The Origin of the Work of Art," or the lecture "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry" (first delivered in 1936)—his dependency on Western metaphysics becomes an increasingly pressing issue. At this point, we want to bear in mind, Heidegger is still wading through the traumatic wake of the rectorate disaster, and he is not at all sure about what lies ahead for his own thinking. Before the Rectorate—and this is particularly true of *Being and Time*—the presupposition of critique was a matter of furthering what had come down to Heidegger as the tradition of Western metaphysics. Like all traditions, this one was marked by inconsistencies that wanted fixing, the ontological difference being for Heidegger the glaring case in point. Now, though, given the shock of the Rectorate and the recoil into Hölderlin, and the deepening interest in the East, especially as regards Laozi's *Tao Te Ching*, the whole Western system, and Heidegger's own heretofore unquestioned and indeed unconscious dependency on that system, has presented itself as undeniably "there."

At this point, the essence of technology is still a concept that has not been designated as such. Whatever the elusive answer to his growing concern as to how he might address a danger that he has yet to call by name, Heidegger remains convinced, nevertheless,

> that it is only from the same part of the world in which the world of modern technology arose that a reversal can come about, and that it cannot happen by way of an adoption of Zen Buddhism or any other oriental experience of the world.

The whiff of cultural supremacy is easily discerned: "In order to think differently we need the help of the European tradition and a re-appropriation of it. Thinking is only transformed by a thinking that is of the same descent and provenance" (May 105). Heidegger commentators cite this statement as clear and undeniable proof that Heidegger never would and never did enter into a meaningful dialogue with the East. To be sure, the unequivocal nature of the remark adds considerable weight to Fried's argument as to the specious use Heidegger intends for the Dao. If in fact the statement says what Heidegger means, and most probably it does, he will, nevertheless, definitively reverse that position in due course.

This reversal is easily overlooked, due in part to the fact that Heidegger revealed very little about his engagement with East Asian thought, as we already noted. Even the essay recounting his conversation with a "Japanese visitor" has to be described as disingenuous at best. In one respect, though, Heidegger's indifference to the standard practice of naming sources is no different than that of the early Greek thinkers, to say nothing of nearly every poet and artist who has ever practiced their craft: scholars cite their references; artists and poets take what they want from whomever they like and hardly ever say anything about it. Here, by the way, we are not applying a double standard to the effect that Heidegger can take what he wants from the East without attributions while metaphysics is to be brought up short for the unacknowledged Eastern elements that run throughout its origins. By the 1940s, and to a great extent before that, Heidegger is operating as an artist-philosopher and not as a philosopher of metaphysics. Heidegger has become a poetic thinker and no longer sees himself as a scholar; while the practitioner of metaphysics operates under the aegis of science, where the pilferage of ideas comes under the jurisdiction of plagiarism.[2]

One could argue, in any case, that Chinese and Japanese thinkers so readily grasp the intertextuality of Heidegger's thinking and their own because they look at and read Heidegger as fellow artist-philosophers, as, in other words, scientific-poetic thinkers of the kind Heidegger had become, not least, through his ultimately dialogical encounter with their thinking and their encounter with his. Granted, Heidegger's engagement with East Asian thought hardly counts for the only factor that brought Heidegger into the thinking of the artist-philosopher. Hölderlin, Kierkegaard, van Gogh, Nietzsche, Cézanne, Rilke, Trakl, Klee, Braque: to greater and lesser degrees, these poetic thinkers attest to the range of Heidegger's search for a mode of thinking that could renew the ontological question as a stepping back from metaphysics. Nor, however, can we keep brushing aside the East Asian element that is so central to Heidegger's scientific-poetic thinking, especially in its later phase. Parkes translates into English a pair of key sentences from the Japanese translation of the lecture "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" as follows:

> By thinking the clearing and characterizing it adequately, we reach a realm that can perhaps make it possible to bring a transformed European thinking into fruitful engagement with East Asian "thinking." Such an engagement could help with the task of saving the essential nature of human being from the threat of extreme technological reduction and manipulation of Human Dasein.
>
> (May 106)

At the very least, the "fruitful engagement" Heidegger refers to here indicates that, for him, the dialogical encounter between Western and East Asian thinking would only increase the possibility of Dasein's freedom from a fate Heidegger elsewhere portends

as the extinction of the species at the hands of Western positivism. Dasein has become a concept no longer reserved for the realm of the West.

. . .

As is commonly known and infrequently noted, Heidegger begins the study of East Asian thought well before he publishes *Being and Time*. We also know that well after *Being and Time*, in 1946, Heidegger attempts, in a close, summer-long collaboration with Paul Shih-yi Hsiao, a translation of the *Tao Te Ching*. This, too, is a matter of slight interest to mainstream Heidegger studies. Maybe that is because both Heidegger and Hsiao give up on the collaboration after the completion of Chapter 8. Hsiao will become increasingly discomfited by the liberties Heidegger wants to take with Hsiao's literal translation of Laozi's words, while Heidegger is already steeped in the practice of poetic hermeneutic translation and increasingly frustrated by Hsiao's insistent literality. For Heidegger, the collaboration is a matter of confirming in greater depth what he had already thought through in his reading of Hsiao's Italian translation of the *Tao Te Ching*. There, Hsiao "had not dared, nor even thought of daring, to go beyond what literally stood in the text" (Parkes 100.) At any rate, the collaboration with Hsiao merely corroborates what can be easily surmised: as the years progress, Heidegger's abiding interest in Laozi does not abate but in fact deepens. The attempted poetic hermeneutic translation of Laozi brings together a meeting of the two philosophers of poetic thinking. Heidegger has backed off from Western metaphysics and stepped into the thinking of Dao.

In the "Letter on Humanism," Heidegger writes: "everything is reversed" (*Basic Writings* 208). The phrase is typically taken as referring to Heidegger's *Kehre*. Few, however, have noted any connection to the East in this reference to the turn. And yet, Heidegger writes the "Letter on Humanism" in December of 1946, only a few months after he concludes the arduous collaboration with Hsiao. These dates—the summer 1946 translation and the December 1946 letter to Beaufret—are common knowledge. What is not commonly acknowledged is the commensurate proximity between the translation of Laozi and Heidegger's self-referential phrase, "everything is reversed." We have quoted Heidegger as saying that "Thinking is only transformed by a thinking that is of the same descent and provenance" and noted that if he were to bring East Asian thought into the realm of Western consciousness, he would most certainly and definitively have to reverse that earlier-held position (May 105). The reversal to which Heidegger poetically refers in the "Letter on Humanism" would in this sense mean the stepping back and away from metaphysics—a reversal in the path toward metaphysics. And it would mean a simultaneous turn toward East Asian thought as an alternative to the subject/object construct that defines Western metaphysics.

In Chapter 40, Laozi writes,

> Reverse is the movement of *Tao*.
> Yielding is the action of *Tao*.
> Ten thousand things in the universe are created from being.
> Being is created from non-being.
>
> (Laozi and Chang 137)

Herein we see poetically expressed everything Heidegger has come to at this point: the Being of Nothingness, the dissolution of the subject/object dichotomy, and the wisdom

of non-action. Each of these thoughts speaks toward a reversal in Heidegger's thinking. He has moved from scientific-technological thinking to the scientific-poetic thinking that precedes it. He is no longer the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, and yet, just as being is created from non-being, Heidegger has become the artist-philosopher of poetic thinking precisely insofar as he is still very much the philosopher of metaphysics, the author of *Being and Time*. In Chapter 48, Laozi writes,

> To learn,
> One accumulates day by day.
> To study *Tao*,
> One reduces day by day.
> Through reduction and further reduction
> One reaches non-action,
> And everything is acted upon.
>
> (156)

This is the way, the *Tao*, as suggested earlier, that Heidegger turns toward in the *Kehre*. We venture to suppose that Heidegger finds in the Dao a sense of wholeness and oneness that has been shattered by the war years, not least as regards the Rectorate and his own wholehearted investment in its grounding in fascist ideology. Be that as it may, for Heidegger, the *Kehre* opens out to the wholeness and the oneness of Dasein's being. The wholeness and oneness we are speaking of is the wholeness and oneness of Laozi's being and nothing. It is the wholeness and oneness in which being and nothing are the same, the subject and the object are the same. The wholeness and oneness of the ego and the world are one and the same. This is by no means the wholeness and oneness of Schelling's oneness with God or Hegel's Absolute. It is, rather, the wholeness and oneness of Hölderlin's poetic thinking, the thinking of poetic spirit. In the essay "The Ground of *Empedocles*," Hölderlin writes:

> however, the whole life of the object will have taken hold of his deserted self, which had but been made more infinitely receptive by the boundless activity of his spirit, the object's life will have become an individuality in him, will have given him his particularity, and will have modelled this particularity after itself more thoroughly in precisely that degree in which he spiritually gave himself over to the object, and so the object appeared in him in subjective form, as he had taken on the objective form of the object.
>
> (*Essays and Letters* 267)

Later in the same essay, he writes, "the subjective and the objective must exchange their shape, and become one in one" (270). By 1946, Heidegger's thought has come into alignment with Hölderlin's in precisely these terms.

As we said, it is a mistake to conclude that Heidegger's step back from metaphysics is owing to Hölderlin alone. Nor is Heidegger's move primarily to do with Nietzsche or to do with Nietzsche in combination with Hölderlin. As far back as *Being and Time*, the kind of nonsubjective thinking that Heidegger comes to describe in terms of Hölderlin's poetic thinking is already developing in Heidegger's thought. Looking back on *Being and Time* in 1941, Heidegger observes that Dasein's "self-being is no longer taken as subjectivity; rather, the being of the human as Dasein is grasped with respect to the

understanding of being which is caught sight of for the first time." This concept, he says, goes not only beyond Kierkegaard's Christian concept of being but "indeed in general lies outside the thinking of metaphysics and the whole of philosophy up to that point" (*Metaphysics of German Idealism* 35). And "up to that point" (pre-1927), the one kind of thinking that "in general lies outside the thinking of metaphysics," and with which Heidegger is already familiar, is not Hölderlin's. Heidegger turns to Hölderlin in earnest after *Being and Time*. Rather, the "understanding of being which is caught sight of for the first time" is Laozi's and Shuangzi's. This being is the same as nothing, the being that comes prior to the subject/object predicate of metaphysics.

In 1942, at the height of the war and four years prior to writing the "Letter on Humanism," Heidegger gives the summer seminar on Hölderlin's river poem, "The Ister." At the close to the first lecture, Heidegger quotes the lines,

> We, however, sing from the Indus
> Arrived from afar and
> From Alpheus

He glosses these lines as follows: "'Indus' and 'Alpheus' are the names of rivers and streams. One belongs to the land of the 'Indians', the other to the land of the Greeks" (*Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"* 10). That is to say, the river Ister, the Danube, carries forth in its backward flow the thinking of the East and the West, from the Hinduism and Buddhism arising in the Indus River Valley to the scientific knowledge born of Greece. "Arrived from afar," this river flows into the current of Greek thought, as it reverses backwards and forwards through the two lands, carrying in its silt the seeds of mythopoetic cross-fertilization. Hölderlin was well aware that early Greek poetic thinking was preternaturally attuned to Buddhism and to the shamans of Hindu consciousness. The Ister does not stop its meanderings at the banks of the Indus, however. In Hölderlin's poetic imagination, the Ister floods in constant reversal, ebbs and flows West to East and East to West, in a circle of time that meanders in and through non-linear poetic consciousness. The river's ever-expanding back and forth can be imagined as estuaries spilling out toward the Tigris and the Euphrates, eventually to intertwine with the Yangtze and the Amazon, only to reverse and re-merge with the currents of thought called Western metaphysics.

Fried ends his essay on Heidegger noting that Heidegger "engages in a distant tradition with the explicit goal of finding a true cultural self and downplays the importance of actual historical legwork in favor of History as a power of vision" (Fried 199). The distant tradition to which Fried refers, we assume, is that of poetic thinking. With particular regard to Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin, Fried is referring to Heidegger's methodological historicality. Such an approach, he concludes, "would create a constant danger of mistaking one's own guesses for the object of analysis" (199). For Heidegger, though, the point is no longer to calculate and measure the object of analysis and to correctly situate the resulting interpretation within an overarching historiographical methodology. It is, rather, to step away from the subject/object perspective and to seek identity in difference—to "stand within," wherein the "in-itself" appears.

Those who, like Fried, would insist on material proof of Hölderlin's poetic allusion to lands not named, such as the Mesopotamian Valley, or China or South America, would no doubt object to the suggestion that Hölderlin's poetic imagination spans horizons far beyond the geographical locations he names in his "river poems." The same objection

would apply equally to Heidegger's third lecture, on "The metaphysical interpretation of art." Herein Heidegger tells his listeners,

> In our attempt to heed what Hölderlin poeticizes when he names rivers, we will often have occasion to test a form of representation that for centuries has secured itself a validity in poetry, as well as in the interpretation of poetic works and in the way poetizing in general is determined.
>
> (16)

Lest his audience fail to catch his drift, Heidegger's use of words "secure" and "validity" plainly indicates that the form of critical analysis to which he is referring, and which he will put to the test of deconstruction and then of poetic hermeneutic translation, is grounded in certainty, in metaphysics—grounded, that is, in the science of calculation and measure, not least, the "leg work" of historiography. He underscores the point in the fourth lecture, given under the heading, "Hölderlin's poetry is not concerned with images in a symbolic or metaphysical sense." Having shown in lecture three that metaphysics, that is, symbolic logic and positivist critical methodology, presents all but impenetrable obstacles to the authentic understanding of poetry, now Heidegger argues that the great poet is not the least concerned with the thinking and methodology of metaphysics because, as Heidegger already indicates in his heading, poetry of the kind Hölderlin writes has little to do with scientific-technological thinking, little to do with Western metaphysics, little to do with historiography, except as a stepping away from thought as "the strict systematization of detailed discrimination." In short, lecture four stands as a demonstration and particular illustration of the general thesis introduced in lecture three, to the effect that historiography and historicality speak toward two different methodologies, two different modes of thought, and that Hölderlin—and Heidegger—come down on the side of poetic thinking.

Even more than Heidegger's lectures on "The Ister," his earlier reading of "Remembrance" brings home the fact that Heidegger's relation to Hölderlin unfolds as an interpersonal poetic hermeneutic encounter. Both Heidegger and Hölderlin change and continue to change as their relationship continues and develops over the course of Heidegger's endless dialogue with Hölderlin's poetic thinking. What Heidegger says in conversation with Hölderlin, what he says in dialogue with Hölderlin's thinking, widens our understanding of both Hölderlin and Heidegger, as each comes into view in light of the other's concept of temporality. In short, the lectures on "Remembrance" have little or nothing to do with literary criticism. As Heidegger puts it, "the lecture course does not pursue any literary-historical aims. It therefore renounces any claim to make us aware of the 'historiographically correct' Hölderlin" (*Hölderlin's Hymn, "Remembrance"* 3). This, of course, becomes the famous two-sentence preface to the fourth edition (1971) of Heidegger's *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, which reads: "The present Elucidations do not claim to be contributions to research in the history of literature or to aesthetics. They spring from the necessity of thought" (21). In *Existence and Being*, he says that his Hölderlin readings "make no claim to be contributions to research in the history of literature and aesthetics." Again, he insists, his readings of Hölderlin "arise from the necessity of thought" (232). By this, Heidegger implies that metaphysics, and German Idealism particularly, compels poetic thinking of the kind he wants to engage in with Hölderlin. Philosophico-critical readings of Hölderlin are, in Heidegger's view, "fixated," and as such they "get set on equal footing with literary-historical objectification and measured

according to its standards" (*Hölderlin's Hymn, "Remembrance"* 3). In such procedures, the subject of metaphysics, the critical philosopher, renders the poetic work as spatialized object.

In its spatialized fixedness, then, Hölderlin's work can be calculated, measured, and generically categorized according to the scientific standards of critical taxonomy. This occurs, Heidegger says, "only if one knows no alternative to literary-historiographical research," in which case, "every other kind of undertaking gets branded as arbitrary interpretation" (3)—gets branded, that is, in terms of what Fried refers to as "the power of vision." To be sure, Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin, "alternatively," is meant to be grasped within the context of his larger project, the poetic hermeneutic translation of German Idealism, in particular, and of Western metaphysics, in general. This kind of translation comes of what Heidegger calls a "moment of vision" in *Being and Time*. Heidegger describes this kind of seeing, this kind of translation, "ecstatic temporality." By the time he completes *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, though, Heidegger has situated his concept of poetic hermeneutic translation more firmly in the still emerging idea of *Ereignis*. We can elaborate the transition from "moment of vision" to "ecstatic temporality" to *Ereignis* in due course. For the moment, the point is that whatever Fried means by "the power of vision," Hölderlin presents to Heidegger's view as a sudden parting of the ways from Hölderlin's old friend and erstwhile confederate in the poetic conception of new ideas, Hegel, and thereby announces the "commencement of another history."

For the Hegel of *The Aesthetic Lectures*, beginning in 1818, the power of art lies in its past, and the power of philosophy lies in the endless present. The same can be said for Hegel's historicization of art in the earlier *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). We should quickly add, though, that Hegel is not at all wrong to situate art's power in the past. He sees plainly that Plato and Aristotle have usurped the power of the gods and thereby disempowered archaic Greek art. It is precisely at this point that Plato and Aristotle claim for philosophy what had once belonged to art and religion: dominion over cultural consciousness. At this point, as we showed earlier, techne and poiesis are taken over as watchwords for scientific-technological creative production. But it would be an egregious error to think that Hölderlin failed to see what Hegel saw. Indeed, the theme of the "Oldest Programme," which, according to Bernstein, among others, is co-authored by Hegel, Schelling, and Hölderlin, can be reduced to Hegel's now-famous observation, that art had been overcome by science. Hölderlin was no less aware of philosophy's sundering of art and religion than his co-authors, Schelling and Hegel. The difference between Hegel, on the one side, and Hölderlin, on the other, comes down to a difference in perspective. For the post-*Phenomenology* Hegel, the scientific-technological thinking, by and through which Plato and Aristotle had transformed the archaic significance of techne and poiesis, is a matter of historiographical necessity; whereas Hölderlin sees the same and perceives the consequences thereof from the standpoint, the perspective, of historicality, and therein he envisions a past that is futural. That is to say that for Hölderlin, poetic thinking awaits "the time to come." Much the same can be said of Schelling. Hegel's perspective is grounded in scientific-technological thinking, while Hölderlin and Schelling think from the standpoint of scientific-poetic thinking. The difference between Schelling and Hölderlin is that Schelling points *toward* the future, while Hölderlin writes to an audience that exists in "the coming time." And whereas for Hegel, the purely scientific dialectic of subject/object relativity brings philosophy to its place of preeminence over art and religion, for Hölderlin, the *es gibt* of futural poetic thinking frees human being from the chains of dialectical opposition, from subject/object relativity, thus opening human

consciousness to the sameness of differentiation. This is precisely the kind of sameness one hears in Laozi:

> Therefore, being and non-being are mutually posited in their emergence.
> (Laozi and Chang 39)

These fundamental differences between Hölderlin and Laozi, on the one side, and Kant and Hegel, on the other—the horizontal dialogism of poetic thinking and the vertical dialectics of metaphysics—shed light on Heidegger's transition from scientific-technological thought to scientific-poetic thought. In Heidegger's earliest encounters with Hölderlin and the Dao, begins not just the move toward scientific-poetic consciousness. Now begins the dissolution of lingering ambivalence, as well as the gradual transition from historiography to historicality, as we saw plainly enough in the Heraclitus lecture of 1938. We bring this up again because the difference between historiography and historicality returns our attention to the earlier-noted difference between Henrich and Heidegger. As Heidegger would have seen from the standpoint of historicality, Henrich extends German Idealism from Kant and Hegel into the next phase of German Idealism's perpetual historical development. That is not to say, however, that Heidegger dismisses German Idealism out of hand. True, Heidegger in his brash younger days looked at German Idealism as an outworn past waiting to be surpassed by his own phenomenological ontology. As we suggested, though, he discovers much in the Western tradition that he had unwittingly counted as his own. We have noted that after *Being and Time*, which Heidegger closes by way of a serious confrontation with Hegel's fundamentally Aristotelian concept of time, Heidegger turns to Hölderlin. One might just as well say that Heidegger comes into Hölderlin following his careful discussion with Hegel at the end of *Being and Time* and that the transition from the one to the other marks a critical turning point in Heidegger's path toward poetic thinking.

At this juncture—that is, in the confrontation with Hegel at the conclusion of *Being and Time*—Heidegger very likely comes across Hegel's 1816 lecture on Laozi. There, Hegel notes that, for the Chinese, that which is most desirable is in fact, "nothing, the altogether undetermined, the abstract universal, and this," he says, "is called Tao, or reason" (Hegel 125). As Chang points out, Hegel is interpreting the *Tao* from a strictly Western philosophical perspective (Laozi and Chang 8). To the contrary, Laozi abjures reason and favors poetic thinking. The Dao's obviation of subject/object relativity is not at all dialectical but in fact dialogical. In the "Elucidation of the 'Introduction to *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*,'" Heidegger writes,

> Hegel not only thinks consciousness in general in the sense of Descartes as self-consciousness, so that all objects-of-consciousness are what they are for an I, i.e., something that stands over and against representation (object) (*Hegel* 71). At the same time, Hegel thinks consciousness in advance 'transcendentally' in the Kantian sense, i.e., with a view to the objectness of the object of consciousness.
> (71)

It is precisely this scientific-technological take on the object in the absence of being that blinds Hegel to the futural nature of his friend Hölderlin's poetic historicality, wherein subject and object are one, and wherein being and consciousness are the same. And it is precisely Hegel's scientific-technological perspective, and Hegel's historiographic

methodology, that brings Hegel to translate the *Tao* in the patently Western terms that Heidegger describes "as reason, mind, *raison*, meaning, *logos*" (92).

Anyhow, by the early 1940s, Heidegger has come to realize that it is possibly the Dao, and in any case certainly not Hegel and the West, that "could be the way that gives all ways, the very source of our power to think what reason, mind, meaning, logos, properly mean to say—properly, by their nature" (92). That is to say that Heidegger is thinking about Hegel and Western metaphysics from a standpoint significantly other than the Aristotelian perspective that informs his thinking up to the writing of *Being and Time*. In *Being and Time*, what is more or less advanced as a subterranean confrontation with Hegel's scientific-technological thinking in the earlier course of the text becomes, retroactively, explicit in the final section. But now, after *Being and Time*, Heidegger is looking at Hegel's metaphysics—not least as regards Hegel's aesthetics—from the standpoint of Hölderlin and Laozi. Another way of putting this is to say that the "end of art," as represented in Hegel's philosophy of subjective objectification, has opened for Heidegger a pathway into Hölderlin's poetic futurity. As Chang puts it, "Heidegger's truth is not a rational Absolute which is more adequately expressed in philosophy than in art" (21). Heidegger comes *out of* Hegel's aesthetics, comes through Kant and Hegel, in particular, and through German idealism in general. And from there, vis-à-vis Schelling, and especially through Hölderlin and Laozi, Heidegger comes into the Dao. In light of this gradual change in perspective, which amounts to a slowly unfolding spiritual transformation in Heidegger's thought, Heidegger comes to view Kant, Hegel, and German Idealism as he does: the location of—and not the exit from—the crisis at hand.

. . .

Xianglong Zhang notes that most of what we find in Heidegger's published work as it directly concerns Laozi does not surface until the late 1950s. Not until Klostermann publishes *Gesamtausgabe*, band 75 (2000), does Heidegger's 1943 essay, *"Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters"* ("The Uniqueness of the Poet") appear in print for the first time. In this text, Heidegger joins the two poets together as one and the same poetic voice, one and the same poetic consciousness. Each one is the same in their difference. The dedication reads, "Zu Hölderlin." Though "Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters" has yet to be "officially" translated into English, one ventures to say that, nonetheless, nowhere in Heidegger's published materials, translated or not, is the aforementioned "gathering-up" more evident than it is here, in "Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters." That is why Zhang classes "Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters" among Heidegger's pivotal essays. Since Zhang does not situate this 1943 piece within the context of Heidegger's immediately preceding Hölderlin seminars on "Remembrance" and "The Ister," there is no need to recapitulate his commentary here. Instead, let us focus on a few key passages from the text itself. To begin with,

> The poet who poeticizes with [*mitdichtet*] the essence of poetry in its poeticized form, poeticizes history [*Geschichte*] itself, meaning what is sent [*Geschickte*]—what comes from the future [*aus der Zukunft kommende*]: the coming time. The speech [*Sagen*] of the poet speaks therefore "before time." The time in which the poet belongs as the poet of its Coming [*Kommenden*] follows first [*erst*], and perhaps only [*erst*] a long time later, the contemporary time of the poet.
>
> ("*Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters*")

Heidegger is talking here about Laozi and Hölderlin. Indirectly, he is also talking about himself. Each of these artist-philosophers poeticizes thinking from the place of historicality. This is how Heidegger specifies Laozi and Hölderlin as "futural" poets; and this is how we designate Heidegger as the same. Just as Laozi "foresees" the "coming time" of Hölderlin, so does Hölderlin "send" the "coming time" of Heidegger. This coming time, in which the futural poet's poeticization of history becomes contemporary in its futural presence, constitutes the ancestral time that precedes the logico-mathematical time by which Aristotle establishes his concept of immediate intuition or unmediated perception.

To bring this latter observation forward to Kant, we need only mention that the judgment of taste constitutes a spontaneous and immediate (unmediated) perception of form, which is itself timeless in its discreet and spatialized instance of universal truth, wherein the object, as a calculable and measurable being, is seized and arrested in the now of time and judged as beautiful or not. By comparison, the experience of the poetic, as poeticized in Laozi and Hölderlin and Heidegger, is indeed "futural." Its poetic truth awaits its contemporary audience in the "coming time," in the time given in the "remembrance" of the ancestral past. Ancestral time exists before and outside of scientific linear clock time. As such, it cares nothing for the subject/object relativity by which the now is determined as the source and locality of scientific truth. The moment of vision, ecstatic temporality, appropriation, ownmost: these are the words by which Heidegger poetizes the coming time as *Ereignis*. In this word, the event ranges from future past to present in a non-discrete now that "expands" in the endless granting of being. In his poetic hermeneutic translation of Chapter 11 of *Dao te Ching*, Heidegger writes,

> Thirty spokes converge in a hub,
> But the emptiness between them grants the Being of the cart.
> (Laozi and Chang 74)

In these words, we hear that nothingness grants Being and that Being grants beings, which are granted being by the nothing that grants Being. Such is the event, the past-present that comprises Laozi's futural poeticization of the historicality of the poetic word. It is the granting of a remembrance, for the sake of which the poet poeticizes the poetic word as sacred, as sacrifice, as a monumental thank-you.

Heidegger says that Hölderlin, by which he means his poetry *and* his prose, "poetically thinks through to the ground and center of being" (*Elucidations* 64). He adds that Hölderlin "is overrich—so rich that he would often like to languish in the thought of those who have been, and in expectation of the one who is coming, and would simply like to sleep in this apparent emptiness." But rather, Hölderlin "holds firm in the Nothingness of this night" (65). As with Laozi, the ground of Hölderlin's being is nothing. And like the poetic thinking of Laozi, the "essence of poetry which is founded by Hölderlin is historical in the highest degree, because it anticipates a historical time" (65). When will come that historical time, the "coming time," as Heidegger calls it, if not in the time when poetic thinking is understood as time and being? In the meantime, as Heidegger puts it, it is "the time of the gods who have fled *and* the time of the god who is coming." For Heidegger, "It is the *time of need* because it stands as a double lack and a double not:

in the no longer of the gods and in the not yet of the god who is coming" (64). Hölderlin writes,

> . . . what are poets for in a time of need?
> But they are, you say, like those holy priests of the wine god
> Who traveled from land to land in holy night.
>
> (65)

The time that Hölderlin is giving us is the remembrance of time, ancestral time, when "holy priests . . . traveled from land to land in holy night."

As to the main difference between Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic reading of "Remembrance" and Henrich's extensive and meticulous explication of the poem, Heidegger had already spelled out the historiographic historicization of the poetic word in the extensive laundry-list with which he opens the essay, beginning with:

> *If we think historically, then we imagine the poet as if he grows out of our time and belongs in this time. If we think historically, then we imagine a sequence [Folge] of ages to which the poet belongs.*
>
> (Heidegger's italics.) ("*Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters*")

Already we see that Heidegger is showing the direct links between historiological methodology and Aristotle's discreet nows and scientific knowledge. He then elaborates as per subject/object relativity:

> Always in historical calculation is history objectified in such a way that history itself does not have its say [*zu Wort kommt*], but rather the assumptions of the impetuses [*Antriebe*] and cravings of the particular present and now. The assumptions of the impetuses [*Antriebe*] and cravings of the particular present and now [*Jetztzeit*] gives the sole light through which history [*Geschichte*] is historically [*historisch*] illuminated.
>
> ("*Die Einzigkeit Des Dichters*")

As we will see in the next chapter, "the assumptions of the impetuses [*Antriebe*] and cravings of the particular present and now" allude to Dasein's addiction to metaphysics, which "sends" Dasein into the "stinging flame of the self-interested nowtime," a time wherein remembrance, and therefore the remembrance of being, is forgotten.

In this regard, it is worth noting that Henrich never once mentions the fact that "Remembrance" is a hymn. Insofar as hymnal expression steps back from the hot flame of metaphysics, it is fair to assume that Henrich's omission is deliberate. Forster remarks that in fact Heidegger's hyper-concentration on the hymnal aspect of Hölderlin's river poems prompts the necessity of setting the record straight from the scientific standpoint of the German Idealist tradition that hosted Hölderlin's philosophy. As if in direct anticipation of Henrich's historiographical analysis, Heidegger, on the other hand, will insist that we will understand "Remembrance" only to the extent that we know Hölderlin's hymn as "the essence of the holy being" (*Holderlin's Hymn "Remembrance"* 233). In Henrich's view, such matters obfuscate Hölderlin's philosophical writings, which, Forster erroneously suggests, Heidegger has woefully neglected. Far from ignoring Hölderlin's philosophical fragments, Heidegger remains ever-attentive to these documents and names them as such. Thus, for example, he writes that "Hölderlin's poetic thinking also treats

of poetry in the form of essays and sketches: 'On the Procedure of the Poetic Spirit', 'On the Differences Between Poetic Forms', and on 'The Parts of the Poems.'" As he goes on to say, "This is even more obvious from the poetic insight exhibited in his translations of 'The Tragedies of Sophocles' in his 'Commentaries to Oedipus' and 'Commentaries to Antigone'" (*Elucidations* 210). The difference here comes down to what Forster and Henrich mean by Hölderlin's philosophical writing and what Heidegger means by Hölderlin's philosophical writing. According to Forster and Henrich, philosophical writing is grounded in unmediated scientific perception; while for Heidegger, philosophical writing means poetic thinking, which is in fact a kind of remembrance that "unconceals" the forgotten oblivion of being. These opposing viewpoints merely point to the simple fact that the difference between Heidegger's and Henrich's take on Hölderlin comes down to the difference between two entirely different perspectives: that of Henrich's scientific-technological thinking and of Heidegger's scientific-poetic thinking. The one is predicated on the now of Aristotle's immediate perception, which obliterates the past and the future, and the other, Heidegger's *Ereignis*, reveals the future past present in the now *as remembrance*. Perhaps it goes without saying, but nonetheless, we need to be fully aware that Heidegger's notion of poetic hermeneutic thinking is itself a remembrance—as grounded in ancestral time. The fact that he openly discusses these matters, especially as they pertain to Germany's foremost and therefore most German of all German poets, and connects this poet's thinking with that of an ancient Chinese thinker, whose poetic hermeneutic *poeisis* stands as an unspoken repudiation of what, in 1943, could be summed up as Hitlerism, speaks to Heidegger's unspoken terms of resistance:

> If one undertakes the task of governing a kingdom and engages in governing it,
> I see he cannot lead it anywhere.
> A kingdom is a spiritual vessel and should not be manipulated.
> Manipulating leads to failure.
>
> (Laozi and Chang Chapter 29)

Chapter 30 begins:

> Aiding in governing the kingdom through Tao
> Means not depending on the superiority of arms.
> Depending on the superiority of arms creates Consequences.
> Wherever there are armies, disorder occurs.

Chapter 30 concludes:

> As it is merely an outcome, one should not claim superiority of power.
> Claiming to be strong leads to decay.
> This violates *Tao*.
> That which violates *Tao* will not last long.
>
> (Chapter 30)

Intermixing Hölderlin's thinking with Laozi's, Heidegger is saying in silence what could not be said aloud. He gives the course lectures on "Remembrance" in 1941–42. Coming in behind the Panzer tank divisions, the German Army had invaded France in May 1940. By the end of June, Germany controlled France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the

Netherlands. The invasion of Russia began in July. Now that his two sons had been deployed to the Eastern Front, there can be little doubt that Heidegger has already begun to see all too plainly what Hitler's regime was going to cost the world, not least in bodies. It would be fair to say that the jingoism he spewed in 1932–33 was coming home to roost, literally. The fact that Heidegger chooses to hold a course on "Remembrance," in which Bordeaux and its environs come to life in richly sympathetic and unmolested form, by none other than Germany's greatest poet, should not be taken as happenstance.

As for Heidegger's reassessment of Hegel as a great thinker locked into the Western tradition, as far back as the 1924 lectures on the phenomenology of religious experience, Heidegger had already noted that Hegel's concept of religion was predicated on the idea of morality rather than holiness, this in keeping with Kant's earlier and decisive move that separated religious thought from the holy and reduced it to the logic of the categorical imperative (*The Phenomenology of Religious Life* 248). As was the case then, when Heidegger first noted this distinction (1918), for him, the holy remained the elemental ground of Dasein's spiritual being. In Hölderlin, as he comes to realize, it is precisely within the sphere of the holy, holy remembrance, as it were, that the subject/object dichotomy dissolves, where difference becomes undifferentiated in nothingness. Hölderlin's poetry can be defined as the poeticization of the holy. One ventures to say that it is largely due to their proximity to Hölderlin that Heidegger "takes in" Trakl, George, and Rilke. Speaking broadly, Trakl poeticizes in silence, Rilke in the realm of death, and George toward the destiny of a people. Hölderlin does so in a single polyphonic word spoken in silence, death, and destiny, precisely insofar as each of these poetic realms are for him not different but identical, which is to say, hallowed. To Heidegger's thinking, at any rate, anyone who approaches Hölderlin from a perspective other than the holy could not possibly veer wider from the mark of Hölderlin's scientific-poetic consciousness. And here we see that Heidegger is referring to Hegel, but again, also anticipating Henrich, who, in this respect, is merely following Hegel's lead.

Situated in line with Hegel, in other words, and further informed by Husserl's descriptive phenomenology, Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic form, and Jauss's Constance School aesthetic theory, Henrich wants to claim Hölderlin for the German Idealist tradition. To that end, Heidegger readily concedes, "whoever happens to chance upon this poem . . . may indeed find 'poetical' satisfaction in the enjoyment of such impressions" (*Holderlin's Hymn "Remembrance"* 53). But of course, "poetical satisfaction" is derived from the judgment of taste, which is precisely what Henrich's analysis boils down to in a philosophically elegant and highly sophisticated way. Saying as much is only to reiterate the point that the stated purpose of Henrich's reading of "Remembrance" is to situate the poem within the German Idealist tradition, while at the same time detaching Hölderlin from Heidegger in the name of Western metaphysics. For Heidegger, nothing could be further from Western metaphysics than Hölderlin's "Remembrance." He writes:

> Pointers to what is beautiful are perhaps altogether out of order here, because the realm of art and of beauty, and all metaphysics, in which both of these find their exclusive site, is exceeded in Hölderlin's poetizing for the first time.
>
> (56)

That is hardly to say that Heidegger is right, and Henrich is wrong. It is to say, again, that they speak from two entirely different critical and philosophical perspectives; that they operate in two entirely different language games.

Nonetheless, to bring forward his case against Heidegger while at the same time claiming Hölderlin for German Idealism, Henrich proffers enormous concessions. It was none other than Plato, who pronounced artists and poets the philanderers of truth. It was, as we said before, on that premise that he defined Western philosophy as the discourse of scientific thought and not of poeticizing. At that point, philosophy became the discourse for which poeticizing stood as the *object* of scientific study and not the *subject* of scientific self-reflection. This tradition, the tradition of scientific objectification, has come to define Western metaphysics down through the ages. Even Schiller is taken to task for his meddling in philosophy, precisely insofar as he dares to critique Kant, who, reiterating Plato, reinforces the great divide between artist and philosopher upon which metaphysics determines its identity as the highest realm of thinking. To prosecute his case against Heidegger, Henrich is willing to give up this basic tenet. In doing so, he redefines metaphysics in the very terms Heidegger is calling for. That is to say that metaphysics, German Idealism, is now to be recognized, according to Henrich, as the discourse of modern scientific-poetic thinking, with Hölderlin as its prize specimen. But of course, nothing could be further from the truth on both counts. Henrich's argument epitomizes German Idealism as the essence of modern scientific-technological thought. True, as an artist-philosopher, Hölderlin stands with Schiller, Novalis, Friedrich Schlegel, and Goethe, the artist-philosophers who distinguish themselves as such at Jena. But while each of these could be nudged or jostled into Henrich's paradigm, Hölderlin's genetic difference from the Jena artist-philosophers comes down to precisely what Heidegger recognizes in his work: Hölderlin's nothingization of the subject/object dichotomy marks a paradigmatic step away from Western metaphysics, and thereby he joins Laozi and precedes Heidegger in the terms we have described. To say that Jena was the hotbed of German Idealism when Hölderlin arrived there, in the mid-1790s, is all the better to appreciate Hölderlin for his "uniqueness" as an artist-philosopher. But Henrich knows all this. The idea that Hölderlin might stand for election to the realm of the elect is proffered as an effective rhetorical device. The real point is that Heidegger ought to be exiled from the realm. And why shouldn't he be? After all, he wants to make good on his promise to deconstruct the history of philosophy, by which he means, the history of metaphysics, the history that in its historiography forgets the history of being and thereby remands Dasein to the "lostness" of the "they." To Heidegger, historiography is intrinsic to Dasein's addiction. "Historiography," he writes, "is a narcotic averting us from history" (*Basic Questions of Philosophy* 108).

It would be easy to suppose that Henrich and Heidegger respectively believed themselves to be right and the other wrong—Heidegger in his anticipation of Henrich and Henrich in his response to Heidegger's uncannily proleptic commentaries on Henrich's historiographic takedown of Heidegger's Hölderlin lectures. But in fact, as we have suggested more than once, by 1943, Heidegger had no further wish to argue with metaphysics, nor further wish to engage in the critique of metaphysics. When he says of "Remembrance" that "whoever happens to chance upon this poem . . . may indeed find 'poetical' satisfaction in the enjoyment of such impressions," he means it as an observation and not an objection. For him, though, Hölderlin's purpose was far from the one Kant defined as the purposeful purposeless of art. Nor is reading Hölderlin's poetry, Heidegger avers, a matter of classifying Hölderlin's "poetizing as either 'Romanticism' or 'Classicism.'" For Heidegger, "such simplified classifications are perhaps very useful for promoting the business of science and increasing the number of scholarly controversies, yet in truth remain an erroneous distraction." "It then ends up," he says, "looking as

though Hölderlin existed only so that there could be scientific disputes over the relation between Classicism and Romanticism and their variations and mixtures, and so that science, through such disputes, could maintain its 'progress'" (*Holderlin's Hymn "Remembrance"* 53). For Heidegger, scientific objectifications of the kind amount to what he calls, in *Being and Time*, the "idle talk" of "the they."

In this respect, historicality wants to remember what historiography covers over and then forgets. Heidegger reiterates the point as follows:

> The task of thinking that we are initially faced with here consists, rather, in thinking our way out of our entanglements in metaphysical ways of explaining. Admittedly, so long as poetizing is a hunting ground for scientific research, the path to the word will often be futile, even as the most extensive detour. For all "science" rests in metaphysics.
>
> (75)

The "word" to which Heidegger is alluding, need it be said, is the poetic word, the hallowed word by which Hölderlin "founds being." As with Heidegger and Laozi, Hölderlin's being arises from the nothing and thereby obviates the subject/object binary that predicates scientific-technological thought. We will return to these matters as they relate more directly to our wider problem, which centers on addiction as it pertains to climate change and the future of mankind.

For now, it should be noted that even those sympathetic to Heidegger's thinking will take Heidegger to task for what Gadamer, for one, will describe as the "distortions and misrepresentations" that supposedly mar Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin. Gadamer will explain or mitigate this presupposed critical deficiency as "a type of freeing of his tongue—when he found a new way of thinking as an interpreter of Hölderlin" (Gadamer 22). Here again Gadamer's reading of Heidegger leaves aside the question of Heidegger's thinking *as in fact* what Chang calls it: "a new way of thinking." More to the point, Gadamer's critical method leaves no room for the possibility that Heidegger is no longer a practitioner of hermeneutic phenomenology or what we have come to think of as a Gadamerian hermeneutics. Heidegger is not interpreting Hölderlin by way of phenomenological description. He is encountering Hölderlin as a matter of poetic hermeneutic translation by way of dialogical inter-subjectification. Gadamer's project advances the philosophical hermeneutics that Heidegger had developed in *Being and Time*. Meanwhile, Heidegger has long since become a self-styled practitioner of poetic hermeneutics. For him, this is not a critical practice but a philosphico-poetic praxis. If we may venture what could be taken as a paradox, Heidegger's poetic hermeneutics is best understood as a praxis of *wu wei*, the way of letting be.

Gadamer titles the collection of essays we are reading from *Heidegger's Ways*. If this title suggests Heidegger's path toward the Dao, it also implies Gadamer's later interest in East Asian thought more generally. Unquestionably, Gadamer understands and appreciates Heidegger's ever-deepening interest on Daoist thought. Yet, but for a brief mention of "Asian cultures" (119), in not one of the essays he collects in *Heidegger's Ways* does Gadamer consider Heidegger's engagement with East Asian thought. By no means should we take Gadamer's silence regarding Heidegger's East Asian thought as an indication that Gadamer believed Heidegger's increasingly Daoist inclinations had led to a dead end. For Gadamer it is a matter of keeping in step with Heidegger's reticence on the matter, which, according to Gadamer, stems from Heidegger's extremely limited knowledge of Chinese language (Parkes 7).

Gadamer aside, Heidegger's Hölderlin lectures indicate that Heidegger had taken further strides toward the Dao in the early 1940s. In tandem with his stepping back from metaphysics, these strides forward toward an ever-deeper engagement with East Asian thinking continued throughout his life. That is hardly to say that the middle and later Heidegger, the Heidegger of "Remembrance" and "The Ister," and then of the *Four Seminars*, will no longer think *about* Western metaphysics. It is to say, rather, that Heidegger no longer thinks *in* the form and through the method of Western metaphysics; he no longer thinks as a practitioner of Western philosophy. "Metaphysics as a History of Being"; "Sketches for a History of Being as Metaphysics"; "Recollection in Metaphysics"; and "Overcoming Metaphysics": these texts (the first of which appeared in Heidegger's Nietzsche lectures from 1939 [Volume II] and the last, "Overcoming Metaphysics" [in *Vortrage und Aufsatze* 1954]) make the ongoing departure from metaphysics sufficiently evident. In one way or another, each of these essays speaks toward Heidegger's thinking as a dialogue with Hölderlin and an opening out to the East.

We typically think of the *Kehre* as the turn in Heidegger's thinking toward questions aside from or even as a reversal of the question of the ontological difference he so famously formulates in *Being and Time*. And for quite some time now, we have begun to see that it is not only the question but also the thinking itself that has been going in reverse. As Stambaugh puts it, together the texts noted earlier posit an ontological difference of a kind that "was never thought by metaphysics and would have to be experienced in a new way outside of metaphysics" (*The End of Philosophy* ix–x). "If this happens," Heidegger tells Stambaugh, "*then the thinking thus transformed* thinks the following: the ontological difference disappears in the Appropriation through the step back. It loses its decisiveness for thinking and is thus given up in a certain way in thinking" (xiii my italics). Heidegger had already said as much in the lectures on "Remembrance." Forgetting has already been absorbed and taken up within wider horizons. These new horizons concern Dasein's addiction to the essence of technology and its denial (forgetting) thereof. Gadamer notes that Heidegger's "predicament" lay not only in the fact that

> the conceptual and linguistic habits of others continuously attempted to push him off the course set by his own questions, but even his own conceptual and linguistic habits exerted this pressure, habits that were determined by the tradition of occidental thought.
>
> (26)

The possible freedom that awaited Heidegger in a new way of thinking was not to be sought in the Occident in and of itself, not to be found, in other words, in the habit of mind called Western metaphysics.

The reversal, then, comes not so much as a stepping back from metaphysics and as it does Heidegger's simultaneous turn toward the Dao, which he completes in "The Uniqueness of the Poet," dedicated to Hölderlin. It is a reversal of the kind that Hölderlin poeticizes: that of a tidal estuary, the coming and going and the mixing and blending of thought. The supposedly "incorruptible purity of scientific research," that thinkers such as Weber and Husserl had brought forward from Aristotle and Kant in the name of scientific-technological thinking, would now give way, in Heidegger's thought, to scientific-poetic consciousness. That is not to say that Plato or Aristotle, Weber or Husserl—or Nietzsche, for that matter—would no longer have any say in Heidegger's thinking. Their ideas would remain at the forefront of his thought, but now in the form of poetic hermeneutic translation.

If this new mode of thought is not so easy to pinpoint, that is partly because Heidegger would fall back into the thinking of unalloyed metaphysics and then climb out again. Thanks to Gadamer, we know, for example, that Heidegger criticized himself for what he, Heidegger, describes as "having relapsed totally into the standpoint of the transcendental question" (Gadamer 131). We can take this as Heidegger's self-reference to the struggle with his addiction to metaphysics and, in that struggle, forgetting operates as a form of denial. One might object that this reading allocates too much meaning to Heidegger's use of the word relapse. It is true that the concept as it applies to addiction was not in widespread currency in 1940, although Duncan Silkworth, the early specialist in the diagnosis and treatment of alcoholism, does use the term from a clinical standpoint in his medical publications during the 1930s. Be that as it may, Gadamer perfectly understands what Heidegger is getting at when Heidegger writes the words quoted in the margin of a copy of *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. Heidegger sent this copy to Gadamer in 1940 to replace the one Gadamer had lost. With these words, Gadamer tells us that Heidegger "recognized in metaphysics the fate of our world, a fate that is being fulfilled by the control of the world through science—and by the collapse toward which we are rushing" (151). Further on in the same essay, Gadamer adds that later, Heidegger would say that "getting over" metaphysics was like recovering from an illness. Not only does one suffer from sickness, he says, but the feeling of sickness stays behind, as memory (164).

But again, our point for the present is that, by the late 1930s or early 1940s, Heidegger came to grips with his own fate. He understood that metaphysics controlled Dasein's perspective, that scientific-technological thinking had insinuated itself as Dasein's overarching habit of mind. And he understood that, like the rest of the world, he too had fallen into the addiction. Whatever his dependency on metaphysics had been, Heidegger is now beginning to break free of its addictive power. He pursues emancipation by practicing a new habit of mind, a new way of being in the world. As we shall see shortly, this was the path to addiction recovery that William James had laid out in the chapter "Habit" in his *Principles of Psychology*. With the deeply private *Contributions to Philosophy* (1936–38) and other works from this period, Heidegger begins to practice a different perspective, a different way of "being-in-the-world," a newly formulating habit of mind. Insofar as Heidegger is writing toward a new mode of perception, he now might easily be compared to William James's father, Henry James, Sr., who recovered from his own addiction by devoting his life to a writing practice centered on Swedenborgian theosophy. Swedenborg, it is worth mentioning, insists on the presence of God in both Essence and Being. We will come back to James Sr. and Swedenborg in due course. For now, let us observe that Heidegger's ontological focus is on Being and not on Schelling's God. Nonetheless, just as Henry James Sr. wrote on Swedenborg as a daily practice, indeed as a spiritual ritual, so Heidegger constantly reinforces his own transition, from scientific-technological thinking to scientific-poetic thinking, through the poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics, a translation that will transport him into a mode of thought wherein the laws of cause and effect and subject/object relativity no longer hold sway in the question of Being.

Going against Henrich, a goodly number of today's Heideggerians hold that Heidegger's legacy remains situated well within the tradition of Western metaphysics and its ongoing development. Reiner Schürmann insists that Heidegger's *destruktion* of metaphysics is always pointed toward the perpetual fulfillment *of* metaphysics. Schürmann makes his case with sometimes stirring conviction, especially in his reading of *Contributions to Philosophy*. Anticipating Schürmann, Gadamer repeatedly suggests

that Heidegger never leaves the fold of metaphysics. Heidegger, he says, "most certainly attempted to find the way of his own questioning within the history of metaphysics and its internal tensions," but still, he was "not apart from it" (Gadamer 82). Given the high regard in which Heidegger held Kant, Hegel, and Schelling, especially in his earlier phase, to say nothing of his early focus on the Schoolmen and then Plato and Aristotle, it is easy to see why Gadamer and Schürmann would want to identify their work with Heidegger's.

The question we are posing comes down to whether Heidegger was in fact addicted to the essence of technology and whether in fact he turned to the poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics as a means of freeing himself from a habit of mind he could no longer abide. From that point of view, Gadamer's and Schürmann's positions become increasingly problematic. *Contributions to Philosophy* constantly invokes the word "mechanization" to characterize modern metaphysics in terms of Hegelian dialectics. Moreover, the word "event," appended to his title, underscores Heidegger's reversal of *Being and Time*. By way of *Ereignis*, Heidegger comes to understand *Being and Time* as a passage, a portal, a way out of metaphysics, a thinking that comes from within and reaches beyond his own scientific-technological consciousness. In no uncertain terms, "Time and Being" reiterates the stepping back as a reversal. Heidegger elaborates whatever remains to be said on the subject in the "Country Path" essays and in numerous other texts of the period. To be sure, in earlier texts, such as the lecture course on Schelling's *Essence of Human Freedom* from 1936, one could find plenty of ways to argue that Heidegger was still committed to the Western philosophical tradition. The same goes for the 1935 lecture course on the *Introduction to Metaphysics* and its much later publication, in 1953. These "relapses" notwithstanding, by the time Heidegger delivers his last Hölderlin seminar, in the summer of 1942, Gadamer's or Schürmann's opinion could be held only by way of a radical redefinition of metaphysics, to the point where the word "metaphysics" can mean almost anything. The one thing metaphysics can never mean, however, is East Asian thinking. By 1943, when he writes the essay on Hölderlin and Laozi, and certainly no later than 1946, when he translates Laozi and shortly thereafter delivers the response to Beaufret (later to be called the *Letter on Humanism*), Heidegger's relationship to metaphysics can no longer be held as one of critique. Once Heidegger pursues a blended poetic hermeneutic translation of Hölderlin and the Dao, Heidegger's thought still speaks to metaphysics, but now as an intertextual poetic hermeneutic translation and increasingly from afar, looking back over his shoulder, as it were, in reverse.

. . .

There are, of course, many reasons why Heidegger is finally compelled to speak of metaphysics only from afar, from the standpoint of translation, from outside the walls of Athens, looking into the city with new eyes and only through the high-barred city gates, then turning away from Athens, looking toward the East. Looking back on this event, Heidegger sees that mathematized Dasein cannot be removed from the center of metaphysics, that the object cannot be taken out from under Dasein's transcendental gaze. The decentering of Dasein could only begin, rather, with the decentering of thought, with the destabilization of the transcendental subject and its hard and fast dependency on scientific-technological modes of perception, predicated as they are on the hierarchies of an endlessly reproduced scientific-mathematical definition of reality. When Derrida takes this up as "the stated abandonment of all reference to a center, to a subject," he is merely articulating a poetic hermeneutic translation of Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic

translation of Aristotle, Descartes, and Carnap. This is why Derrida seeks Dasein's Being in the margins. Only from there, far from the text's center, can Dasein begin to find its way to the humility and grace that Hölderlin sees in the absence of the gods that once held sway—before Dasein, in its newfound technological arrogance, lost sight of its essential relation to Being. Perhaps it is no accident, then, that this decentered and marginalized non-subject rearticulates the outside status to which Plato relegates all poets except those who sing the praises of the state through the representation of beauty as pure form, as mathematico-scientific truth. Giving voice to Derrida, it is from this outside that Heidegger speaks, when he writes the self-referential note in the margin of his Kant book.

Especially in the letters, Hölderlin talks about the task of translating Western metaphysics into the language of poetic spirit. Thereby, the subject/object dichotomy, upon which metaphysics is grounded, dissolves in the nothingness of being. But that is not to say that Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic translation of Western metaphysics begins with Hölderlin. Poetic hermeneutic translation is very much in incipient development all the way through Heidegger's early work, beginning with his adolescent encounters with St. Paul and Augustine, and the earliest lectures on Aristotle. These various encounters do not merely constitute a phase of philosophical development; they announce a coming into, an inception and its subsequent phases of thought. To be sure, it is worth repeating, one finds equal measures of ambivalence and ambiguity running through much of Heidegger's post-*Being and Time* thinking. After *Being and Time*, traces of Heidegger's errancy, sometimes emphatically calculating and scientific, appear with varying degrees of frequency all the way up through the 1950s. Some insist that these traces appear stronger than ever in the *Der Spiegel* interview. From the *Contributions* on, though, Heidegger is no longer trying to change the direction of metaphysics; he is no longer trying to repair metaphysics. As does Hölderlin's poetic spirit, he will let metaphysics be.

. . .

We are left with two living documents, two kinds of philosophy. The one comprises Western metaphysics. This philosophy includes break-off philosophies which consider themselves sciences, such as analytic philosophy and cybernetics. Along with Western metaphysics in general, these philosophies come under the heading scientific-technological thinking. The other, also very much a living mode of thought, though of a more or less subliminal and fugitive nature, comprises the ongoing history of scientific-poetic thinking, the thinking that Heidegger steps back into through Hölderlin's initial poetic hermeneutic translations of Western thought and then through Parmenides and Heraclitus, Nietzsche, and then Cézanne and Braque and Rilke further on. With Heidegger's later thinking, a space had already opened wherein these latter-named artist-philosophers would come into relation with Laozi and Zhuangzi. Through the latter, we want to bear in mind, Heidegger, Hölderlin, and the rest have to be understood as dialogically in conversation with the west-coast shamans of modern Ecuador, the likes of ancient Tiresias, and all else of that ilk in between.

As importantly, though, Heidegger insists that resolving

> the still hidden mystery of the power of *Stellen* . . . is no longer to be accomplished by Western European philosophy up till now, but also not without it—that is, not unless its newly appropriated tradition is brought on to the appropriate path.
>
> (May 105)

For him, in other words, the poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics will bring its language into dialogical engagement with the thinking of the world, future, present, and past. The arrogance that informs Heidegger's early thinking has receded into the memory of what had been his own scientific and indeed Hegelian mode of thought. Apropos of Heidegger's reference to the essence of technology, Parkes comments that "the implication is that the reappropriation of the Western philosophical tradition will require a preliminary move out of it, optimally by way of a tradition innocent of the ideas that gave rise to the Western worldview," namely, East Asian thought (105). This history, as we have been suggesting, situates Heidegger's later thinking within a tradition as yet to be recognized as such, namely scientific-poetic thinking. That is not to say that Heidegger has any intention of forgetting Hegel's scientific philosophy. Indeed, the lectures on Hölderlin's river poems are delivered within the context of Heidegger's coeval lectures on "Negativity," subtitled "A Confrontation With Hegel Approached From Negativity" (1938–39, 1941) and the lectures titled "Elucidation on the 'Introduction of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*'" (1942). As Heidegger was well aware, Hegel's philosophy of science carries within it a definite attitude toward East Asian thought. As we have already suggested, this attitude epitomizes the Western scientific objectification of the East. In "The Oriental World" for instance, Hegel writes that for the Chinese artist, "the exalted, and the beautiful is not the domain of his art and skill." More generally, "The Chinese are, on the other hand, too proud to learn anything from Europeans, although they must often recognize their superiority" (Hegel 125). On this score, everything Heidegger has to say about Laozi and the Dao—and this is especially true of "The Uniqueness of the Poet"—marks a "confrontation" with Hegel's scientific philosophy. As such, it marks, as I said, an ongoing process of liberation from his own addiction, his own entrapment within the confines of scientific-technological consciousness.

In "The Uniqueness of the Poet," the trans-historical engagement of East and West arises in the form of scientific-poetic consciousness. Heidegger's thinking of Hölderlin and Laozi from the standpoint of historicality reveals this newly intertwined perspective. Though we have focused mainly on Laozi and the *Tao Te Ching*, we shall not dismiss the importance of Zhuangzi's effect on Heidegger's grasp of the Dao. As Reinhard May notes,

> Heidegger's often repeated association of thinking and poeticizing gains a special meaning, in so far as the great teachers of classical Daoism are poets as well as thinkers, and Zhuangzi, to whom Heidegger owes so much, is the greatest among them. (May 55)

Most notably from Laozi and Zhuangzi, Heidegger draws elements of the Dao into his own poetic thinking, into his own poetic-scientific mode of thought, which we have also defined as poetic hermeneutic translation. As Heidegger remarks, in the task of thinking essay, he has in mind "the possibility that the world civilization that is just now beginning might one day overcome its technological-scientific-industrial character as the sole criterion of man's sojourn" (*Basic Writings* 437). For Heidegger, in other words, trans-historical, transcultural scientific-poetic consciousness as represented in Hölderlin and in the Dao presents the possibility of thinking otherwise than the scientific-technological mode of thought that characterizes the history of Western metaphysics as the history of objectification, domination, and control.

. . .

At Le Thor, Heidegger says that "Nothing is the characteristic of Being." Roughly 40 years earlier, in the already noted "What is Metaphysics?"—an essay that arises on the heels of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle—Heidegger had already said that "Nothing reveals itself as belonging to the Being of beings." We take this remark to be typical of what Heidegger says about nothing in its relation to being. As we suggested a moment ago, we tend to forget that, in saying what he does about the nothing, Heidegger goes against the fundamental law of Western reason. As we saw, Anaximander is the first to lay down this law. But he is hardly the last. Such, for specific example, is the case with Leibniz, whom Heidegger in the "What is Metaphysics?" essay quotes as asking: "Why is there something rather than nothing?" By Leibniz's day, it is worth remembering, the notion of Being had long since crystallized as *a* being, a thing. But again, Leibniz was standing in a long line of Western tradition. Reiterating Epicurus, the Roman poet Lucretius insists that "Nothing comes from nothing." Long before Lucretius and well before Epicurus, Aristotle in the *Physics* will have already proclaimed, "nothing comes-to-be from nothing"; and before him, Plato in *The Parmenides* argues that "neither can any appearance or seeming of that which has no being be found." And then there is Parmenides himself, who says, "but nothing is not" (McKirahan 146).

In Hegel's case, the relation between being and nothing is defined as one of sublation. Under the heading "*Being and nothing*," Heidegger writes that "*Hegel's negativity* is not a negativity because it never takes seriously the not and the nihilating—it has already sublated the not into the 'yes'" (*Hegel* 37). "In all metaphysics," Hegel writes, "for which being as the beingness [is] already a supplement to beings, the nothing is only a supplement to being" (39). For Heidegger, on the other hand, "Being 'is' the 'nothing'—not because each is equally as undetermined and unmediated as the other, but because they are one and yet '*fundamentally*' different!" (37). Here we see, again, the dissolution of subject/object relativity; while for Hegel, as Heidegger puts it, "Thinking is the unconditional correlation of subject and object" (41). Hegel "equates being and beings in general understood in the ordinary sense—in accordance with the metaphysical habituation, more specifically, however, according to the idealistic mode of thinking"—the thinking, that is, which is predicated on "the unconditional correlation of subject and object" (23). It was Heidegger's refusal to stand by this "unconditional correlation" that so provoked Carnap.

Likewise, when Laozi says that "Being is born of non-being" (*Four Seminars* 40), he says something entirely foreign to and, indeed, contrary to the whole of Western metaphysics. At Le Thor, Heidegger will say much the same, with added commentary:

> We keep the guiding statement ever in view:
>
> **Being: Nothing: Same**
>
> Nothing is a characteristic of being. It is not being, but this in a manner that is thoroughly different from the sentence: the being is not (which would be an ontic proposition). On the contrary, one says: the nothing characterizes being, this is therefore an ontological proposition. Viewed from the ontic position, being is precisely not some being; viewed from the categories, it is *not*. Otherwise said: insofar as the nothing and its negating are not understood negatively, being is something entirely other than a being. It is essential to the participle form "nihilating" that the participle show a determinate "activity" of being, through which alone the particular being *is*. One can name it an origin, assuming that all ontic–causal overtones are

> excluded: it is the event [*Ereignis*] of being as condition for the arrival of beings: being lets beings' presence.
>
> (58–9)

Like Laozi, Heidegger is speaking poetically, from the place of poetic thinking. It is safe to assume that both artist-philosophers are saying the same thing about Being and nothing and that each says what he says about Being and nothing in contradiction to the ontology of metaphysics, notwithstanding the fact that Laozi is writing in the sixth century BCE. At the core of the difference between Western metaphysics, on the one side, and Laozi and Heidegger, on the other, lies the binary relation between the subject and object. This binary, as we have been suggesting, determines the fundamental ontological relation required of so-called first philosophy. The science of calculation and measure depends on the binary relation between subject and object. By the same token, Eastern thought obviates the ontological difference between subject and object. Heidegger, working within the poetic logic of *Ereignis* and enownment, does the same. We have said as much, but we cannot overemphasize the observation that Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic reconfiguration of subject/object reality begins with his reconceptualization of the relation between Being and beings to that of Being and nothing. In doing so, Heidegger is stepping back from fourth-century Western metaphysics into sixth-century Chinese Daoism. This step back in time and space is to depart from the Western subject/object relation of difference to embrace the Eastern intersubjective relation of sameness.

Heidegger was perfectly familiar with Laozi and even more so with Plato. In saying the same as Laozi, Heidegger is thinking and speaking consciously toward Laozi, in poetic remembrance of Laozi. This poetic thinking in remembrance of Laozi consciously and deliberately remembers *through* Plato to Laozi. The language of poetic thinking engages the language of science precisely insofar as scientific language, and particularly, scientific-technological thinking, requires poetic hermeneutic translation. As such, poetic hermeneutic translation always already arrives from the place of uncertainty, as an endless questioning, even as it recognizes the scientific logic of its own thinking. Heidegger does not explicitly define being and nothing other than to say that neither of the two terms can exist without the other. Saying as much also says that there can be no understanding of being and nothing that is not arrived at through poetic thinking.

Here it bears repeating then, that for Heidegger and for Laozi, Being and nothing cannot be grasped in scientific-technological thinking; the sameness of Being and nothing cannot be calculated or measured. Laozi is a poet, an artist-philosopher. His thinking cannot be scientifically reduced to a determinative truth. He can be understood only from the perspective of poetic hermeneutic experience. What we are coming to is not merely that Heidegger's words must be interpreted in terms of poetic thinking, by way of poetic hermeneutics; it is to suggest that one understands the later Heidegger through the thinking *of* the artist-philosopher, takes in his words as he would think them, from the standpoint of scientific-poetic consciousness, or better yet, through a poetic hermeneutic engagement with Heidegger's poetic thinking in its dialogical encounter with Hölderlin and Laozi, as well as Shuangzi. This kind of thinking can be grasped only from the standpoint of historicality. Henrich's historiographic critique of Heidegger can reveal certain facts about Heidegger's relation to German Idealism, facts with which Heidegger for the most part would not disagree; but it cannot bring us to an understanding of Heidegger, let alone Heidegger's relation to Hölderlin. Likewise, it is fair to say that we cannot pretend to understand Heidegger in the absence of Laozi. Only through an understanding

of the relations among Heidegger, Hölderlin, and Laozi, in other words, do we begin to grasp the full extent of what Heidegger means when he refers to the essence of technology as an extremely harmful and possibly fatal addiction.

May observes that in Chinese thinking Heidegger discovers the "totally other." This "totally other," according to May, pulls or draws Heidegger from "one place, the place of metaphysics, in favor of another, which he characteristically leaves encoded, 'without a name.'" Heidegger in this case, he argues, is leaving us to think of the Dao, a thinking which is always "hidden and without a name." It is in the poetic sense of the Le Thor seminar as a whole that one approaches Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic thinking in its closeness to that of Laozi. That is to say that one should not "figure out" Heidegger's relation to Laozi, or for that matter, Zhuangzi.

As Heidegger often remarks, poetic thinking comes to him from Hölderlin but also from van Gogh, Nietzsche, Rilke, Cézanne, Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus, and many others. As we see now all the more plainly, it comes also from Laozi and Zhuangzi. That brings us to suggest the following: Hölderlin's scientific-poetic thinking comes close to that of Laozi in a way that is distinct from van Gogh, Nietzsche, Rilke, Cézanne, Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus. More correctly, through Hölderlin, we recognize in van Gogh, Nietzsche, Rilke, Cézanne, Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus, what we could not see before. That is to say that like Laozi and Zhuangzi, who think through the nothingness of being in the nameless hiddenness of the Dao, wherein the subject/object paradigm does not hold, much the same is to be said of van Gogh, Nietzsche, Rilke, Cézanne, Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus. That the same is true of Hölderlin Heidegger makes clear in "The Uniqueness of the Poet." Which is to say that when Heidegger speaks at Le Thor, when he speaks poetically, he speaks in fact in the scientific-poetic thinking of Laozi *and* Heidegger *and* Hölderlin, of Zhuangzi *and* Heidegger *and* Hölderlin—and van Gogh, Nietzsche, Rilke, Cézanne, Anaximander, Parmenides, and Heraclitus, and many others.

If we can consider only this point indirectly, that is because it pertains to what is "hidden and without a name." To say as much we, by no means, intend mystification. We are, nevertheless, dealing with the Dao, toward which Heidegger has long since opened his thinking and absorbed into the fold of his poetic thought, more or less in silence, excepting "The Uniqueness of the Poet." For now, we can merely suggest that the Le Thor seminar constitutes the poetically dialogical mixing of East Asian and Western historical consciousness, in which polyphonic intertextualities come together in the sameness of poetic consciousness. In what Heidegger says at Le Thor, we can hear the history of East Asian poetic language as enfolding the history of Western scientific-poetic language. It follows that, at the same time, Heidegger's poetic language bears in its utterance the mirror reflection of scientific-technological thinking. This reflection, now deeply inflected within the history of East Asian thought, carries in it the poetic-hermeneutic translation of Western metaphysics. These inter-inflected reflections of consciousness come, as we suggested a moment ago, as a mirroring of remembrance.

Earlier, in our mention of borders, we alluded to the story, most likely apocryphal, that Laozi, who served as an archivist in the Zhou court, found himself finally out of patience with the inanities of sixth-century BCE bureaucratic life and retired from his duties. In his travels, he is stopped at the northern frontier, where a border official asks him to gather together his thinking. It is then, at the boundary line, at the territorial crossing between inside and outside, that he composes what has come down to us as the *Tao Te*

Ching. Or so the legend goes. It is easy, in any case, to imagine that Confucius wrote his pragmatic philosophy from the heart of China, while Laozi composed his poetic thinking at the border's edge, at the margins, as a looking-back while stepping away—a turning point from Classical Chinese thought. According to Zhuangzi, Confucius once said that men of Laozi's ilk, "wander beyond the realm," whereas "men like me wander in it." As Confucius goes on to say, "Beyond and within can never meet" (83). In a similar way, like Confucius, Heidegger in his late years remains a peasant, a pragmatist, a wanderer within. He abides in his Black Forest hut and keeps as he does to the wood paths nearby. But in fact, more like Laozi, who crosses the border and leaves the Zhou frontier behind, Heidegger is no longer a German or a European philosopher. Having stepped all the way back from metaphysics, he is a poetic thinker, an artist-philosopher. Like Laozi, in this way, he then "wanders beyond the realm." He writes: "The step back, which is actually a direction and a manner of thinking and not an isolated step of thought, leads out of metaphysics into the essential origin of metaphysics" (*Identity and Difference* 16). That essential origin is the thinking that obtains prior to and beyond the transition from scientific-poetic thinking into scientific-technological thinking. This latter is constituted as such by the advent of Western metaphysics. Though Heidegger looks back at metaphysics, he does so from beyond the pale; never again will Heidegger meet metaphysics on the same path, though he will look back at it all the while in his travels and keep it ever in the forefront of his thinking. Thus, do we think of Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics as a remembrance of whence he comes. Responding to the Cleansing Committee's December 1945 request for his view of Heidegger, Jaspers comes very close to describing Heidegger's poetic thinking as it had developed to that point, albeit from a disparaging perspective. He writes,

> Heidegger is a significant power, not by content of philosophical worldview, but in his wielding of speculative tools. He possesses a philosophical organ whose perceptions are interesting, although in my opinion he is exceptionally uncritical and is far removed from real science. At times he operates as if he were combining the seriousness of nihilism with the mystagogy of a sorcerer. In the current of his linguisticality, he is occasionally able to strike the nerve of philosophizing in a way that is hidden and magnificent. In this, as far as I can see, he is perhaps alone among contemporary philosophers in Germany.
>
> (*Heidegger-Jaspers Correspondence* 210)

That Heidegger was far from science is perhaps too severe a judgment, but clearly, he was far enough away to stand "alone among contemporary philosophers in Germany." Jaspers was not unfair but mistaken in the measurement, insofar as he referred to Heidegger as a philosopher, a term that for Jaspers and Heidegger defines the pure scientific thinker, when in fact by 1945, Heidegger had stepped back from scientific thinking. He stood alone in Germany because he had taken a different path. He had become an artist-philosopher, a scientific-poetic thinker, in the style of Laozi and Hölderlin. In that sense, it would be much fairer to compare Heidegger to a shaman than a sorcerer. Heidegger is a futural poet. Like Laozi's and Hölderlin's, his vision of the future, "the time to come," is "hidden and magnificent." In those rare moments when he is "able to strike the nerve of philosophy," he awakens philosophy to what can never be seen from a strictly scientific point of view.

At Le Thor—and the remark we are about to quote comes on the heels of Heidegger's earlier Le Thor comments on the nothing—Heidegger says: "It is a matter here of understanding that the deepest meaning of being is *letting*. Letting the being be, this is the noncausal meaning of 'letting' in 'Time and Being'" (*Four Seminars* 59). Here we want to remember that "Time and Being" reverses *Being and Time*. "Time and Being" "attempted to think this 'letting' still more fundamentally in the expression 'giving'" (59). As such, it also serves as Heidegger's extended elucidation of the 1946 "Letter on Humanism," in which "everything is reversed." Let's remember, too, that the 1942 lecture course on Hölderlin's "Ister" had already indicated a reversal in terms of the river's tidal currents flowing backwards through the lands of ancient Asiatic consciousness. Now, at Le Thor, Heidegger is suggesting that

> an excellent way of approaching enowning would be to look into the essence of positionality [*Ge-stell*], insofar as it is a passage from metaphysics to another thinking ('a Janus head' it is called in *On Time and Being*), for positionality is essentially ambiguous.
>
> (60)

By this last comment, which in my view alludes to Einstein's theory of time and Bohr's deconstruction thereof, he means that "positionality (the gathering unity of all ways of positing) is the completion and consummation of metaphysics and at the same time the disclosive preparation of enowning." He adds: "This is why it is by no means a question of viewing the advent of technology as a negative occurrence (but just as little as a positive occurrence in the sense of a paradise on Earth)" (60). He concludes: "Positionality is, as it were, the photographic negative of enowning" (60). Here we might say that positionality, enframing, *Gestell*, the essence of technology—and however else we might want to refer to Western metaphysics as that mode of consciousness that incarcerates modern human consciousness *per se*—opens a doorway to freedom, a portal to Dasein's emancipation from its own mode of thought, metaphysics. The waters into which the Ister flows in its tidal reversals must be understood, then, as a blending of difference into sameness, Einstein *and* Bohr.

Perhaps it would not be too far-fetched to think of this difference into sameness in terms of feminist postmodern appropriation. Take, for example, Sherrie Levine's photographic image of the Walker Evans photo titled *Alabama Tenant Farmer's Wife*. Levine's photograph preserves Evans's original image exactly, as well as the title's possessive, while simultaneously reversing its meaning. In this poetic hermeneutic translation, we see Levine's appropriation of Evans's photograph giving rise to *Ereignis*, an opening in which Dasein comes into presence of the present. That is to suggest that Heidegger sees the reversal in the "Letter on Humanism" as *Ereignis*, an event that he also describes as appropriation. What in Evans proclaims the modernist aesthetic of formal originality becomes, in Levine's coeval image, the deconstruction of the concept of originality. It marks a coeval event because Levine's copy cannot be comprehended in the absence of a present awareness of Evans's original. In which case, both appear to the world for the first time as they are *now*, a now that can only be fully grasped in terms of remembrance. And yet the one lets the other be. Here of course, Levine's appropriated image is mirroring the patriarchal essence of possession in her feminist postmodern deconstruction of property as the fundamental principle of subject/object relations. At the same time, she is suggesting that possession is a patriarchal construct essential to modernist aesthetics,

which in turn, via Kant, stands as a keystone to modern metaphysics. What she is reflecting as a feminist postmodern artist, in a way that lets patriarchy be, is how Western metaphysics, in its possession and control of the meaning of being in terms of subject/object scientific epistemology, will not let woman be.

We typically see "appropriation art" such as Levine's as "interventionist." On a deeper level, though, Levine is inviting scientific-technological thinking to see itself reflected in the mirror of feminist postmodern artistic consciousness, to see itself as it is to be seen *now*, *in reflection*. This reflection comes to the fore as coming into the presence of what is present, as *Ereignis*, as poetic event. As Heidegger goes on to say at Le Thor, "This 'letting' is something fundamentally different from 'doing'. It is to be understood as the Daoist notion of *in*-action. In letting *Being and Time* be, the text "Time and Being" attempts to think this 'letting' still more originarily as a 'giving'" (*On Time and Being* 59). One could say that "letting" is the letting go of possession, while "doing" is the productive process essential to taking possession, not least as regards the patriarchal domination and control that Levine represents in her appropriation of Weston's photo. In which case, the word appropriation, as applied to Levine, is now understood in Heidegger's sense, that is, in terms of Levine's self-enownment. The same goes for Weston, whose self-enownment comes in the event of Levine's mirror reflection. But, of course, appropriation and enownment indicate for Heidegger variations on the meaning of *Ereignis*, the nowness of the event or the event of the now as a giving. More to Heidegger's poetico-philosophical point, this giving is the *poetic* giving of *Ereignis*, of the *now*. We could say that this "*now*," this gift of presence that comes of *Ereignis*, defines, more than anything, the difference between Heidegger and Carnap, between, shall we say, Western metaphysics and poetic hermeneutic consciousness. Nor does *Ereignis* in this sense mark anything like an absolute transformation of one thing to another, from Occidental to Asiatic, for instance. It is, rather, an intermixture, a dissolution of subject/object relativity into both as same.

That is only to say, again, that Heidegger's poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics initiates a reversal, an appropriation of the kind he announces in the already-mentioned "Letter on Humanism" and that he then elaborates in "Time and Being." Seeing its own self, in the newness of *Ereignis*, in its mirror reflection, in its coming into presence for what it is (a hierarchical-patriarchal construct moving toward its other, moving toward the Dao, for example), *Being and Time* becomes, in the now of *Ereignis*—as unconcealed in "Time and Being"—present to itself as such. Here we see a "moment of vision" very different from what we see in Book IV of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, for example. In the struggle to death for recognition, we see in Hegel's "moment of recognition" a dialectical transformation wherein the subject becomes subject in the very moment it subjugates what it sunders to its will as the object that, in turn, simultaneously recognizes its subjugator as subject. Within the reversal that unfolds as "Time and Being," *Being and Time* recognizes itself in mirror reflection. It thereupon appropriates (enowns) its essence. Moreover, in this enowning, this coming into the presence and appropriation of its own presence, in the *now* of its own reflection, *Being and Time* is carried forward into scientific-poetic thinking, precisely insofar as metaphysics, in its self-reflection as a hierarchical construct, stands as the "totally other" upon which poetic spirit depends for its future as scientific-poetic thinking—not least, Heidegger's. This suggests that Heidegger does not come to see *Being and Time* for what it has fully become until "The Letter on Humanism," or until, *On Time and Being*—not until after, in other words, his attempt to translate Laozi and "The Uniqueness of the Poet."

The relation between metaphysics and poetic spirit, between scientific-technological thinking and scientific-poetic thinking, abjures the subject/object relativity in which metaphysics is grounded as per Hegel's dialectics. In its poetic hermeneutic relation with metaphysics, scientific-poetic thinking evolves from its primordial existence, which begins prior to "the great beginning" of metaphysics. As such, scientific-poetic thinking is already present in its evolved form of thought when Heidegger engages Hölderlin and Laozi. Just as the "great beginning" marks the advent of Western metaphysics as an overcoming of early Greek thought and the simultaneous injunction of subject/object scientific perception, so *Being and Time* marks the "great beginning" of Heidegger's thinking as an overcoming of Western metaphysics. Let us elaborate: the "great beginning" initiates the advent of scientific-technological philosophy in its original form, Platonic metaphysics. In its struggle to death for recognition, Platonic metaphysics struggles with none other than early Greek thinking, the scientific-poetic thinking that precedes scientific-technological thinking and which metaphysics sunders. Likewise, *Being and Time* in its form as a mirror reflection of metaphysics operates now as a poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics. Heidegger's "appropriation" of metaphysics, his poetic hermeneutic translation of metaphysics, is, in other words, a moment of *Ereignis*, a mirror image: metaphysics presenting itself to itself in reverse. If, as *Ereignis*, "Time and Being" reverses *Being and Time*, the former mirrors and reflects the latter even as it "overcomes" itself. The reversal of *Being and Time*, "Time and Being" depends for its meaning on the originary essence of *Being and Time* as scientific treatise, as calculation and measure. And yet, as "totally other," they are the same.

As Heidegger says to Stambaugh, "The step back allows Being as difference to come before thinking without being its object" (*Identity and Difference* 16). This departure from or letting go of the subject/object dichotomy can be seen as similar to Michael Harner's "step back" from his own Western scientific perspective. The highly regarded Berkeley academic's prolonged firsthand anthropological encounter with Western Ecuadorian shamanism led him to reverse his scientific practice in anthropology, at which point, he crosses over into the lifeworld of shamanist consciousness. This reversal is not something Harner intended of his own accord. Rather, he was invited. He was trained and confirmed as a shaman by the very shamans whose ancient ways and hermeneutic practices he had scientifically objectified. As with Heidegger's *Ereignes*, he would now see shamanism from the inside, not as an object of his own scientific calculation and measure, as per Levi-Strauss, for example, but as it would come to be in and of his own psycho-spiritual transformation. In this regard, one thinks, too, of Robert Thurman, Je Tsongkhapa Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies at Columbia. Having studied with the Dalai Lama, Thurman would become the world's first Western Buddhist monk. In both cases, the subject/object relation that defines Western metaphysics and secures the scientific grounds upon which Harner and Thurman approached their respective "objects" of study, no longer obtains. For each, assuming the ways of the peoples they had studied is not a matter of renouncing science; rather, it is a matter of recognizing science as an element of scientific-poetic consciousness.

There are those who say that such transformation amounts to a half-baked claim; that one cannot simply leave their "Western baggage" behind. Maybe so. But pronouncements such as these second-guess the Dalai Lama and the shamans who indoctrinated Harner and Thurman, as if neither the shamans nor the Dalai would not know and that Thurman and Harner would not know, either. A transformed consciousness does not

forget what it has been transformed from; rather, the memory of what has been transformed informs the newly assumed perspective. The recovering alcoholic who has undergone Jung's "vital spiritual experience" does not forget the life he or she has surrendered; the necessarily vigilant memory of that way of being in the world constantly shapes the new way of seeing and guards against slipping back into the old, self-destructive habits of being in the world.

Likewise, in Heidegger's case, the event experienced from within entails a poetic hermeneutic transformation of consciousness, but the old way of seeing is kept at the forefront of memory. Heidegger does not "forget" the Western metaphysics that was his way of being in the world; he lives and breathes the constant remembrance of that which he is perpetually stepping back from. Again, poetic hermeneutic events of the kind come not as self-assertion or a self-willed taking hold. Such a response, in other words, does not involve the analytic appropriation of the object from the outside, from the standpoint of subject (scientist-metaphysician) to object; it is rather a movement within which the distinction between subject and object, inside and outside, dissolves and gives way to a mode of poetic consciousness that does not so much abjure scientific truth as it embraces scientific-poetic truth. Just as Harner is beckoned from scientific-technological thinking (anthropology) into scientific-poetic thinking (in the form of shamanism), so Heidegger has responded in the same way to a similar kind of gesture. He has moved from the scientific-technological thinking of metaphysics to the scientific-poetic thinking of Hölderlin's poetic spirit, which has opened itself to him. Shamanistic consciousness in its primordial form remains in close proximity to the originary thinking of scientific-poetic thought. And yet, just as Harner cannot "think" as a shaman outside of his scientific-technological experience as an anthropologist, neither can Heidegger "think" as a scientific-poetic thinker outside of the mirror reflection he carries in his mind in the image of Western metaphysics and scientific-technological thinking.

Heidegger's thinking as it stands before and after the *Kehre* has to be described, then, as something other than a reversal in the typical sense of the word. Nor is it anything like a break. What we see, even from Heidegger's earliest work, amounts to a gradually unfolding transmutation of Heidegger's relation to truth. The thinking that informed his early discussions with Jaspers, for instance, still holds an analytic connection with Husserl's scientific phenomenology. But the connection to Husserl changes at the very start of *Being and Time*, where Heidegger runs up against the limit of phenomenology. Which is to say that precisely insofar as Being is not an entity, Husserl's "pure" science will not take its measure, nor will it lend the slightest to the question of Being's meaning. Even here, then, in the very first pages of *Being and Time*, Heidegger has already begun to move into his middle phase, wherein, as is generally noticed, phenomenology gives way to a preponderance of hermeneutic thought. And even here, in these late Marburg years, Heidegger has already realized that "we cannot apply to Being the concept of 'definition' as presented in traditional logic," the logic, that is, of metaphysics. Here again, metaphysics has no wish to deal with the meaning of Being, because Being is not an entity and therefore will not submit to phenomenological description, to calculation and measure. And yet, the "indefinability of Being does not eliminate the question of its meaning" (*Being and Time* 23). If Heidegger is ever to properly formulate the question that provokes *Being and Time*, it can only mean that Heidegger must begin elsewhere and anew, beyond the logic of metaphysics and, more particularly, beyond the "pure" science of Husserl's phenomenology. It is at this point, in the aftermath of *Being and Time*, that Heidegger begins a close study of Hölderlin's poetic word. At this point, one ventures to

suggest, Heidegger begins to realize that his thinking is as far astray from Jaspers's as it is from Husserl's.

At roughly the same moment—and as we've suggested, there is no coincidence here—Heidegger begins to open his eyes with greater wonder toward the East, again on the chance his question might be found there, well east of Athens and farther still from Freiburg. With these two radical shifts in Heidegger's formulation of the question of Being comes the later phase, best characterized as a practice in poetic hermeneutic translation. We might note that this last phase initiates the final separation from Jaspers, whose project remains an insider's critique of metaphysics. The estrangement between the two philosophers, clouded by Heidegger's rectorship, awaits consideration further on. For now, suffice it to say that following the rectorship and the ensuing crisis, we can see a deepening relation to Hölderlin's notion of authentic freedom as arising from poetic consciousness. Not only does this relation fly in the face of Jaspers's growing concern regarding Heidegger's philosophical trajectory, which Jaspers sees as increasingly at odds with the basic principles of German Idealism, it also comes in deliberate opposition to Hegel's claim that art has long-since died and philosophy long-since risen in its place. This move, away from German Idealism as per Hegel and Jaspers, and the new alignment with Hölderlin's thought and Daoism, marks an emancipatory moment for Heidegger. As already noted, this development concerns Schelling as well as Hölderlin, not only as regards Schelling's essay on freedom but even more so in light of Schelling's trenchant remarks on Laozi.

Insofar as these latter developments bring Heidegger further toward the East, we can illustrate its movement in terms of Daoist martial arts. The Dao warrior does not attack but awaits the onslaught of assault. On contact, he/she embraces the aggressor, draws the aggressor toward him/her in surrender. Stepping backward and going with the momentum of the charge, the Dao warrior swivels at the shoulders and hips, and "twisting free" (*Nietzsche Vol One* 210) lets go of his/her attacker, who by his/her own force tumbles to the ground. The purpose here is not conquest and domination but healing, or better, a kindly gift proffered in surrender. By way of benevolent edification, the enemy sees now that force is not power, that power is surrender, letting-be, the letting be of inaction. With this benign lesson, which in fact constitutes reciprocal surrender, comes an embrace of the way, the Dao. Here again we see a complete departure from the subject/object construct that underlies Hegel's struggle to death for recognition, as if the willingness to die for freedom constitutes the perquisite of freedom. And indeed, the qualities of "letting be" inhere the Dao's idea of courage as the courage to "let be." Scientific-technological thinking presumes exactitude, utility, potential production, force of a kind that in Heidegger's later view leads to the domination and control of human consciousness—a force, for instance, that Heidegger attributes to logical positivism and cybernetics. Nonetheless, the nothingness of scientific-poetic thinking takes positivism and cybernetics as a gift. Scientific-poetic thinking accepts calculation and measure as a matter of thankfulness, it embraces logical positivism and cybernetics with gratitude. Why? Because these variations on the essence of technology call for poetic thinking.

We can now further elucidate the point that we earlier left at the verge of mystification. First, let us consider something else that Heidegger says about the nothing at Le Thor. Heidegger actually makes these remarks the day before he makes those we have already quoted. In this earlier exchange, he asks,

What occurs with the nothing in "What is Metaphysics?" From what place can Heidegger say:

Being: Nothing: The Same?

> From a question concerning the essence of metaphysics, that itself is nothing metaphysical. . . . If one will allow, the ontological difference is the condition of possibility for metaphysics, the place upon which it is grounded.
>
> But what is the theme of the Heideggerian proposition? It is difference itself. Heidegger speaks of the difference, without holding on to it; thereby, he has abandoned metaphysics. One can now ask, what is the characteristic of the nothing just spoken of?. . . . The nothing is not the simple negation of being. On the contrary, the nothing in its nihilation refers to the being in its manifestation. The nihilation of the nothing "is" being.
>
> (57)

Here we see a monumental modification of what was said about "difference itself," in the major lecture "The Principle of Identity" given at Freiburg in 1957. In that lecture, the thinking of Parmenides is given as "the same perceiving (thinking) as well as being" (*Identity and Difference* 27). If thinking and Being are the same, as Heidegger notes, it follows then that this sameness is "something wholly different from what we know otherwise as the doctrine of metaphysics, which states that identity belongs to Being" (27). This departure from the "doctrine of metaphysics" is easily explained: the thinking that Parmenides poeticizes is not at all the logical ratiocination of metaphysics; it is the poetic thinking of scientific-poetic consciousness that precedes metaphysics. The same holds true with Being and Nothing, except that the Nothing is that of Laozi, who says that "Being is born of non-being" (40). Here the nothing confirms, in other words, the intertwinement of Parmenides and Laozi. The Being that is all and the Being that is nothing, Being and Nothing, Parmenides and Laozi, are the same. Each is grounded in scientific-poetic thinking.

Heidegger reminds his Le Thor group that the lecture "What is Metaphysics?" was given to scientists, "to show the scientists that there is something other than the object of their exclusive occupations and that this other precisely first enables the very thing with which they are preoccupied." This preoccupation, in other words, is preoccupied scientific-technological thinking. Preoccupation of this kind marks an absence—the preoccupation with, or rather against, the object that stands as a non-presence to what *is* present. That is to say, scientific-technological thinking preoccupies itself with the measure and utilization of beings. It has of obsessive necessity forgotten to ask about the ontological difference. Or it has cast the question aside. The question itself poses an inconvenient embarrassment to scientific consistency, which scientific-technological thinking depends on as the ever-reliable and trustworthy production of its own verifiable truth. Hence, perhaps, the absence of gratitude, the lack of humility, the absence, one could say from the standpoint of East Asian thought, of the courage to let be. Consequently,

> the human is challenged forth to comport himself in correspondence with exploitation and consumption; the relation to exploitation and consumption requires the human to *be* in this relationship. Man does not hold technology in his hand. He is its plaything. In this situation, there reigns a complete forgetfulness of being. Cybernetics becomes a replacement for philosophy and poetry.
>
> (*Four Seminars* 62–3)

Here, need it be said, Heidegger applies the word "correspondence" in direct reference to its epistemological function as the guarantor of scientific truth. In this context, we read Heidegger's phrase "philosophy and poetry" as to be taken in reference to poetic thinking and not in the Platonic sense as contrary discourses. Furthermore, the reference to cybernetics, which comes up three years earlier in the *Der Spiegel* interview, speaks to the then-emergent phase of logical positivism. As Heidegger notes elsewhere, "Metaphysics grounds an age, in that through a specific interpretation of what is and through a specific comprehension of truth it gives that age the basis on which it is essentially formed" (*Off the Beaten Track*, 57). For us, this suggests that the coming age of cybernetics will be one in which humans will find themselves face to face with catastrophic strife.

The words quoted from Le Thor were spoken roughly half century ago. The seminar's significance to the present moment could not be more germane. And yet, in the here and now, Heidegger's remarks seem distant, far less audible in our time than when first given at Le Thor. Perhaps today's human beings are even less capable of thinking poetically than when Heidegger spoke in Provence. What in Heidegger's time was already formed as an era that could hardly fathom the poetic word is now a crystallized mode of thought. A decade before he spoke at Le Thor, in *The Question of Being* (1958), Heidegger raises a strident alarm at the surging approach of biospheric collapse. He is writing at about the time that symbolic positivism makes visible the potential power of cybernetics. There can be no mistaking the gravity of Heidegger's concern: "we are obliged not to give up the effort to practice planetary thinking along a stretch of road, be it ever so short." Continues Heidegger, "no prophetic talents and demeanor are needed to realize that there are in store for planetary building encounters for which participants are by no means equal today." The existential threat "is equally true of the European and of the East Asiatic languages and, above all, for the area of a possible conversation between them. Neither of the two is able itself to open up this area and to establish it" (*Question of Being* 107). The survival of the species *Homo sapiens* is no longer a question of East or West, no longer a question of warring tribes or competing hemispheric ideologies. The planet now faces a common colossus, unprecedented in force and magnitude.

Notes

1 See *Philosophie der Mythologie*. In F. W. J. Schelling, *Ausgewahlte Schriften*, vol. 6; quoted and translated by Kwok Kui Wong in "Schelling's Understanding of Laozi" (*Ausgewählte Schriften*; Wong).

2 Plato stands in a class all his own. As we said before, he made little or no effort to attribute ideas originating in the East. There can be little doubt that his motives were pointed toward Platonic hegemony. Nonetheless, given his status as a poet as well as a scientist (a status not to be confused with that of the artist-philosopher), Plato stands between guilt and innocence when it comes to the question of forthright attribution. Those who came after Plato did whatever needed to be done to represent the pedigree of metaphysics as purely Greek. After Alexander, these latter represented the East as having been conquered by a Greek philosopher-king who left in his wake Greek logic as the dominant mode of Eastern thought. Hence the justifications for unidirectional "influence."

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